Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali

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Abstract

International competition within the tourism industry together with the advancement of technology has affected the way holiday destinations are promoted and perceived. In today's Internet era, the use of Web 2.0 within the travel industry continues to gain popularity. This platform allows software developers and end-users to create and share their own content in various guises, such as blogs, wikis, social networking sites and video sharing sites. As the Web 2.0 platform continues to evolve, destination marketers around the world face the challenge of creating an appealing destination identity within a dynamic shared environment. Destination identity is how destination marketers want the destination to be perceived, while destination image is the overall perception of a destination in the mind of consumers.

Users of Web 2.0 gather destination information not only from official tourism websites created by destination marketers but also from other individual users of the platform. Destination marketers are no longer the sole creators of destination images. This may create a mismatch between destination identity and destination image, which in turn may impede tourism development of a destination. Thus, as the information flow on Web 2.0 cannot be controlled, destination marketers face the risk of their destination identity being distorted by external input. This study explores the role that Web 2.0 plays in a destination branding strategy and how it influences consumer images of a destination. The aim of this study is to develop a model of destination branding within a Web 2.0 environment by constructing the components of destination image formation and using it as a foundation to explore destination identity and destination image. The underlying concepts used in developing the model are brand identity and brand image. The study is set within a specific destination - Bali.

The launch and implementation of Bali's destination brand coincided with the increasing adoption of Web 2.0 tools and platforms. It is in this context that this study examined the efficacy of Bali's destination branding strategy. The study

explored Bali's destination identity as portrayed to target markets; whether the identity resonated with the target markets, and what impact it had on their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali. The research was undertaken in two phases. Phase one of the study identified Bali's destination identity as espoused in its brand. Phase two evaluated consumers' destination image of Bali and how it was influenced by Web 2.0. The research design allowed the researcher to compare the results of phases one and two enabling the congruency between Bali's destination identity and its destination image to be evaluated.

The study findings suggest that Web 2.0 gives new meaning to the image formation process. The relationship between destination identity and destination image becomes dynamic in nature, where each affects the other. This study also found that despite the influence of Web 2.0 on image formation process, the importance of other communication channels cannot be discounted. On the contrary, they complement each other. The findings of this study provide useful information for Bali destination marketers, helping them evaluate their current branding strategy. It supports the notion that pre-visit image can have a substantial influence on the way potential tourists perceive a tourist destination. It also supports the idea that various information sources are influential in the consumer image formation process and can influence tourist behavioural intentions towards a destination. This study enriches the existing body of knowledge regarding the application of destination branding in tourism. It also adds to the image literature by providing empirical evidence concerning pre-visit image formation with Web 2.0 as a conduit for information.

Declaration

I, Ni Made Asti Aksari, declare that the DBA thesis entitled Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali is no more than 65,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.
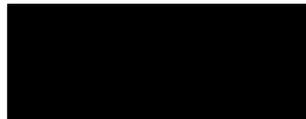
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Publications

The Destination Branding of Bali. (2010). Refereed paper presented at the 4th
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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Destination branding

Destination branding strategies are effective when members of the target markets perceive the destination in the way that destination marketers intend them to be perceived. The underlying principle of this is that individuals' perceived images of a destination have a significant influence on their travel decisions (Ahmed 1991; Hu & Ritchie 1993; Milman & Pizam 1995; Sönmez & Sirakaya 2002; Tasci, Asli & Gartner 2007) and consumers are more likely to consider and choose destinations which they view favourably (Woodside & Lysonski 1989). To evaluate the effectiveness of a destination branding strategy, a comparison between a destination's projected identity and its perceived image provides a starting point for analysis. Equally important, destination marketers need to make sure that the destination's projected identity represents the destination's idealised identity. A destination's idealised identity is the identity that destination marketers aim to project to target markets. A destination's projected identity is that which is created through its branding strategy, while a destination's perceived image is how that destination is actually seen by its target markets.

Today, the Internet plays a significant role in influencing consumers' perceived images and providing virtual experiences of destinations (Gretzel, Yuan & Fesenmaier 2000). With the introduction of the Internet, and more recently with the advent of Web 2.0, the transmission of information about tourism destinations has changed (Wenger 2008). In a Web 2.0 environment, in which users can

generate and share their own content about their travel experiences and specific destinations (Schegg et al. 2008), a vast amount of information has become electronically available to consumers. This marketing communications channel has become a dominant source of information for travellers in their search for tourism related information (Xiang & Gretzel 2010). Indeed, Web 2.0 has restructured the way people plan for and consume travel (Buhalis & Law 2008) and destination marketers are now aware of the influence of this new communication channel in attracting visitors to their destinations.

Destination marketers are generally responsible for developing a unique identity for a destination, providing information to visitors, and leading the overall tourism industry within the destination (Prideaux & Cooper 2003). These marketers invest considerable amounts of time and money in promoting their destination on the Internet (Inversini, Cantoni & Buhalis 2009). They create official websites to project their destination's identity with the aim of forming desired images in the minds of their target markets. Consequently, the perceived images that consumers develop are fundamental to a destination's competitiveness (Andreu, Bigné & Cooper 2001). However, due to the nature of the Web 2.0, with its wikis and travel blogs, so much information is beyond the control of destination marketers.

For the destination, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) can be beneficial when the information spread on Web 2.0 has a positive effect on image formation and consumer behaviour. However, eWOM can also have a detrimental effect when negative impressions of a destination are created. This results in a misalignment between what is being projected by destination marketers, and how consumers perceive that destination. Consumers' perceived images of a destination reflect the differences in information processing and interpretation among people, but destination marketers hope that the range of consumer images are at least aligned with the destination's projected identity (MacKay & Fesenmaier 2000). Ashworth and Goodall (1988) suggest that the disparity between projected and perceived images may impede tourism development of a destination, leading to a gap between visitors' expectations and experiences and resulting in visitor

dissatisfaction. Such circumstances would suggest a failure in the destination marketing strategy.

The importance of understanding the relationship between the supply side (a destination's projected identity) and demand side (a destination's perceived image) (Stabler 1990) in a Web 2.0 context is therefore paramount. With this information, destination marketers can review and modify their branding strategies to help them better align the destination's projected identity with its perceived image.

1.2 Research aim and questions

The aim of this study is to develop a model of destination branding within a Web 2.0 environment. This is achieved by constructing the components of destination image formation and using it as a foundation to explore a destination's projected identity and how it is perceived by target markets. The underlying concept used in developing the model is the concept of brand identity and brand image set within a tourism destination context. Brand identity is the strategist's goal for the brand (the projected identity) and brand image is the identity created in the mind of consumers (perceived image).

Bali, as a popular tourist destination, was chosen as the case study for this research. The study explores whether Bali's destination branding strategy works effectively in projecting Bali's identity to its target markets. Within this context, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How effective has Bali's destination brand (Bali's projected identity) been in communicating Bali's idealised identity to its target markets?
2. Is Bali's perceived image as a tourist destination congruent with Bali's projected identity?
3. What role does Web 2.0 play in the consumer image formation process as relates to Bali?

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1.3 Research context

1.3.1 The Web 2.0 environment

The introduction of the World Wide Web available on the Internet has accelerated the use of internet around the world (Evans & Volery 2001). The difference between User Generated Content and Web 2.0 is that User Generated Content has been available before the Web 2.0. Web 2.0 represents the ideological and technological function, while User Generated Content (UGC) is the sum of all ways in which people make use of Social Media. The term, which became popular in 2005, is usually applied to describe the various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end-users (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

The emergence of Web 2.0 provides opportunities to collaborate and share information (Pühringer & Taylor 2008) as it is a platform in which content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals. Instead content is continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Web 2.0 includes new technologies, such as media and content syndication (RSS-feeds), wikis, web forums, message boards, customer rating and evaluation systems, virtual community games, podcasting, blogs and online videos (vlogs) (Schmallegger & Carson 2008).

Tourism is considered to be one of the most popular topics on the Internet (Carson 2008) and has generated the largest number of online transactions in recent years (Mack, Blose & Pan 2008). Web 2.0 can be used as a media for communicating the intentional destination identity, at the same time it can also generate unintentional identities. This can occur through user-generated content (UGC), a media content created and produced by the general public as opposed to a paid professional, and is primarily distributed on the Internet (Daugherty, Eastin & Bright 2008). Online traveller communities have existed since the late 1990s, and their impact and their role in sharing information about destinations and their attractions have been analysed by several researchers (Schmallegger & Carson 2008). One example is TripAdvisor, the largest online travel community in the world, which has 20 million members with more than 40 million monthly visitors

and over 45 million reviews and opinions (TripAdvisor 2011). The increasing accessibility of high-speed Internet access initiated the creation of social networking sites such as MySpace in 2003 and Facebook in 2004. From these networking sites, the term 'social media' started to spread (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of UGC.

The dominant force in social media increasingly appears to be social networks. People engage in social networks to promote themselves, to share new experiences with others, and to simply have fun (Hutton & Fosdick 2011). A few examples of social network sites are Facebook, Friendster, CyWorld, MySpace and Twitter. Social networks sites allow individuals to present themselves, articulate their social network, and establish or maintain connections with others regardless of geographical distance (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe 2007). The people who use social media come from a broad range of backgrounds. The terms used in social media such as "friend", "fan", or "follower" do not necessarily describe the complex relationships and interactions on the Internet (Hutton & Fosdick 2011). Social network sites can be used for work related content (e.g. LinkedIn.com), to connect people with shared interests (e.g. My Space.com), romantic relationship initiation (the original goal of Friendster), or the college student population (the original incarnation of Facebook.com). Social network sites help people maintain relationships as people move from one offline community to another (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe 2007). This is seen as one of the great advantages of social media, both from a personal and business perspective.

Interpersonal influence and word-of-mouth (WOM) are considered to have the most affect on consumers' purchase decision-making in the tourism industry (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan 2008). The travel decision-making process may involve searching for information about products through other people's opinions. Advice and recommendations from friends and relatives who have experience with tourist destinations are often the most preferred and influential source of information for

travel decision-making (Crotts 1999). Web 2.0 has restructured the traditional WOM marketing into eWOM, with people across the globe sharing information with each other despite the distance barrier. eWOM is defined as 'all informal communications directed at consumers through Internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services, or their sellers' (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan 2008). Searching and reading other people's opinions about market offerings enables consumers to save time and make a better purchase decision (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh 2003). This reinforces the importance of interpersonal influence and opinion exchange as factors affecting consumer purchase decisions.

As already indicated, the use of Web 2.0 has become an increasingly dominant source of information for travellers in searching for tourism-related information (Xiang & Gretzel 2010); it has restructured the way people plan for and consume travel (Buhalis & Law 2008). The increasing use of eWOM for destination identities projected on travel blogs is gaining much attention from tourism scholars and practitioners (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan 2008). It is predicted that Web 2.0 will continue to play a vital role in communications, destination image formation and tourism marketing in the future (Lo et al. 2011). Travel blogs are likely to have a significant impact on WOM communication. Information sourced via blogs are particularly vital to the tourism industry because most tourism products are intangible and are difficult to assess prior to consumption (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan 2008). For travellers, blogs act as a source of information through shared opinions on recommendations for trip decisions (Pühringer & Taylor 2008). Blogs are viewed as reliable sources of information as they are free from external censorship and are thus seen as providing the 'real' story (Wenger 2008). Travelpod.com and tripadvisor.com, for example, enable the exchange of recommendations and opinions on tourism products and destinations among consumers (Schmallegger & Carson 2008). The comments and observations written on such platforms can express positive and negative experiences, while marketers' communications generally only reveal positive features (Volo 2010).

The increased popularity of online reviews and recommendations, as the digital form of WOM marketing, has been acknowledged by academics and practitioners (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh 2003; Schmallegger & Carson 2008). An example of this is the emergence of blogs. 'Blogs', originating from the word weblogs (Volo 2010), are Internet-based tools categorised under Web 2.0 (Pühringer & Taylor 2008). They are 'virtual diaries' which take the form of 'digital story telling' (Pudliner 2007; Sharda & Ponnada 2008) presented in reverse chronological order via a web page (Volo 2010; Wenger 2008). A 'Blogger' is the person who writes a blog, while the collective activities of blog and bloggers are known as 'blogosphere' (Carson 2008). Blogs can become a favourable source of information for travellers (Crotts 1999) as they combine texts, images, audios, videos, and links that provide useful information. When these features are used in travel blogs, they allow the bloggers and readers to spread and explore huge amounts of information quickly (Pudliner 2007).

1.3.2 The case study: Bali

Bali has had a sustained interest from tourists since the early 1960s. The island has been bestowed with various names by its visitors, such as 'The Morning of the World', 'The Island of Gods', and 'Island of a Thousand Temples', and Bali's image as 'a last paradise' has been presented by various authors (Picard 1996; Vickers 1989). Additionally, because of the increased contact with tourists this image has become an integral part of Bali's identity (Robinson & Meaton 2005). While Bali is one of the wealthiest provinces in Indonesia, because of its agriculture, tourism has been a major source of employment for its people (Hitchcock 2001). According to the Bali provincial government report (Bali Government Tourism Office [BGTO] 2010), in recent decades, tourism has accounted for the largest contribution to Bali's economy, where 80 percent of its economy is dependent on tourism (Cole 2012). Tourism provides jobs and growth in Bali, and is therefore strongly encouraged by the Balinese and national government. According to Bali Statistics Agency (BPS 2014), in 2013 tourism in Bali provides 481,000 direct jobs, directly employing 25 percent of the workforce

and supporting more than 50 percent and contributing 35 percent of Bali's Gross Domestic Product (BPS 2014).

Attracting tourists to Bali has, however become increasingly difficult. From the data provided by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), there will be an increase in the number of tourist activities around the world. International tourist arrivals grew 5% in 2013 with a record of 1,087 million arrivals. The demand for international tourism was strongest for destination in the Asia and the Pacific where it is estimated that there will be growth of 6% each year with 1 billion tourists around the world within 2010 and 1.8 billion in 2030 (UNWTO 2014). In 2013, Bali only captured 0.3% (3.278.598) of the 1.087 million tourists worldwide (BPS 2014). Thus, there is a large opportunity for Bali to develop its tourism industry by increasing the number of tourists entering the island. In response to this, Bali destination marketers developed and launched the island's destination brand in 2007. Two brands were introduced: *Bali Is My Life* and *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*. The launch and implementation of Bali's destination brand coincided with the increasing adoption of Web 2.0 tools and platforms. It is in this context that this study examined the efficacy of Bali's destination branding strategy, analysing the identity that was portrayed, whether that identity resonated with target markets, and what impact it had on their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali. Ultimately, this examination would lead to the development of a model of destination branding within the Web 2.0 environment for Bali.

1.4 Research approach

A case study of Bali's destination brand was developed for this study. The case study was focussed on Web 2.0 and the way in which it was used by both Bali destination marketers and by potential visitors to Bali. The research was undertaken in two phases and a qualitative approach was adopted for data collection and analysis.

Phase one involved exploring Bali's idealised identity as a tourism destination with the use of in-depth interviews with key 'actors' in the development and execution of Bali's destination brand. This was followed by an analysis of Bali's destination brand online presence to understand how Bali's idealised identity is translated in the Web 2.0 setting. This is referred to as Bali's projected identity. Phase two of the study explored how potential tourists to Bali perceive the destination. In-depth interviews were conducted with Australian residents who have not been to Bali but who have considered Bali as a potential travel destination. These interviews were designed to help understand how Web 2.0 interactions influence perceptions of Bali as a tourist destination.

Using the findings from phases one and two, Bali's projected identity was compared with its image as a tourist destination. Similarities and differences between the projected identity and perceived image of Bali as a tourism destination were identified to explore for the congruence between them with Web 2.0 as the mediating factor. This comparison assisted in determining the effectiveness of Bali's destination branding strategy, the role of Web 2.0 in communicating Bali's identity and how images of Bali are formed. It also allowed for modifications to the proposed research model.

As already indicated, the main terms used in this study are 'idealised identity', 'projected identity', and 'perceived image'. Table 1.1 below provides definitions for each term.

Table 1.1: **Idealised identity, projected identity, and perceived image**

Term	Definition
Idealised identity	The identity that destination marketers aim to project to target markets.
Projected identity	How the destination's idealised identity is projected to target markets.
Perceived image	How the destination is perceived by target markets.

1.5 Significance of study

1.5.1 Contribution to knowledge (academic contribution)

This research makes two contributions to knowledge. First, Munar (2012) noted that there is a dearth of published research on the influence of Web 2.0 platforms and tools with regard to tourism marketing. This study explores the role that Web 2.0 plays in a destination's marketing strategy and how it influences consumer perceptions of the destination. It adds to the knowledge of branding theory in the twenty-first century and incorporates Web 2.0 into a model of destination branding.

Second, despite the expansive research and significant contributions to destination image studies, the concept of image in relation to destination branding have not been comprehensively examined (Lee, Cai & O'Leary 2006). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) suggested that there is a need to develop a commonly accepted framework for destination branding theory. To date this has not yet been done. Indeed, Qu, Kim and Im (2011) recently noted that the literature on the conceptual development of destination branding is still sparse. In particular, there is a dearth of information on how tourism organisations use Web 2.0 as part of their branding activities (Hede & Kellett 2012). This study contributes to understanding the conceptualisation of branding theory in the Web 2.0 context, specifically the relationship between destination identity and destination image.

1.5.2 Statement of significance (practical contribution)

This study will provide important information for Bali's tourism strategists; a significant contribution given that the tourism industry is a major contributor to Bali's economic development (BGTO 2010). The research findings will offer Bali destination marketers valuable insights into the role of Web 2.0 in contemporary destination marketing and an opportunity to evaluate their destination branding strategy.

1.6 Thesis presentation

This thesis is comprised of the following seven chapters:

Chapter 1 has introduced the research and provided the background, context and rationale for the chosen topic. The research aim and scope have been outlined, research questions presented, and the significance of the study has been explained.

Chapter 2 reviews the extant literature and related discussions on topics that include destination branding, destination identity and destination image. Finally, the theoretical model used to guide this study is presented.

Chapter 3 describes the methods used to identify the projected identity and perceived images of Bali. It begins with an introduction of the methodological stance followed by the research design, which involves the phases of data collection.

Chapter 4 reports the findings of phase one of the data collection and discusses these in relation to the literature. It also presents the congruency between Bali's idealised identity and how it is projected via Web 2.0.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of phase two of the data collection and discuss these in relation to the literature.

Chapter 6 draws upon the findings of phase one and phase two of the research to explore the congruency between Bali's destination identity and its perceived destination image. This enables an evaluation of the effectiveness of Bali's destination brand. The results of this evaluation are then translated into the revised research model.

Chapter 7 summarises the main arguments of this research. It discusses the major findings, followed by the research contribution and implications of these findings. Finally, the limitations of this study are discussed and recommendations for further research are made.

2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the theoretical development of branding (Sections 2.2 and 2.3) and destination branding (Section 2.4). This is followed by a discussion on the destination branding construct used in this study (Section 2.5), which includes destination identity (Section 2.6) and destination image (Section 2.7), focusing on their respective definitions, types and components. Section 2.8 discusses earlier studies on the relationship between destination identity and destination image. Next, in Section 2.9, the benefits of destination branding are presented. Section 2.10 outlines the proposed model of destination branding for this study. Finally, Section 2.11 presents a summary of the chapter.

2.2 Branding

The study of branding has gained the attention of numerous scholars in the marketing field (Kapferer 1997; Keller 2008). The notion of branding was first seen as a concept relating to products. Branding helps to distinguish one product from another through the creation of different brand elements such as 'name, logo, symbol, and package design' (Keller 1998, p. 4). As a result of this, the product receives 'awareness, reputation, and prominence in the marketplace' creating value for the firm resulting in financial profit (Keller 2002). The American Marketing Association (2013) defined brand as a 'name, term, design, symbol, or

any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers'. A widely accepted definition of brand was that proposed by Aaker:

> Brand is a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark or package design) intended to identify the goods and services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods and services from those of competitors. A brand thus signals to the customers the source of the product, and protects both the customer and the producer from those of competitors (1991, p. 7).

These definitions highlight how brands are more than just the physical attributes of a product or service; they create impressions in the mind of the consumer.

Branding is important for businesses to be sustainable and to succeed (Aaker 1991; Kapferer 1997). Creating a brand is one of the most powerful marketing strategies that can assist to attain a competitive advantage (Lee, Cai & O'Leary 2006). In designing a program for brand positioning, marketers develop branding elements and also secondary associations that support brand positioning and then create marketing plans to achieve brand awareness and brand associations (Keller 2003). The process of branding involves communicating about the brand to a specific target market, to move consumer images of a brand toward the desired brand identity. This perspective indicates that successful branding strategies are also influenced by consumers' perceptions of the brand. Indeed, Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2002) suggest that consumers' perceptions are more important to a brand's ultimate success than the product's actual attributes.

Brand is a strategic resource within a business that can generate value for customers (Urde 1999). Through branding, market offerings can be differentiated and made special. Branding encourages awareness and can establish consumer perceptions of quality and favourable associations (Henderson, JC 2000). Strong and powerful brands provide value to business via a variety of benefits, such as customer loyalty, future sales stability and increased profitability (Kapferer 1997; Keller 2008).

2.3 Brand identity and brand image

Brand identity is understood as the strategist's goal for the brand. Identity is vital because it is what makes the brand and allows the target audience to connect with the brand. Further, identity represents the brand's core values and provides a consistency that is vital to assuring the target market of the products viability. Aaker defines brand identity as:

> A unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain. The associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organization members. Brand identity should help establish a relationship between the destination and the customer by generating a value proposition involving functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits (1996, p. 68).

Brand identity originates from the sender and is defined as 'a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain' (Aaker 1996, p. 68). The strongest brand identities have emotional benefits and are self-expressive, meaning that the brand is the expressions of the user's self-concept (Aaker 1991). Brand associations imply a promise from the sender to consumers (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). Brand identity symbolises the brand's meaning, aims and self-image (Kapferer 1997). Researchers argue that brand identity is best understood from the sender-side, or from the destination marketers. Brand image, on the other hand, is best understood from the consumer or receiver-side (Konecnik & Go 2008).

Image is 'a synthesis made by the public of all the various brand signals, e.g. brand name, visual symbols, products, advertisements, sponsoring, patronage, articles' (Kapferer 1997, p. 94). It is the result of the interpretation of signs, decoding messages and extracting meaning (Kapferer 2012). These signs come from brand identity and extraneous factors, referred to as 'noise' (Kapferer 1997). According to Keller (1998, p. 93), brand image is a consumer's 'perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory'. Brand

image lies on the receiver's end; it is based upon the linkages a consumer holds in their memory in relation to the brand (Gwinner & Eaton 1999). In other words, brand image is the perception of the brand that exists in a consumer's mind - which may or may not match the brand identity (Anholt 2007). Thus, brand image is the result and interpretation of identity.

Brand image includes an array of 'associations, memories, expectations and other feelings' that are related to the product or company (Anholt 2007, p. 5). In the context of brand management, 'identity precedes image' (Kapferer 1997, p. 94). This interrelationship between brand identity and brand image is that, "brand image plays a significant role in building brand identity, whereas brand image is also a reflection of brand identity" (Qu, Kim & Im 2011, p. 467).

Brand identity strives to create a positive brand image. However, as brand image is how the messages are received; not the message itself (Anholt 2007), brand identity can result in bad brand image because the conception depends on the receiver's ideas and feelings in interpreting the brand message.

2.4 Destination branding

Destinations are places with some form of actual or perceived boundary, such as the physical boundary of an island, political boundaries or even market-created boundaries (Kotler, Bowen & Makens 2010). Hu and Ritchie (1993, p. 26) define a tourism destination as 'a package of tourism facilities and services, which like any other consumer product or service, is composed of multidimensional attributes that together determine its attractiveness to a particular individual in a given choice situation'. This definition implies that destinations encompass a distinct space and are set out by a variety of products, services and features. Thus, the definition can be used to explain geographical divisions such as islands, states, regions and cities. Based on the definitions of destination above, it is proposed that an island can be considered a destination.

While branding is a concept that has been known for decades (see Aaker 1996), applying the branding concept to destinations is a relatively new phenomenon. Branding was integrated into tourism marketing and become a research topic in the late 1990s (Pike 2004; Tasci, Asli & Kozak 2006). Academics (e.g. Hall 2002; Kotler & Gertner 2002; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2002) and practitioners have generally accepted that 'destinations' can be branded. This general acceptance of destination branding has been the focus of increased attention by tourism researchers as well.

The first academic conference on destination branding was held in 1996, the first journal articles were published in the late 1990s (Pike 2002), and in 2002 the first book on the topic was published, entitled 'Destination branding: creating the unique destination proposition' (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2004). Destination branding was the focal topic at the 1998 Travel and Tourism Research Association's Annual Conference. Since then, the topic has been further explored in the *Journal of Vacation Marketing* (Editors: Morgan & Pritchard 1999) and in the *Journal of Brand Management* special issue (Hall 2002; Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott 2002). Despite the comprehensive research to date on this topic, further knowledge is needed for the conceptual development of destination branding (Balakrishnan, Nekhili & Lewis 2011; Bregoli 2013; Pereira, Correia & Schutz 2012; Qu, Kim & Im 2011).

Destination brands share some similarities and differences with product and service brands. The similarity between destination brands, product brands and service brands is they are all comprised of tangible and intangible components and slogans are used to position them (Pike 2005). However, destination branding is exposed to more challenges and complexities compared with product or service branding (Hankinson 2009; Hem & Iversen 2004; Pike 2005). According to Pike (2005), there are six reasons that underlie these complexities and challenges. First, destinations are more multidimensional than consumer goods and services. Second, the market interests of the diverse group of active stakeholders are heterogeneous. Third, the creation of a destination brand involves decision-making at various levels such as the issue of appointing personnel who are held

accountable for the brand theme. Fourth, destination marketers lack any direct control over the actual delivery of the brand promise by the local tourism community. Fifth, brand loyalty measured by tourists' repeat visitation is difficult to achieve. Last, the funding of a destination brand can be problematic in both scale and consistency because destination marketers do not have a direct financial stake in visitor expenditure.

As indicated, destination brand differs from regular product brands because it comprises a range of components (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott 2002). One of the most cited definitions of the construct was introduced by Ritchie and Ritchie, as follows:

> A name, symbol, logo, word or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of destination experience (1998, p. 17).

This definition suggests that a brand is a symbol of a place, and related to differentiation. Destination brands are seen to convey core values that link to a destination's 'sense of place' (Williams, Gill & Chura 2004). Blain, Levy and Ritchie (2005, p. 337) proposed a comprehensive destination branding definition, as follows:

> Destination branding is the set of marketing activities (1) that support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both *identifies* and *differentiates* a destination; (2) that convey the *promise* of a memorable travel *experience* that is uniquely associated with the destination; and (3) that serve to *consolidate* and *reinforce* the recollection of pleasurable *memories* of the destination experience, all with the intent purpose of creating an *image* that influences consumers' *decisions* to visit the destination in question, as opposed to an *alternative* one.

Destination branding is 'selecting a consistent element mix to identity and distinguish it through positive image building' (Cai 2002, p. 722). These definitions have their roots in the traditional product branding literature represented by, for example, Aaker (1991), Keller (1993), and Kapferer (1997).

A number of models have been developed to explore destination branding. For example, Cai (2002) identified the weaknesses of analysing a destination brand from the customer-centric perspective. In his study, Cai highlighted the differences between branding and image formation and applied his framework to a case study of cooperative branding in various rural areas. In his model, the image formation encompasses the image that destination marketing organisation's wants to project. Cai's (2002) destination branding model outlines both general branding theories and tourism image research. In his model, the destination branding research is progressed in several ways. First, it acknowledges the active nature of brand development and its intention to stimulate a consumer response. Second, it identifies the gap between projected and perceived destination images. Last, it identifies marketing programs and marketing communications as a means to operationalise the image formation agents, as identified by Gartner, to become induced image formation agents. Cai's (2002) model of destination branding focuses on analysing a destination brand from the supply-side perspective, emphasising on building the desired image through marketing programs and marketing communications.

Based on the contributions of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) in their brand equity theories, Konecnik & Gartner (2007) introduced an evaluation model of customer-based brand equity for a tourism destination. The model complements the findings of previous studies as it examined a tourist's perspective in evaluating a destination and confirms the notion that image plays an important role in brand evaluation. However, according to Konecnik and Gartner (2007), there are also other brand dimensions that should be taken into consideration in assessing the brand. In the model, the authors identified four dimensions in assessing a brand, namely brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality and brand loyalty.

While most studies on destination branding have adopted a demand-side perspective by looking at the viewpoint of the consumer-perceived-image, others have considered the supply-side. In a study on Slovenia, Konecnik and Go (2008) highlighted the importance of destination brand identity by analysing the supply-side/managerial perspective. In their study, they proposed a framework of tourism destination brand identity which consisted of a tourist analysis, competitor analysis and self-analysis. They collected data from documents, archival records, and interviews with tourism organisations to develop the destination brand identity of Slovenia. They also analysed the visual brand of Slovenia (via logos and slogans) to explore whether these icons reflected its identity through representatives opinions. They concluded that there are three key reasons why it is important to analyse the effectiveness of a destination branding strategy from the supply-side perspective. First, there is a need to understand the potential effects and reactions to the destination branding strategy on the host population. Second, there is increasing interest in the topic of identity from the supply-side perspective. Last, there is a demand to build a theoretical understanding of this perspective.

An analysis of the research literature indicates that little attention has been given to a simultaneous exploration of both the managerial perspective and the tourist perspective of destination branding. Existing frameworks that evaluate destination brands do so largely from one perspective.

2.5 Deconstructing the notion of destination brand

Despite the large body of literature that emphasises the consumer's perspective of destination branding, it is equally important to evaluate the supply-side perspective of destination branding. In many cases, these perspectives are those of the destination's tourism authorities or destination marketers. This supply-side perspective can be analysed by looking at the concept of destination identity. According to Cai (2002), destination image cannot expand to destination branding without the consideration of brand identity. Hence, while there is a conceptual

difference between brand identity and brand image, they are inter-related. Therefore, in order to conceptualise destination branding, destination identity and destination image should be explored.

2.6 Destination identity

To achieve a favourable position in consumers' minds, destination marketers need to create and manage a distinctive and appealing identity, or perception of the destination (Calantone et al. 1989; Gallarza, Saura & García 2002). From the tourists' perspective, destination identity provides information for consumers on the destination's product and service offerings, how those offerings can be aligned with visitors' needs and self-image, and how tourists should behave once in that destination (Ryan, Chris & Gu 2008). Thus, destination identity affects consumers' subjective perceptions, consequent behaviours, and destination choice (Chon 1990, 1992b; Hunt 1975; Tasci, Asli & Gartner 2007).

The concept of destination identity is a crucial factor for a destination branding study as it offers valuable contributions for understanding successful destination branding strategy. Konecnik and Go (2008) highlighted the importance of analysing destination identity by looking at the managerial perspective. In their study, they proposed a framework of tourism destination brand identity that consisted of tourist analysis, competitor analysis and self-analysis. The importance of 'self-analysis' in destination identity brand studies was also noted by Kapferer (1997, p. 71) who stated that 'before knowing how we are perceived, we must know who we are'. The author suggests that identity is the core concept of brand management. Hence, identity needs to be examined in evaluating brand management.

2.6.1 Components of destination identity

In the tourism literature, the terms destination identity, destination brand, destination brand identity, and destination projected image are sometimes used interchangeably. In this study, the term destination identity is used, and is

distinguished in two parts. Those are destination idealised identity and destination projected identity. These two terms are discussed in the following sections.

2.6.1.1 Destination idealised identity

Destinations consist of wide-ranging products combined together to provide a complete experience to the visitor. These products can be related directly to tourism, such as accommodation and tour operators, or indirectly supporting the tourism industry, such as retail operations and restaurants. In addition to this, geographical features, such as culture and physical characteristics, are important elements of the destination experience. Destinations are differentiated from competitors through branding activities using physical attributes, services, personnel, location, and images (Font 1997). Destination brands need to reflect the reality of the destination and fulfil the experiences promised to tourists (Hankinson 2004).

According to Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2004), brand identity is representative of essence. Similarly, Hankinson (2004) remarks that the brand's core represents a place's identity which is defined in three elements: a statement of the brand personality, a statement of the brand's positioning, and a brand reality. While, the terms brand personality and identity are sometimes used synonymously (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2004), this study differentiates brand personality from identity because brand personality is associated with human characteristics that are related to a destination (Aaker 1992; Ekinci & Hosany 2006). Moreover, brand identity is only one part of the destination's identity.

Identity is the core concept of brand management (Kapferer 1997). Through identity, the appropriate framework for brand consistency and continuity can be provided. In the context of tourism, destination identity is how a destination identifies itself, how it wants to be perceived and remembered in the mind of its target markets (Font 1997). Thus, to reach a tourism destination's marketing objective, it is essential that the target market defines the brand and its content in

the same way that the destination identifies itself. Ideally, the destination brand is a reflection of what the destination offers to its target market.

In the marketing discipline, the approach to the study of tourism destination brand suggests that destination identity is more important than image from a strategic point of view (Cai 2002). The purpose of branding a destination is to create a unique and appealing identity that conveys values that are intuitively or consciously associated to the sense of place of that destination (Williams, Gill & Chura 1993). A successful brand is a product, service, person or place that offers a unique value and is perceived to have the ability to fulfil the wants and needs of its consumers (Caldwell & Freire 2004).

Due to the proliferation of destination branding activities around the world, the need to create a unique and distinctive brand is essential to differ from competitors (de Mooij 1998). Thus, in order to achieve a sustainable advantage through brand identity, an effective positioning statement that differentiates one from those of its competitors is vital. The differentiated branding strategy should have a clear and unique image in the mind of the customers (Balakrishnan 2009). It needs to stand out among its competitors, represent the organisation and have the ability to resonate with its customers (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000).

It has been argued that destination identity should be built upon the perceived image of that destination held in a consumer's mind (Qu, Kim & Im 2011). This symbiotic relationship provides a strong basis for exploring how brand identity of a destination is created and whether brand associations and tourist images have been utilised in the creation of destination brand strategy. This also leads to a further question on the extent to which tourist image impacts the creation of destination brand identity.

This study takes the destination-centric view (e.g. Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2006), and interprets a destination's idealised identity as how destination marketers desire the destination to be perceived among target markets through the creation of a destination branding strategy.

2.6.1.2 Destination projected identity

A destination's projected identity includes the features and beneficial attributes, as well as the symbolic, social, and emotional values of the place which are imbued in the brand (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2006). It is the ideas and impressions about a destination which are created from various sources (Bramwell & Rawding 1996). The projected identity is the creator's desired image which includes their expectations on how people will evaluate the destination (van Gorp & Beneker 2007). Projected identities are the result of deliberate strategies or can result without plans (Andreu, Bigné & Cooper 2001). Projected identities are categorised into the intentional projected identity (i.e. promotional activity) and unintentional projected identity (i.e. information from other sources) (Ashworth 1998).

An intentional projected identity is created deliberately for marketing purposes; while unintentional projected identity are those autonomously created identities that are independent of the destination marketers' activities (Andreu, Bigné & Cooper 2000). A destination's projected identity is constructed by bodies such as tour operators, tourism offices and travel agencies (Kotler, Haider & Rein 1993). These types of identities are usually projected via attractive pictures and slogans on tourism advertising materials, brochures and television programs, targeting potential tourists and promoting the uniqueness of a destination (Baloglu & Uysal 1996; Bramwell & Rawding 1996). Consequently, the intentional projected identity of the destination may not be an objective and realistic interpretation of the destination (Albers & James 1988). Unintentional projected identity, however, is less market-oriented and attracts people's attention through the creation of imagined experiences that differ from visitors' normal lives (van Gorp & Beneker 2007). Unintentional projected identity has a high level of credibility and market penetration as it is displayed in popular media forms such as news broadcasts, movies, television programs, and travel guides (Gartner 1993).

Past studies have explored the role of intentional projected identity in destination marketing (e.g Bramwell & Rawding 1996; Choi, Lehto & Morrison 2007;

Molina & Esteban 2006). Results from these studies show the influence of intentional projected identity on visitors' image formation, destination selection, and the importance of the demand-supply image relationship in marketing (Ashworth & Goodall 1988). Studies on unintentional projected identity mainly emphasise its influence on tourist images, visitor experience and travel intentions (Kim & Richardson 2003). A common finding of these studies is that identity projected through travel guides, television programs, or movies affects tourist behaviours, influences their image formation of a destination, and increases tourist arrivals.

2.7 Destination image

Hunt (1975) and Gunn's (1972) work on destination image has been the impetus for a large body of research on the subject, with increased interest occurring in the 1990s (Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil 2007). Many authors [see, for example, Baloglu & McCleary (1999); Beerli & Martin (2004); Hunt (1975)] agree that image plays a vital role in the process of decision-making and destination choice, with a number of studies demonstrating that destination image influences the choice of holiday destination [see, for example, Gartner (1989); Stabler (1990)]. Cai (2002) suggests that destination image has an effect on the destination choice process; individuals include destinations with stronger positive images in their process of decision-making and destination holiday choices (Echtner & Ritchie 1993).

Destination image is the overall perception of a destination, it is the representation in tourist's mind of what they know and feel about it. It consists of all that the destination evokes in the individual; any idea, belief, feeling or attitude that tourists associate with the place (Alcañiz, García & Blas 2009, p. 716). Early research on tourist destinations demonstrated the importance of destination image in the success of a destination (Tasci, Asli & Gartner 2007) and tourism development (Echtner & Ritchie 2003). Destination image affects both supplier and consumer. From the destination marketers' perspective, for example, images

help design effective promotional activities because understanding how the destination is perceived provides critical information for promotional strategies.

2.7.1 Components of destination image

Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the components of destination image. Many authors suggest that image is a construct formed from a tourist's rational and emotional interpretations, which consist of two interrelated components: cognitive or perceptual; and affective or evaluative. The cognitive and affective components have been used by researchers across several disciplines [see, for example, Baloglu & Brinberg (1997); Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal (2006); Kim, Seehyung & Yoon (2003); Stern & Krakover (1993); Walmsley & Young (1998)].

In the consumer behaviour and psychology literatures, it is acknowledged that consumer behaviour is a combination of cognition and affect. Cognition is a neural-mental activity related to information processing on the decision-making process, while affect has a psychological component which is a complex construct of feelings, emotions, moods, and evaluative impression (Peterson, Hoyer & Wilson 1986). The affective component has a powerful effect on the decision-making process (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982; Lerner & Keltner 2000; Naqvi, Shiv & Bechara 2006; Peters & Slovic 2000). The blending of cognition and affect during a consumer's decision-making process applies to be universal for all types of vacationers.

The cognitive component of destination, also known as designative component, is the evaluation of a destination which may be organic or induced (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Stepchenkova & Morrison 2008). It is the awareness, knowledge, or beliefs, which may be, for example, developed from a previous visit (Pike & Ryan 2004). These attributes can include the weather, transportation, food, landscape, recreational facilities, or the attitudes of the local people.

The affective component is the individual's feeling towards the destination (Stepchenkova & Morrison 2006). It represents individual's emotional evaluations

about the strengths and weaknesses of a destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999), and the value the individuals place on destinations based on the travel motives and benefits they seek (Gartner 1993). The affective component has been explored within the context of tourism and found to be useful for individuals in differentiating destinations. Russel, Ward, and Pratt (1981) factor analysed 105 common adjectives used to describe environments resulting in the development of a theoretical affective structure with eight adjective dimensions: pleasant - unpleasant, relaxing - distressing, arousing – sleepy, and exciting - gloomy. The assumption is that these dimensions are not independent of each other but represent a circumplex model of affect. In their study, Baloglu and Brinberg (1997) demonstrated how this theoretical affective structure could be applied to explore tourists' perceptions of destinations. They found that affective images of tourism destinations vary across positive and negative dimensions.

Despite the differences between the cognitive and affective components of a destination, these components are interrelated; the formation of the affective image depends on the cognitive image and is a function of it (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Gartner 1993; Stern & Krakover 1993). In each decision-making task people perform when planning their vacation; both affective and cognitive processes are used to varying degrees depending on their valence and intensity (Walls, Okumus & Wang 2011).

In addition to the notion of an image construct, several researchers have proposed that consumers form an overall image, which is an amalgamation of cognitive and affective evaluation (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Stepchenkova & Morrison 2008; Stern & Krakover 1993). These authors found that cognitive image could directly impact the overall image and also indirectly influence it through the affective image. Indeed, Stern and Krakover (1993) suggest that cognitive and affective images together create the overall image, which is known as the holistic perception of a destination (Calantone et al. 1989; Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Hunt 1975). The overall image is the third component of image which may be similar to, or different from, the cognitive and affective image of the destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Gartner 1993). As the evaluation of the overall image

and cognitive and affective components can differ, each of these components should be evaluated to understand the positioning of a destination (Ahmed 1991).

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) demonstrated the importance of the differentiation between an individual's beliefs and attitudes. Individual's beliefs represent the information they hold about an object, while attitude is their favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the object. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) suggest that attitude is comprised of cognitive, affective, and conative components. Another group of researchers advanced the notion that image is created by adding another component to the construct: conative image (see Gartner 1993; Pike & Ryan 2004). Indeed, Gartner (1993, p. 193) proposed that destination image is 'formed by three distinctly different but hierarchically interrelated components: cognitive, affective and conative'. Conative image is the behavioural component which is the intent or action component related to decision-making (Gartner 1993). According to Howard and Sheth, intent is 'an intervening variable between attitude and brand choice behaviour, in other words, it is the likelihood of brand purchase' (Howard & Sheth 1969). This conative component is the result of an assessment during the cognitive and affective phases, as well as a transition from the cognitive and affective images to a decision about whether or not to visit a destination being evaluated (Gartner 1993). However, Tasci, Gartner and Cavusgil (2007) suggest that the interaction between cognitive and affective images constructs the overall or holistic image. This leads to the formation of the conative image, which in turn results in the process of decision-making.

Another influential image study was made by Echtner and Ritchie (1993). These authors reviewed studies on tourist destinations, brand, and store images from the psychology, geography and marketing literature. They developed a three-dimensional model of a destination's image: attribute-holistic; functional-psychological; and common-unique. Echtner and Ritchie (1993) explained that destination image should be composed of people's perceptions of individual attributes (such as climate, accommodation facilities, people's friendliness), as well as holistic impressions (mental pictures or imagery) of the destination. Distinctions should also be made between directly observable or measurable

characteristics (functional), such as price, accommodation facilities, scenery, attractions; and intangible characteristics (psychological), such as atmosphere, friendliness and attractiveness. Furthermore, destination images can range from characteristics that are based on 'common' functional and psychological components to more distinctive or unique features, events, feelings or auras.

Tapachai and Waryszak (2000) proposed a conceptual and methodological framework to assess destination image. By using a 'beneficial image' model to analyse tourist destination image, they deconstructed the beneficial image into five value dimensions, as follows:

- Functional value: consumers will choose a destination that performs best on salient physical and utilitarian attributes.
- Social value: consumers will choose a destination that has association to the group which they belong to.
- Emotional value: consumers will choose a destination that could arouse their feelings or affective state.
- Epistemic value: consumers will choose a destination that could satisfy their aspiration for something new, different or fashionable.
- Conditional value: consumers will choose a destination that gives them utility from its relation to an antecedent situation.

In a study based on a literature review of 65 tourist destination image studies (conducted between 1971 and 1999) about image taxonomies, Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia (2002), proposed a conceptual model of destination image. Their model introduced features that underline the dimensions of the image concept for destination marketing strategic management. These features explain the nature of destination image and include:

- Complex: the concept of image lacks consensus in terms of its nature, components, and how the components interact with each other.
- Multiple: the multiplicity of the components of destination image and the image formations process which involves a sequence of interrelated stages.

- Relativistic: image is subjective from one person to another, at the same time; it is comparative when image is compared among different objects or destinations.
- Dynamic: people's images change through time and space.

In summary, this section discusses destination image components used in previous studies. The literature on the image construct shows that different scholars use different components to evaluate destination image. However, the common and generally accepted components are cognitive, affective and overall image (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Beerli & Martín 2004; Hahm & Wang 2011; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Kim, Seehyung & Yoon 2003; Qu, Kim & Im 2011; Song & Hsu 2013; Walmsley & Young 1998; Wang & Hsu 2010).

2.7.2 How destination images are formed

It is important to understand the consumer image formation process as it affects planning, development, positioning, and the promotion of intelligent destination marketing activities (Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil 2007). This in turn will affect the competitiveness of a destination. Destination marketers, therefore, need to have an image formation strategy to maintain, increase, and develop their tourism industry because understanding how consumers' images are formed helps destination marketers to project the appropriate destination images to their target markets (Gartner 1993).

Commonly, target market members that have not visited a destination have limited knowledge of that destination. What knowledge they do have is obtained from information provided by the media or their social groups (Um & Crompton 1999). This information influences the perceptions of potential tourists and is vital in the destination selection process (Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Gartner 1993). Baloglu and McClearly (1999) postulate that there are two approaches in the destination image formation process: static and dynamic. The static structure involves the investigation of the relationship between image and behaviour, while

the dynamic approach examines the structure and formation of tourism destination image.

The most important stage in a tourist's destination selection process is the initial image formation stage before the trip (Gunn 1972), when image formation involves gathering information about the destination. In regards to information sources, Gunn (1972) put forward two levels of image formation: organic and induced. An organic image is formed from information sources that do not directly come from the destination. These types of sources are supposedly unbiased and include non-tourist and non-commercial sources, such as media (books, news, reports, magazines, movies), education (school), word-of-mouth, and friends' and families' opinions (Gunn 1997). An induced image is the result of the efforts of travel / business agents or tourism organisations through promotional materials directly associated with the destination (e.g. tourist brochures, advertising literature, magazine articles, guidebooks, television) (Molina, Gomez & Martin-Consuegra 2010). The main difference between organic and induced image is the level of control that a destination has on what is presented (Gartner 1993).

2.7.3 Factors influencing image formation

Previous research has placed emphasis on the importance of understanding the factors that influence image formation (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Beerli & Martin 2004; Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Gartner 1989), as this knowledge helps destinations identify potential markets and to formulate effective promotional strategies (Goodall 1988). A review of the literature highlights that the factors influencing image formation include: information sources, travel motivations and previous travel experience, and socio-demographic characteristics. Each of these factors is discussed below.

2.7.3.1 Information sources

While generally tourists do not have a lot of knowledge about destinations they have not visited, they are able to form a certain image in their minds of their ideal

destination (Mayo 1975). This image derives from various information sources gathered prior to visiting a destination. Information sources include materials which potential tourists encounter related to a travel destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999). From previous studies evaluating the influence of information sources on image formation, most researchers found that the variety and type of information sources influenced the formation of the cognitive rather than the affective image (Ji & Wall 2011). However, a study by Li, Pan, Zhang, and Smith (2009) shows that both the level and type of information received contribute to the cognitive and affective images of the respondents.

Gartner (1993) further subdivided Gunn's (1972) categories of image formation into eight image formation agents: Overt Induced I; Overt Induced II; Covert Induced I; Covert Induced II; Autonomous; Unsolicited Organic; Solicited Organic; and Organic. Gartner viewed the image formation process as a continuum of separate agents that act independently or in some combination to form an individual's destination image. The first agent, Overt Induced I, consists of traditional advertising forms, such as television, radio, brochures, billboards and print media advertising. This agent has high credibility but low market penetration. Overt Induced II is the information created by tour operators, wholesalers and organisations with interest in the travel decision process but that are not directly associated with the destination. This category also has high credibility but low market penetration.

Covert Induced I involves a recognisable spokesperson to increase the credibility of the information made by the destination. This has high market penetration, but the level of credibility may be compromised by the second-party endorsement. Covert Induced II includes articles, reports or stories related to the destination from an unbiased source with no interest in increasing the number of visitors to the destination. The credibility of this agent is higher than the abovementioned agents; however, its market penetration is moderate. Autonomous image formation agents include reports, documentaries, movies, and news articles. Both the credibility and market penetration of this agent is high, because they are independent from the destination marketers and are popular media forms.

Unsolicited Organic agent refers to unrequested information about the destination received from people who have visited the destination. Due to the limited scope of personal communication, it has low market penetration but relatively high credibility. Solicited Organic is information about a destination emanating from knowledgeable sources, normally from friends or relatives, which is provided without any intention to influence the consumer's decisions. This agent has high credibility but low market penetration for the same reason as Unsolicited Organic agent. Organic Agent consists of information gathered from previous experience of visiting the destination, which gives this agent the highest credibility among all the other formation agents. Gartner (1993) points out that the sequence of the eight agents explains the destination control and audience credibility. The degree of destination control of information decreases from induced to autonomous, while the degree of audience credibility increases. The study of Gunn (1972) and Gartner (1993) offers a theoretical base for future research in evaluating the role of information sources in image formation.

Fakeye and Crompton (1991) advanced Gunn's (1972) image process into three categories: organic, induced and complex. The complex image is defined as the individuals' actual perceptions of a destination after they have visited the place. Further, these images were linked to the informative, persuasive and reminding functions of marketing promotions targeted at prospective, first-time and repeat visitors, respectively. Depending on the information source, Phelps (1986) categorised destination image into primary and secondary image. She explains that primary image is formed based on each visitor's experience of a destination, while secondary image is referred to as the first-time visitor's image developed from external sources. This secondary image is a combination of Gunn's organic and induced images (Gartner 1993).

2.7.3.2 Travel motivations

Motivation is considered an influential factor in the destination choice and image formation models because of the 'push' role it plays in prompting actions (Stabler 1990; Um & Crompton 1990). A number of researchers argue that an individual's

motivations resulting from their travel experience has a great influence on their affective image (Baloglu & Brinberg 1997; Dann 1996; Gartner 1993). Indeed, an individual's motivations influence their affective images towards a destination although in varying degrees (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Dann 1996; San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque 2008; Um & Crompton 1990). In addition, an individual's motivations also influence cognitive and overall images. Gartner (1993) and Baloglu and McClearly (1999) suggested that motivations may influence the overall image in a direct or indirect way, as the affective image influences that image.

2.7.3.3 Previous travel experience

Many researchers suggest that previous travel experience influences image formation. According to Gunn (1997) potential tourists have organic and induced images of a destination until they visit the place, and after their travel, a modified induced image is formed. This modified image has been studied by a number of researchers (Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Milman & Pizam 1995) by evaluating the image difference between first-time and repeat visitors. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) suggest that actual visitation to a destination set the criteria for the visitor's future evaluation of destination alternatives. Previous studies by a number of researchers [see, for example, Kaplanidou (2007); Hu & Ritchie (1993)] used familiarity as an intermediate factor to analyse the role of previous travel experience in destination image formation. They claimed that previous travel experience increases an individual's familiarity with a place and thus alters image creation.

Other researchers had different findings regarding the factors that influence perceived image in terms of previous visitation (Fakeye & Crompton 1991). Hu and Ritchie (1993), in studying the measurement of destination attractiveness, found that previous visitation positively affected specific attributes of the cognitive image, or the destination's attractiveness. On the other hand, Baloglu and Brinberg (1997) found that prior visitation can lead to more affective images. Further, other researchers (Hunt 1975; Young 1999) concluded that previous

visitation has no significant influence on destination image. According to Govers, Go and Kumar (2007), image formation is no longer seen as a one-way push process, it is dynamic. Consequently, both the supply side and demand side are interactively involved in the process.

2.7.3.4 Socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, occupation, household status, place of origin, distance, income, and social class has an effect on individual's image formation to different extents (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Beerli & Martin 2004; Hunt 1975; MacKay & Fesenmaier 1997; Stern & Krakover 1993). These components have been common factors in analysing people's images towards a destination (Beerli & Martin 2004). Stern and Krakover (1993) found that education, age and gender had an effect on British travellers' perceptions of Spain. Baloglu and McClearly (1999) in their study of the perceptions of Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt by Americans who intended to travel to these countries, found that age and education levels significantly influenced both the respondents cognitive and affective images.

In their study of the perceived image of Lanzarote, Spain, created by first-time and repeat visitors, Beerli and Martin (2004) found that gender and country of origin had a significant influence on both the cognitive and affective images, while age, education and social status had a significant influence on either the cognitive or affective images. Other studies report different findings on the effect of socio-demographic characteristics on perceived images. MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997), for example, in their study on the images of Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba, found that age and marital status had no significant impact on their perceived images on the place. Smith and MacKay (2001) claimed that no age-related differences were found among participants in their memory of pictures of tourism destinations.

2.7.3.5 Image assessment

Many studies have proposed a number of scales to measure destination image, but only two works effectively determined the reliability of the scales used (see Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Echtner & Ritchie 1993). With a lack of universally accepted, valid, and reliable scale for image measurement, Beerli and Martin (2004) reviewed destination attributes in the existing measurement scales and incorporated all factors influencing the image assessments made by individuals. The authors proposed comprehensive image attributes and classified these attributes into nine categories. These categories are natural resources, general infrastructure, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, political and economic factors, natural environment, social environment, and atmosphere of the place.

The most common attributes used in destination image studies were activities, landscape, nature, cultural attractions, nightlife and entertainment, shopping facilities, availability of information, sport facilities, transportation, accommodation, gastronomy, price, climate, relaxation, accessibility, safety, social interaction, resident's receptiveness, originality, and service quality (Gallarza, Saura & García 2002). Since then, Beerli and Martin's (2004) image categorisation has been used to measure a destination's projected identity and to measure tourists' perceived images of a destination, which has verified their framework [see, for example, Dwivedi (2009); Pan, Tsai & Lee (2011); Phau, Shanka & Dhayan (2010); Phillips & Jang (2010); Song & Hsu (2013)].

2.7.4 The influence of destination image on consumer behaviour

Destination image has a crucial influence on tourists' behaviour (Ashworth & Goodall 1988; Beerli & Martin 2004) and is of academic interest (Beerli & Martin 2004; Pike 2002). Several authors have considered the influence of tourists' previously held images of a destination on their decision-making (Gartner 1989; Goodall 1988; Stabler 1990). According to Cai (2002), destination image influences a tourist's destination choice process regardless of how the image truly represents the actual condition of the place. However, the influence of destination

image on tourist behaviour is not limited to the stage of destination choice process; it affects tourist's behaviour at all stages (Ashworth & Goodall 1988). Image therefore becomes a critical aspect in analysing tourist's behaviour at all stages -before, during, and after the vacation experience (Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez 2001).

Given that image helps determine purchase decisions, destinations must compete through their image creation (Buhalis 2000). According to a number of studies, destination images assist in developing visitor expectations and later evaluations of the destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Chen & Tsai 2007; Prayag 2009). Destination image directly influences consumer intentions to visit and recommend the destination to others (Alcañiz, García & Blas 2005; Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez 2001). Thus, building a strong destination image is vital as it enables destinations to increase repeat visitation, as well as attract new tourists (Qu, Kim & Im 2011). These factors highlight the importance of the influences of destination image on consumer behaviour (Ryan, Chris & Gu 2008). Thus, destination marketers are trying to find ways to create strong and positive identities to attract tourists to visit the destination they promote.

2.8 Destination identity/Destination image: the nexus

Some studies have focused on the relationship between the projected and perceived image of destinations. Young (1999) proposed and empirically tested a model of the tourism system of place construction for his study on the relationship between the place meaning that was promoted by the tourism industry and that which was consumed by visitors concerning the Daintree and Cape Tribulation area, Far North Queensland, Australia. Two subsystems were presented in the model: the tourist industry's construction of place (which is 'place production'), and the tourists' construction of place (which is 'place consumption'). It was found that where the two place constructions overlap a 'zone of consensus' is found. The 'zone of producer surplus' indicates that the meanings promoted by the industry are not consumed by visitors, while the 'zone of consumer surplus'

illustrates those meanings that are consumed by visitors are not included in the industry's image. Young suggested that destination marketers should attempt to maximise the 'zone of consensus'.

Andreu, Bigné and Cooper (2000) evaluated the projected and perceived images of Spain in the British market and the relationship between those images. In their evaluation of Spain's projected image, promotional materials and advertising campaigns were analysed, and surveys of British tourists were conducted. The authors reported that certain differences existed between the projected and perceived images based on the qualitative evaluation of the relationship. They further claimed that destinations cannot control the information sources used for constructing visitors' images, but destination marketers must pay more attention to consumer behaviour if they are to understand the factors influencing destination choice.

Another study, this time evaluating the perceived and projected images of Rwanda as a tourist destination was conducted by Grosspietsch (2006). The study compared the image of Rwanda as perceived by visitors and as projected by international tour operators. By employing two separate but identical questionnaire surveys on tourists in Rwanda, and international tour operators who featured Rwanda, the study findings showed that there were several differences between the perceptions of visitors and tour operators on Rwanda as a tourist destination. The tour operators provided a much more negative and gloomy picture of Rwanda compared to that created by visitors who showed a great interest in Rwanda's traditional lifestyles. Grosspietsch (2006) concluded that the image differences were partly a result of the lack of knowledge of tour operators, and that effort should be taken to create accurate marketing strategies for tourism development.

Similarly, Kim and Lehto (2012) investigated the projected and perceived destination brand personality of Korea. Brand image and brand personality are correlated concepts, where brand personality is more closely related to affective image (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006). Korea's projected destination brand

personality was explored by analysing the contents of the official Korea tourism website, while the perceived destination personality was assessed by conducting a survey among American travellers. In their study, they found significant discrepancies between the two constructions.

In a study that incorporated online sources, Michaelidou et al. (2013) compared the online images construed by destination visitors and marketer-controlled images. With Taiwan as the context-destination, visitors' perceived images were explored by using online visitor generated-photography and destination marketers projected image was analysed by evaluating image representation of Taiwan from a variety of web sources. The findings highlighted the disparities between the holistic images between visitors and Taiwan destination marketers. Song and Hsu (2013) also explored the perceived and projected image of Taiwan as a travel destination. In this study, the authors focused on the perspectives of mainland China to examine the perceived image of Taiwan. The images of Taiwan among visitors and non-visitors were evaluated through interviews, and were then compared to the projected image of Taiwan in travel magazines. The authors found that the destination image of Taiwan focused more on cognitive images than on affective images, and that the destination image was framed differently by interviewees and travel magazines. This resulted in some mismatch between visitors, non-visitors, and travel magazine images of Taiwan.

2.9 Benefits of destination branding

Successful destination branding strategies affect tourists' perceptions regarding a place and can create an emotional connection with their target markets (Cai 2002). A distinctive and powerful destination brand has a positive influence on visitors' behaviour and intention towards the products and services offered by the destination (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2004). Blain, Levy and Ritchie (2005, p. 337) emphasised the importance of 'consolidating and reinforcing emotional connection between the visitor and the destination' to branding marketing activities.

Most authors in the destination branding literature have acknowledged the benefits of branding, both for the destination and for the destination marketers. The identified benefit of branding that occurs most in the literature is greater competitive advantage. An overview of the benefits identified by academics and practitioners in destination branding is provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: The advantages of branding a destination

Author	Advantages of destination branding
Parkinson, Martin and Parkinson (1994)	Promotes brand loyalty and customer retention, extends life-cycle, and increases foreign exchange expenditure.
Crockett and Wood (1999).	Acts as consumer's predisposition to purchase.
Gilmore (2002a)	As coordination of investment, increased marketing effectiveness, and marketing best practice.
Ryan (2002)	To increase local pride.
Slater (2002)	Acts as perceptions of quality and enhances support; promotes brand loyalty.
Gilmore (2002b)	Acts as a preventative injection against negative publicity.
Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott (2003)	Differentiates products, represents promise of value, incites beliefs, evokes emotions, and prompts behaviour.
Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2004)	Differentiates a destination from its competitors and reduces substitutability.

2.10 Proposed research model

This study aims to deepen the understanding of the relationship between a destination's projected identity (from the managerial or destination marketer perspective) and its perceived image (from the consumer or tourist perspective). It seeks to explore the influence of Web 2.0 in the creation of a destination's projected identity, particularly visitors' pre-visit images.

According to Aaker (1996, p. 71), there are three aspects of destination branding: brand identity, brand positioning, and brand image. The model for this study uses destination brand identity and destination brand image as the principle constructs to evaluate effective destination branding strategy in a Web 2.0 environment. In building a destination brand, it has been suggested that the creation of identity should not be limited to the visual but should also include an emotional relationship between the destination and the potential target market. How the destination views itself and how consumers perceive that destination both need to be taken into account (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott 2002). Further, destinations with a strong brand are those places that are rich with emotional meaning, have great conversational value and hold high anticipation for potential visitors. Therefore, effective branding strategies develop congruence between brand identity and brand image (Cai 2002; Nandan 2005).

In this thesis, the effectiveness of a destination brand will be explored through evaluation of the following:

- **Destination idealised identity:** how the strategists want the destination to be perceived;
- **Destination projected identity:** how the destination's identity is projected through its branding strategy on communication channels, particularly Web 2.0, which is the focus of this study; and
- **Destination image:** how the destination is perceived by its target markets.

From the review of the literature, destination image formation consists of cognitive image, affective image, overall image and conative image (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Gartner 1993; Stern & Krakover 1993; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil 2007). For the framework of this study, these components of destination image were also used to evaluate destination identity.

The model developed for this study is represented in Figure 2.1 below. The model consists of three main parts: idealised identity, projected identity, and perceived image. It serves as a framework for exploring whether the destination branding

strategy is actively communicating the destination identity to the specific target market and, in so doing, moving the destination image components toward the idealised identity and projected identity. The destination branding strategy in this case is the projection of idealised destination identity via Web 2.0. The components consist of cognitive, affective, overall and conative, which is explored among the idealised identity, projected identity and perceived image. This allows a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of a destination branding strategy. This involves the exploration and identification of similarities and differences between a destination's idealised identity and its projected identity. Followed by the identification of similarities and differences between a destination's projected identity and the way it is perceived by consumers within a Web 2.0 context. Similarities indicate that there is congruency between the destination's identity that is projected through Web 2.0 and consumers' image about the destination. On the other hand, differences indicate that there is a gap between the messages transmitted through Web 2.0 and how consumers' use this information to form their image about that destination.

The double-headed arrow that links projected identity via Web 2.0 exchanges with idealised identity and perceived image supports the idea that there is an interrelationship between destination identity and destination image. Web 2.0 can influence a destination's identity and its perceived image. Consumers build an image of a destination in their minds based on the projected identity by the destination marketers. At the same time, destination marketers establish and enhance their destination brand identity based on their knowledge about consumer's brand image of that particular destination (Qu, Kim & Im 2011). Further, with the emergence of Web 2.0, tourists have become image formation agents with a much more active and prominent role through the contributions they make by publishing comments, advice and travel experiences on blogs, forums, social networks, and through videos and pictures uploaded to these Web 2.0 sites (Camprubi, Guia & Comas 2012). As a consequence, tourists become the most effective type of image projection agent because of the credibility they have to all individuals who read or watch their contributions on Web 2.0 (Camprubi, Guia & Comas 2012).

Idealised Identity

Perceived Image

Cognitive Identity

Overall Identity

Conative Identity

Affective Identity

Projected Identity via Web 2.0 Exchanges

Cognitive Image

Overall Image

Conative Image

Affective Image
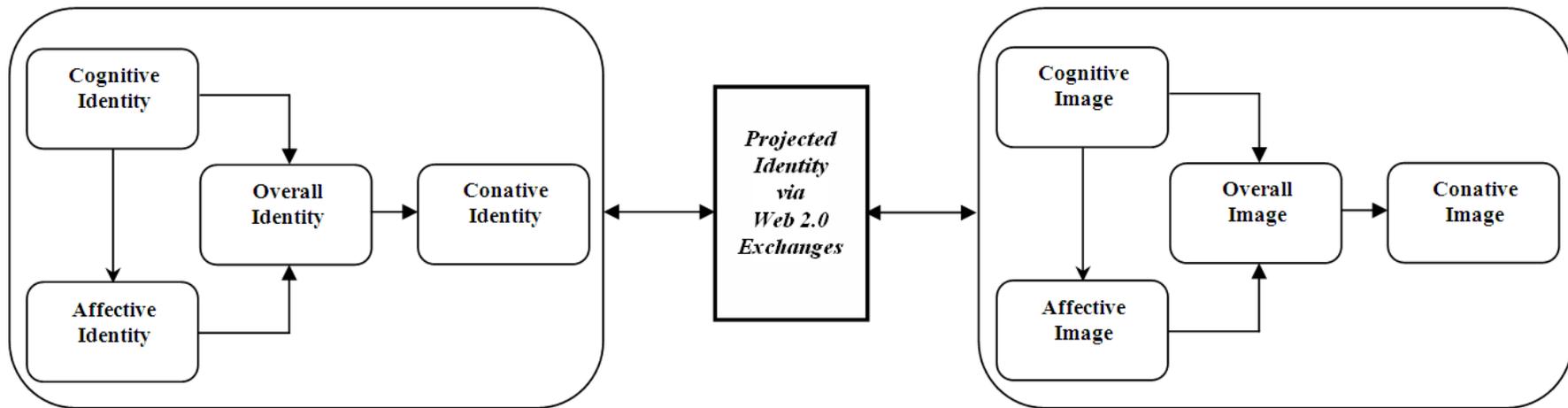
Figure 2.1: A Model of Destination Branding in the Web 2.0 Environment

2.11 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed the literature relating to the concept of destination branding, destination identity and destination image from a marketing perspective. After a review of the literature, it is apparent that there are a number of issues to identify and explore in-depth in order to have a good understanding of the destination branding concept. A research model was developed to gain further understanding of these concepts and the relationship between them. The methodology used in this study is presented in Chapter 3.

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METHODOLOGY

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3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the research methodology used in this study in order to respond to the research questions posed in Section 1.2. In this chapter, Section 3.2 presents the research philosophy adopted for this study and Section 3.3 provides an overview of the research approach. Then, the details of the research design, including the data collection process and sources of data of phase one and phase two are presented in Sections 3.5 and 3.6. An explanation of how the data was categorised, analysed and grouped in emergent themes is provided in Section 3.6. Section 3.7 then outlines the ethical considerations of the study. Finally, Section 3.8 provides a summary of the chapter.

3.2 Research philosophy

The methodological approach that a researcher chooses to employ is based on their philosophical stance among ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods and paradigms (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008). The two most common paradigms in social science research are the positivist and interpretivist approaches (Veal 2005). The positivism paradigm uses accurate and objective measures and is normally associated with quantitative data (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001). It begins with a theoretical position towards concrete empirical evidence and uses deductive testing driven by generic laws (Patton 2002). The positivist paradigm views the world as

external. Thus, in this research paradigm the researchers are expected to be independent of their research to focus on objectivity during data gathering and analysis (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001; Veal 2005).

In contrast to positivist researchers, interpretivist researchers are seen to be a part of the research process where they become fully involved with the subject being researched to discover meanings and deeper understandings of the interrelationships in a given situation (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001; Veal 2005). Instead of creating general, predictive laws on human behaviour, interpretivist research offers a rich and complex description of people's thoughts, emotions and behaviour in certain situations, relying on the people being studied to provide their own explanation of their situation or behaviour (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001). The studies using this approach are those that generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them (Veal 2005). This paradigm is often associated with an inductive approach and qualitative methods (Veal 2005).

In this study, an interpretivist epistemology was adopted as a strategy to respect the differences between people and society and the objects of natural sciences (Bryman & Bell 2011; Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008). This approach enabled the researcher to identify the way people think and feel and then interpret those meanings to reflect the objectives of this study. Therefore, this approach was considered to be most appropriate for this study because it allows the participants to speak in their own voice, providing a greater richness and depth of data. Further, this approach allows the capture of individual experience to help identify and understand the processes through which the individual comprehends the image of a destination.

3.3 Research approach

This study applied a case study research method focused on Bali's destination brand. Qualitative data collection techniques were used as part of the case study method. To obtain detailed information about Bali's destination brand and consumers' perceived images of Bali as a tourist destination, data were collected in two phases. The first phase took the form of face-to-face interviews with Bali destination marketers and an

analysis of the presence of Bali's destination brand on Web 2.0. Phase two was conducted through online interviews with Australian residents. This research design allowed the researcher to compare the findings of phases one and two to elicit the projected identity and perceived image of Bali respectively, and to make a comparison between them.

3.3.1 Qualitative research

The three types of research approaches most commonly used are: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, with each consisting of different forms of data collection and analysis (Creswell 2009; Yin 2009). Each research method involves the process of collecting and analysing empirical data in some way (Yin 2009). Quantitative methods view the world as observable and measurable and are associated with the positivist scientific paradigm (Creswell 2009; Thomas 2003). The use of this method generally relies on experimental and/or survey instruments, and often uses statistical data analysis (Creswell 2009). Quantitative methods are also known as traditional or scientific and applied research, they often include hypothesis and theory testing as core criteria (Creswell 2009).

Qualitative methods view the world as socially constructed, complex, and ever changing, and are associated with the interpretivist paradigm (Thomas 2003). This method commonly produces detailed information, and when information is analysed effectively it may increase the understanding of the individuals and situations under study (Patton 2002). Mixed methods combine both the quantitative and qualitative approaches and are applied in a single study. A mixed method approach is commonly used to investigate specific and complex social environments (Creswell 2009; Yin 2009).

In general, qualitative research is usually associated with depth and detail. Given the purpose of this study, a qualitative approach was considered to be an appropriate method as it was felt that this approach would enable the researcher to explore and capture the relationship between destination identity and image formation. In addition, a qualitative approach allows the flexibility needed to explore and

understand the complex and dynamic environment of the situation being studied. Alternatively, the openness and flexibility which qualitative methods offer enable the study to be modified as required to focus on new discoveries and relationships (Maxwell 2005). The use of open questions in the qualitative methods allows researchers to explore in-depth unique associations of a place or a brand in general (Zenker 2011).

The qualitative approach can help researchers gain images of a particular destination held in the minds of the consumers (Ryan, Chris 2000). With regards to this study, by employing a qualitative method, it is possible to better understand tourists' images of destinations (Cave, Ryan & Panakera 2003). This approach is an effective way to analyse destination image (Echtner & Ritchie 2003), because the holistic and psychological aspects associated with a destination can be revealed (Dann 1996; MacKay & Fesenmaier 2000).

Qualitative data is suited to obtaining an understanding of how people give meanings to events, processes, and structures in their lives, 'their perceptions, assumptions, prejudgements, presuppositions' and how this connects to the social world around them (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 10). Key qualitative approaches include case study, ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenological research, and action research (Marshall & Rossman 1999; Yin 2009). In this study, a case study approach was adopted.

3.3.2 Case Study

Case studies are empirical inquiries of a socio-technical and holistic-centric nature which seek to understand complex social phenomena (Yin 2009). Case studies are categorised into single and multiple cases (Leedy 2005). The use of a case study is suitable for studies that deal with multiple and unknown variable types, often used for hypothesis generation, theory development and theory testing (Creswell 2009). Depending on the research problem, the appropriate approach for the case study method falls into the category of exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Yin 2009). This study falls into the category of exploratory and uses a single case.

The purpose of using a case study method is to understand a phenomenon by studying single examples and gathering in-depth information on a single entity using various data gathering methods (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001). Commonly, case studies are used to study new areas of research or less known areas where existing experience and theories seem inadequate to serve as a guide (Eisenhardt 1989). Thus it is considered that an intensive study of a selected example is a useful approach to gain insight (Ghauri & Grnhaug 2005). In addition, case studies are used to investigate contemporary phenomenon in-depth within a real-life context (Yin 2009). As this study aims to explore the relationship between destination identity and destination image as the key point of comparison in achieving effective destination branding strategies in a Web 2.0 environment, the case study research method is considered the most appropriate approach as it helps to investigate this phenomenon.

A single case study is some phenomenon of interest which is explored in-depth to gain a rich understanding of a situation or event, whereas, multiple cases consist of multiple units of analysis which are studied to compare 'cross-case' findings (Leedy 2005; Yin 2009). A single case study was considered to be suitable for this research because this approach offers the depth and richness of analysis needed to explore the projected destination identity and perceived destination image of a destination, particularly in the dynamic environment created by the increasing use of Web 2.0 in tourism. By using a single case study approach, the findings of this study may be used to generate hypotheses framed by a theoretical lens, and promote additional valid research beyond this study (Creswell 2009; Yin 2009). The case study method is appropriate to use in situations where the relevant behaviour of participants cannot be manipulated, and it is a suitable method to examine contemporary events (Yin 2009). Therefore, this method is appropriate for this study. As this research focuses on people's perceptions of a destination, it does not require the control of the actual behavioural events of the participants in this study. The key purpose of using a case study approach is to capture people's perceived images of a specific destination through their use of Web 2.0 as a platform to search for travel information. Therefore, the experience of each individual and the context of action are critical to explore (Cepeda & Martin 2005).

A case study approach requires the researcher to collect data personally, and to take advantage of opportunities offered during the data collection. The researcher has to be skilled in managing the dynamics of the situation under study (Ghauri & Grnhaug 2005). The researcher is required to have the ability to multi-task through asking relevant questions, while still listening and interpreting the answers.

3.4 Phase one

Phase one of the study involves exploring Bali's idealised identity and Bali's projected identity on Web 2.0. In terms of the sampling method, both phase one and phase two of this study employed purposive sampling and a snowball technique. Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling (Bryman & Bell 2011). In the purposive sampling technique, the selection of respondents relies on the researcher's judgement in determining relevant respondents that are representative of the study population based on their knowledge and experience (Babbie 2010). In a snowball sampling technique, the researcher makes initial contact with a small number of relevant people and then uses these people to refer to and establish contact with the other potential respondents (Bryman & Bell 2011).

3.4.1 Exploring Bali's idealised identity

Interviews are widely used in qualitative research (Barbour 2008; Bryman & Bell 2011), and are a common source of data for case study research (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001; Yin 2009). Interviews can be divided along a continuum between highly structured and highly unstructured (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001; Collis & Hussey 2009). In this study, semi-structured in-depth interviews were used as the data collection technique for phase one and phase two in exploring Bali's idealised identity and Bali's perceived image. Semi-structured interviews that employ open-ended questions are useful for probing and uncovering information in exploratory studies with an interpretivist underpinning (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran 2001; Collis & Hussey 2009). The in-depth interview aims to gain access to, and an understanding of, activities and events which cannot be obtained from direct observation by the researcher (Minichiello, Aroni & Hays 2008).

It was considered that in-depth, semi-structured interviews were most appropriate for this study because they provide an effective way of collecting meaningful information in an effective manner and a contextual understanding of that information (Marshall & Rossman 1999). Interviews are an appropriate means of finding out how people think or feel in relation to a given topic (Darlington & Scott 2002). This technique allows the researcher to explore questions in-depth, and follow up with additional questions or clarify questions to ensure that the participants focus on the discussion issues.

In this phase of the study, in-depth interviews with Bali destination marketers were conducted to explore Bali's idealised identity and the strategy used in projecting the idealised identity on Web 2.0. As Bali's idealised identity is the identity that Bali destination marketers aim to project to its target markets through its destination branding strategy, this is best understood from the perspective of the brand creator (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Kapferer 1997). Information gathered on Bali's tourism marketing activities was used as background knowledge and assisted the development of questions for the in-depth interviews with Bali destination marketers. Face-to-face in-depth interviews with tourism officials and relevant stakeholders, who developed, launched and maintain Bali's destination brand, were undertaken in Bali. Through this data collection method, comprehensive information on Bali's idealised identity was collected. In-depth interviews were used to gain information on a specific topic through the knowledge and experience of respondents (Churchill, Brown & Suter 2008).

In the Indonesian culture, and specifically the Balinese culture, human orientation is valued and direct face-to-face communication is preferred (Hofstede 2005). Thus, the face-to-face in-depth interview was considered to be the most appropriate data collection technique for this research phase. A semi-structured interview was designed to gain information on Bali's destination branding strategy. This included questions on how Bali destination marketers wish Bali to be perceived cognitively, affectively and overall in the minds of their target markets, and what behavioural response they are hoping to see from target markets. The list of questions was prepared and sent via email to the participants prior to the interviews. This provided

time for participants to prepare and understand more on the issue that was going to be discussed. Further, this method provided the participants the opportunity to ask for clarification and additional information if needed.

Research sample. In order to obtain information on Bali's idealised identity, relevant stakeholders who were involved in the development of the tourism industry of Bali and the introduction of Bali's destination brand were selected as the research sample. Interviewing key informants allowed the collection of information from people who can provide in-depth information on certain social phenomena (Eisenhardt 1989; Marshall & Rossman 1999). In this study, interviewees included Bali destination marketers from tourism authorities and tourism associations of Bali. Between 3 and 5 tourism authorities involved in the introduction of Bali's destination brand were selected as the research sample. These include personnel from the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Bali Government Tourism Office, and Bali Tourism Board. The researcher had professional contacts that facilitated setting up these interviews. These people have first-hand knowledge and experience in the introduction to Bali's destination brand identity, thus they provided detailed information and valuable insights on the meaning of the projected destination identity of Bali. Further, interviewing key informants was much easier to conduct and less expensive compared to other forms of qualitative data collection techniques such as focus groups and observations (Marshall 1996).

3.4.2 Exploring Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity

In this study, Bali's Web 2.0 identity is the identity that Bali destination marketers project of Bali via Web 2.0. To explore Bali's idealised identity, an online search was conducted on Bali's official tourism websites. Only these were explored as these websites belong to Bali destination marketers who are responsible for creating Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity. Foreign intermediaries (tour operators and travel agents) and cybermediaries (e.g. TripAdivsor, Lonely Planet or Expedia) were not considered because Bali destination marketers would not normally be able to influence the identity projections of other intermediaries directly. This part of the data collection aimed at exploring the extent to which Bali's destination identity, as

projected on Web 2.0, correlated with what Bali destination marketers aimed to project to its target market.

Research sample. All online materials that formed the official part of Bali's branding strategy were searched and analysed to explore Bali's destination identity projected on Web 2.0. Online materials on Bali's tourism official websites, including text and photographs were used to analyse Bali's projected identity. Phase one of the research design enabled the researcher to identify the projected identity of Bali espoused by Bali's destination brand and the categories of images that could be used to inform the next phase of the research.

3.5 Phase two

Phase two involved the evaluation of consumers' perceived images of Bali from the information that was gathered through their Web 2.0 activities. The data for this phase of the study was collected using in-depth online interviews conducted via Skype, a host of services that fuses VoIP (voice over internet protocol) and P2P (peer-to-peer) computing (Rao, Angelov & Nov 2006). As the interviews were conducted online, participants were able to take part in the research in their chosen environment, enabling them to feel more relaxed and comfortable in expressing themselves (Reid & Reid 2005). Interview location can have a negative impact on the interview process but this can be overcome by conducting the interview in a private location (such as the interview subject's home) (Neuman 2011). By conducting Skype interviews, participants had the opportunity to choose the time and location for the interview according to their own preferences and convenience. Again, this was designed to improve the level of comfort of the participant and the quality of responses. Another advantage of using Skype was the minimal cost involved, as well as the ability to overcome the barrier of distance.

The purpose of the interviews was to explore how Bali is perceived as a tourism destination and how those perceived images of Bali influenced behavioural intentions with regard to visiting Bali. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on questions from previous studies on destination image (Baloglu & Brinberg

1997; Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Beerli & Martin 2004; Echtner & Ritchie 1993; Huang & Gross 2010), as well as the interview results of phase one with Bali destination marketers. The questions were sent to the participants before the interviews were conducted. This provided the participants the opportunity to ask for clarification and additional information when needed. The interview commenced with a general introduction to the research and an opportunity for the participants to introduce themselves and outline their Web 2.0 activities, particularly in relation to travel and Bali. To ascertain knowledge that particularly impacted on participants' image formation, interviewees were asked about their awareness and understanding of Bali as a tourist destination, whether within Web 2.0 or outside that medium.

Research sample. The proximity of Bali to Australia has proven advantageous for tourism in Indonesia. Australia is the primary tourist market for Bali (Hussey 1989) and over the last two decades, Australians have been the largest market group in Bali's long tourism history (BPS 2011). Hence, Australian residents were considered an appropriate population for this study. Participants were also required to be engaged in Web 2.0 activities, given the focus of the research, particularly in relation to the use of this platform as a means of gathering information about Bali as a holiday destination. People who showed interest in posted articles and blogs were targeted because they were considered to be more enthusiastic about presenting personal and subjective opinions in the blogging world (Huang, Chou & Lin 2010). As the target group were required to be users of Web 2.0 as a mean to gather travel information, it was assumed that they would also have some experience in using online communication tools such as Skype.

Potential participants were initially identified by their Web 2.0 activities. With the approval of related travel websites, an announcement regarding the study was posted on travel blog sites to invite people to participate in the study. In addition, the researcher's associates (friends/relatives/colleagues) were also approached to ask people they know, if they were interested in participating in the study. If this is the case, they were invited to contact the researcher and further information was provided about the research when they can make the decision not to or to participate in the study. Using this method, the researcher did not have direct contact with the

potential participants until such time that they have shown some interest in participation. Targeted participants who agreed to participate were then interviewed online via Skype as this enabled the researcher to access participants more easily than if only face-to-face interviews were conducted. Each interview was approximately 30-40 minutes in duration. The sample only included Australian residents that have not yet visited Bali, as this ensured that experience of visiting Bali did not confound the findings. The target participants were between 10–15 Australian residents, and this target is dependent on issues such as of saturation of information and consistency in the findings. In summary, the main characteristics of the sample for this study were: Australian residents (or those who had lived in Australia for the last 5 years) who had considered Bali as a potential destination but had not yet visited the island and who had high involvement in the Web 2.0 environment.

3.6 Analysis

3.6.1 Phase one

The data resulting from the recorded face-to-face in-depth interviews with Bali destination marketers; and the Web 2.0 promotional material, specifically Bali's official tourism websites and social media sites. In this study, the analysis of the interview data provided a general understanding of Bali's idealised identity, while the analysis of the online promotional materials played a role in explaining further the result of the interview data and how Bali's idealised identity was projected via Web 2.0. This process was carried out to gain a greater understanding of Bali's destination branding strategy and to examine whether Bali's branding online strategy corresponded to how Bali destination marketers aimed to project Bali's idealised identity.

The interviews were transcribed by the researcher, and they were then analysed thematically. Thematic analysis involves a process of encoding qualitative information (Boyatzis 1998), and identifying themes within the data (Ezzy 2002). The process of analysing the interview data followed the practical steps of thematic analysis suggested by Aronson (1994). The analysis started with listing common

patterns, then identifying all the data that relates to these patterns, these patterns are then combined into themes and sub-themes to gain a comprehensive view of all the data from these themes and develop a valid argument. The projected identity descriptors on Bali's official website and social media that were not mentioned during the interview were also explored and reported in this study to explore the Bali's projected identity presented via the Web 2.0. The search for key trends and themes was conducted amidst the interview transcripts for Bali's idealised identity, and Bali's tourism official websites and social media for Bali's projected identity. The search for the themes is also linked to the research questions. As the most often mentioned words reflect the greatest concerns of the message creators (Stemler 2001), the most frequent words and phrases used to describe the identity of Bali were considered to be the key themes. These themes were then classified using Beerli and Martin's (2004) image categorisation.

NVivo 9 was used to analyse data. NVivo is a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program. It does not analyse the data, however, it helps to manage, structure and organise the data imported into the program. This program assisted the researcher to re-examine and evaluate categories of the interview data and make connections in the interview result. NVivo allows for the analysis of various types of data (Edhlund 2008), this was very important for this study as it involves both textual and graphic information.

3.6.2 Phase two

In this study, the phase two data analysis process was similar to that of phase one. The Skype interviews were also recorded with the permission of the participants. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. As was the case in phase one, thematic analysis was used to analyse the interview data in phase two and NVivo software was used to assist with categorising the information and collating the themes. The interview transcripts were analysed to identify words and phrase descriptors used in the interviews to illustrate participants' images of Bali as a tourist destination. The process of coding started with reading each transcript a number of times to gain greater understanding of the emerging patterns. From this process, a

number of themes were identified. Again, the emerging themes were categorised using Beerli and Martin's (2004) image attributes.

The analysis of Bali's projected identity on Web 2.0 is presented with the comparison with the interview data for Bali's idealised identity.

3.7 Ethics

This study was governed by Australian university requirements for research that involves human participations. Victoria University's Ethics Committee approval was obtained in accordance with those requirements. Participants were given a consent form, indicating that their participation in this study would remain confidential at all times. They were also provided with specific information on the study, outlining its purpose and objectives. Each interview began only after the consent forms were signed by the participants. All participants were advised that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any stage. All participants were offered a copy of the recorded data and asked if they were interested in the summarised outcomes of the research.

3.8 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology used in this study. This study is categorised as an interpretative study with a pure qualitative approach to data collection. The research method was conducted across two phases. Phase one of this study focused on exploring Bali's destination identity by interviewing Bali destination marketers and examining Bali's projected identity on Web 2.0. Phase two of the study focused on exploring Bali's destination image as perceived by Australian residents through Skype interviews. All data were analysed with thematic analysis. The next chapter discusses the findings from phase one of the study.

4

BALI'S DESTINATION IDENTITY

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research methodology for this research was outlined. This chapter presents the findings of phase one and is structured as follows. First, description of the field interviews in Bali are provided in Section 4.2. Next, in Section 4.3, information is provided about the branding of Bali as a tourist destination. This is then followed by the findings of the analysis of the interview data in Section 4.4. Section 4.5 then outlines the findings of the analysis of Bali's destination brand Web 2.0 presence. In Section 4.6, the comparison between the findings from the interview data analysis and Bali's destination brand Web 2.0 presence is presented. Finally, Section 4.7 presents a summary of the chapter. The purpose of this phase of the research was to identify the attributes of Bali's destination identity that is Bali's idealised identity and Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity. These would be used to explore the congruence between Bali's destination identity and perceived image and will be discussed in Chapter 6.

The shaded sections of Figure 4.1 below represent the part of the research model discussed in this chapter.

Idealised Identity   **Perceived Image**
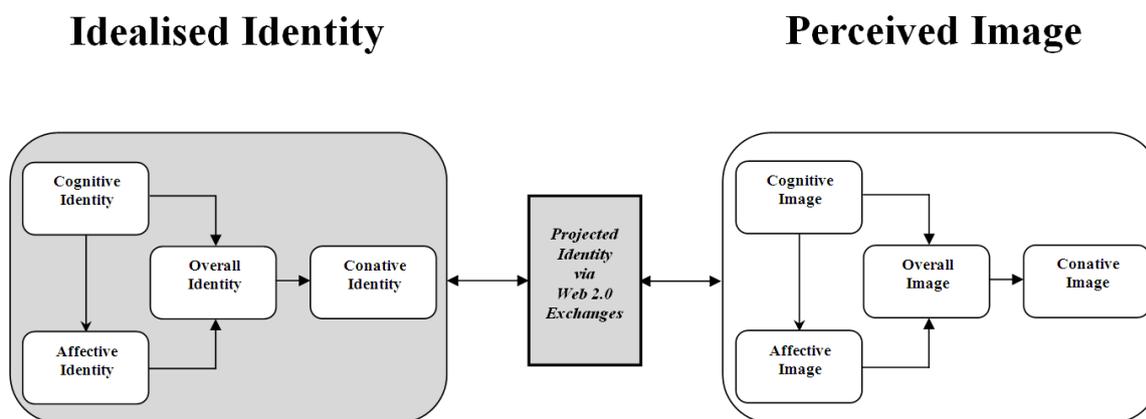
Figure 4.1: The research model

4.2 Description of the field interviews in Bali

Bali is marketed by the government: Bali Government Tourism Office and the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. It is also marketed by the Bali Tourism Board which is the embodiment of a partnership between the travel industry, the government, and the local community. In this study, these entities are referred to collectively as Bali destination marketers. The interviews with Bali destination marketers began on the 7th of October 2011 in Bali and were completed on the 9th of December 2011. Table 4.1 outlines the interviews that were conducted with Bali destination marketers. During the interviews with the Bali Government Tourism Office, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and the Bali Tourism Board, it became apparent that the Bali Hotels Association was involved in the marketing of Bali as a tourism destination. Hence, through the snowball sampling method, interviews with personnel from the Bali Hotels Association were also conducted.

Table 4.1: Interview with Bali destination marketers

	Interview participants	Length of interview	Mode of interview	Date of interview
Bali Government Tourism Office	Director	60 minutes	Email and face-to-face	7th October 2011
	Head of Tourism Marketing Division	60 minutes	Face-to-face	7th October 2011
Bali Tourism Board	Deputy Chairman Marketing and Promotion	30 minutes	Face-to-face	12th October 2011
	Previous Executive Director	60 minutes	Face-to-face	3rd December 2011
Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy	Deputy Minister	40 minutes	Face-to-face	2nd November 2011
Bali Hotels Association	Executive Director	60 minutes	Face-to-face	30th November 2011
	Marketing Director	60 minutes	Face-to-face	8th December 2011
	Public Relations	45 minutes	Face-to-face	9th December 2011

4.3 Two coherent branding strategies?

At the outset of the first phase of this research, the researcher expected to be examining one destination branding strategy for Bali and that is *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*. However, during the initial in-depth interview with representatives from the Bali Government Tourism Office, it became clear that there was another official destination branding strategy being communicated in the marketplace, *Bali Is My Life*. These two official branding strategies have been developed and adopted by significant stakeholders in Bali's tourism industry.

During the course of the interviews, it became apparent as to why two strategies had been developed. The impetus for these two branding strategies stems from the unrest that Bali experienced as a result of the Bali Bombings on the 12th of October 2002, which impacted tourism significantly. In response to this, Bali Recovery Program was formed. However, on the 1st of October 2005, Bali experienced another bombing attack. To recover the situation and economic conditions of Bali, the Bali Tourism Board formed a team to create a second Bali Recovery Program, and it was through this program that the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy was initiated in December 2005. Initially, the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy was a project of the Bali Tourism Board funded by the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and Tourism, however, it was not until three years later, in January 2007, the *Bali Is My Life* brand was formally launched by the former Minister of Culture and Tourism. Since its launch, until today, this branding strategy has been managed by Bali Hotels Association.

In addition to this, during this same period, the Bali Government Tourism Office also made an effort to recover Bali's situation and on the 16th of July 2007, the Governor of Bali officially launched *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* as its destination brand for Bali. *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* was designed to increase the competitiveness of Bali to deliver tourism services. This branding strategy still has the full support of the Bali Government Tourism Office.

The difference between the two branding strategies lies in the way they communicate and convey the brand message to target markets. The *Bali Is My Life* brand represents the life in Bali. The *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand represents the natural, cultural and spiritual aspects of Bali; harmony through stability and a balanced life (BGTO 2010). Furthermore, *Bali Is My Life* projects Bali's identity through its people, while *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* projects Bali's identity through the idea of peace. There is limited coherence in the taglines, logos, and designs of these two strategies. This is reflected in the coexistence of the two different messages being sent to target markets. Both of the messages were contentious. While there was support from the Governor of Bali for the launching of *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* branding strategy, it was met with strong criticism by many stakeholders who felt

that it did not fit with the target market, especially through the brand's tagline: *Shanti Shanti Shanti*.

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 depict the *Bali Is My Life* and *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brands.
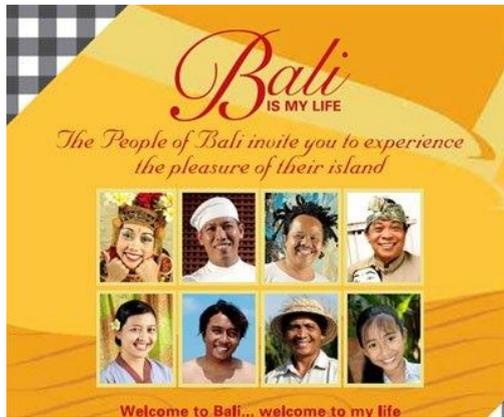
Figure 4.2: *Bali Is My Life*   Figure 4.3: *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*

The words *Shanti Shanti Shanti* is founded on Balinese ancient philosophy, and therefore thought to fit well with Bali's values and its sense of place and identity. This supports Pike's (2005, p. 259) view that the local people should feel that the destination brand represents their 'sense of place' because they interact directly with visitors. Despite its resonances with Bali's values, the design, logo, and especially the tagline received considerable criticism from tourism associations and tourism industry groups as the concept was considered difficult to sell to an international market, less 'catchy', and not attractive for tourism marketing.

As one of the representatives of the Bali Hotels Association stated, "to commercialise or to sell something using the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand is hard because it is difficult for people to comprehend. So if we use *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* internationally - we would need to explain it further". This is similar to the opinion of the representative from the Bali Tourism Board who commented that, "... using Balinese terms internationally is the same as using *Om Shanti Shanti Shanti* to the international market. That is rather difficult". The representative of the

Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy stated that, "*Bali Is My Life* is more suitable than *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*. However, the decision lay upon the Governor of Bali". Further, many stakeholders felt the process of disseminating the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand was not communicated effectively by tourism officials. A representative of the Bali Tourism Board also indicated his concern about having two branding strategies in the market place:

> There should be consistency in the form of promotion or communication strategy to the international market ... it should be well exposed for people to recognise *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*, but we think the strategy is not consistent.

While most of the research participants viewed the two strategies as not complementary, analysis of the official marketing collateral, including web content, brochures and other printed product information, did not suggest that they worked against each other. Indeed, the analysis suggests that they supported each other and *are* complementary. This finding resonates with the comment made by a representative of the Bali Tourism Board that *Bali Is My Life* takes people one step closer to Bali's goal of achieving a balanced life, while *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* is what they experience when they reach that point. He stated that:

> After everyone is able to adopt *Bali Is My Life*, automatically Bali becomes *Shanti* [peaceful]. In other words, if everyone acts in accordance to their own role and responsibility, Bali will be in peace. This is why I have no arguments and no doubt that *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* is an integral part of *Bali Is My Life*. *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* [peace] will not be achieved if we cannot understand and implement the *Bali Is My Life* concept.

Despite the differences between the two approaches, *Bali Is My Life* and *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* are similar in principal and the underlying message is the same. Consequently, this study will not analyse the brands and the branding strategies separately, however, it will analyse the brand as an overall theme for Bali's destination identity.

4.4 Bali's idealised identity

This section outlines the identity that Bali destination marketers aim to project to target markets through Bali's destination branding strategy. In this study, this is referred to as Bali's idealised identity. Bali's idealised identity was explored via a thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews with Bali destination marketers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the destination identity is deconstructed into four components: cognitive identity, affective identity, overall identity, and conative identity. To aid the analysis within these components, Beerli and Martin's (2004, p. 659) destination attributes were used. The categorisation of the destination identity attributes into cognitive and affective classification was based on a study by Song and Hsu (2013).

4.4.1 Bali's idealised cognitive identity

The cognitive component (also known as designative component) is the beliefs and knowledge about a destination (Pike & Ryan 2004; Stepchenkova & Morrison 2008). Cognitive identity refers to the identity that destination marketers project to target markets in terms of their own beliefs and knowledge of the destination. Analysis of the interviews with Bali destination marketers indicates that this component can be explored using Beerli and Martin's (2004) destination attributes namely: natural resource, natural environment, general infrastructure, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, and political and economic factors. Among these attributes, natural resources and natural environment were merged into one category as discussion around these overlapped during interviews. The next sections provide a discussion of Bali's destination identity as projected on Web 2.0 within each of these destination attributes.

4.4.1.1 Natural resources and environment

Bali's natural scenery was mentioned several times as part of Bali's idealised identity. For example, Bali's climate, flora and fauna were put forward by a representative of the Bali Hotels Association as one of Bali's strongest attractions.

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This was supported by another Bali Hotels Association representative who believed that Bali's natural resources attract people to visit the destination. For example, he said that Bali's attractions include "the landscape which can be the beach, ocean, mountains, etc ... this is what we sell to people, Bali's natural uniqueness". A representative of the Bali Government Tourism Office also pointed out that Bali's idealised identity is "a natural and authentic tourist destination. Bali will not need to change, if there are any changes needed, it will only be on certain elements such as better infrastructure."

4.4.1.2 Tourist infrastructure

Hotels and accommodation

In terms of tourist infrastructure, Bali destination marketers aimed to project an identity that Bali offers a range of hotels. One Bali Hotels Association representative stated that, "we want to show that Bali offers all types of hotels, from the more casual types to the higher end five-star hotels". Further, Bali destination marketers aim to market spa tourism in Bali, and to also provide venues for meetings and other types of events. The representative of Bali Tourism Board explained, "we also promote spa and wellness in Bali, also wedding venues for the Australian market". These attributes were used to project Bali as a sophisticated destination and were designed to attract high yield tourists and to help change the perception that Bali is a destination only for the lower end of the market.

4.4.1.3 Tourist leisure and recreation

Entertainment, sporting activities and adventure

Entertainment, sporting activities and adventure are also featured in Bali's marketing communication to the international market. This can be seen in the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy as it features Balinese surfers, rafters, dancers, and masseuses. A representative of the Bali Tourism Board stated that they aim to promote the island as a destination with a range of tourism activities, "Bali is a destination for marine

tourism and beach attractions. Bali is good for sports ... we sell golf, beach games, etc". This was supported by a representative of the Bali Hotels Association who commented on the recreational aspects of Bali as follows, "... there's a lot of adventure here [in Bali], but you don't have to be really adventurous to come here. There are a lot of things that go on here."

4.4.1.4 Culture, history and art

Customs, tradition and ways of life

The cultural aspects of Bali were viewed to be one of Bali's defining features. Almost all the representatives of Bali destination marketers interviewed in this study noted that the life of the local people and their traditions are of great interest to visitors. The Bali Government Tourism representative stated that, "Bali will continue to change over time to improve and develop its tourism industry; however, its true identity will always be preserved as it is one of Bali's main sources of tourist attraction". For example, art is a strong part of Balinese life and tradition. The representative from Bali Government Tourism Office suggested that the temples and art in Bali are symbolic of Bali's identity and that this is projected through Bali's destination brand.

The two branding strategies, *Bali Is My Life* and *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* were influenced and inspired by Balinese ancient wisdom and the philosophical concept *Tri Hita Karana,* which means "harmony between the divine, mankind and nature". This cultural concept is a tripartite concept that explains a balanced life through the spiritual relationship between humans and their creator, humans and their environment, and the relationship among humans. In interviews with representatives of the Bali Government Tourism Office and the Bali Tourism Board, *Tri Hita Karana* was noted as being the essence of the branding strategy. The representative of the Bali Government Tourism Office stated that, "the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand represents the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy of peace through balance of life which has grown together in the Balinese society". This statement was also supported by a representative of the Bali Tourism Board, who stated:

The desired effect of the *Bali Is My Life* brand is to make Bali more than just a tourist destination, but also as a source of inspiration by introducing the concept of *Tri Hita Karana* internationally, which is a part of the lifestyle in Bali.

This approach to promoting Bali's culture was also supported by the former Minister of Culture and Tourism who stated that in the tourism context, a balance must be struck between exploiting the environment and preserving the culture and environment. While there were concerns that tourism will cause the disintegration of Balinese culture, it is believed that the Balinese culture is resilient and flexible and will still be held strongly in Bali (Howe 2005). Bali destination marketers suggested that the people of Bali hold an extremely strong connection to their cultural heritage. They believe that the interaction between the Balinese and tourists is a source of tourist attraction which, according to Picard (1999), plays a vital role in the tourism industry.

Highlighting uniqueness is pertinent to destination marketing since it can provide the destination with a competitive advantage and help consumers distinguish between different destinations (Goodall 1988). According to Bali Government Tourism representatives, Bali's authentic culture cannot be replicated by other destinations and which provides a unique selling point. They also argue that the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand is unique as it combines the Hindu philosophy of a balance life with the artistic culture of Bali. Representatives from the Bali Hotels Association also believe that the Balinese culture brings a competitive advantage. As one of them stated, "it is the Balinese culture which we display, that is why we are different."

4.1.4.5 Political and economic factors

Safety and security

Safety and security have been major concerns in Bali, especially after the terrorist attacks of 2002 and 2005. A representative from the Bali Government Tourism Office stated that:

The most specific reason for the launching of this branding strategy [*Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti*] is because the two times tragedy of bombing in Bali, which have affected the credibility of Bali as a safe and secure tourism destination for the domestic and international tourists.

Further, a representative from the Bali Government Tourism stated that, "first of all, we want to convey [Bali as being] safe, secure and peaceful. Safety and security is a must". This was also conveyed by the representative of the Bali Hotels Association who pointed out that, "the very first identity which we aim to project is Bali is a safe and secure destination especially after the terrorist attacks, swine flu, bird flu issues". A representative of the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy felt that projecting Bali as a peaceful island through *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* will attract more visitors. He commented on this branding strategy and stated, "we try to attract investors to come to Bali ... How can we convince them when there are issues of terrorism? Well, *Bali is Shanti*, Bali is peaceful."

4.4.2 Bali's idealised affective identity

The affective component of a destination relates to its emotional evaluations (Baloglu & Brinberg 1997). Thus, affective identity is focused on the emotional aspects of the destination. This includes the atmosphere of destination and social environment. The classification of atmosphere of destination and social environment into affective identity is based on the previous study of Song and Hsu (2013).

4.4.2.1 Atmosphere of destination

From the interview analysis, through its destination branding strategy, Bali destination marketers attempt to evoke emotions in their target markets. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association argued that Bali's destination brand conveys Bali's atmosphere emphasising the people of Bali. He explained that the Balinese "are welcoming, they are friendly. It's an exotic destination but the people are very friendly". Destination brands are designed to create a unique and distinctive identity that conveys values which are consciously or intuitively linked to the destination's 'sense of place' (Williams, Gill & Chura 2004). In branding

destinations, this synergy is achieved through creating an emotional link between the destination and their target markets (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2004). The values and meanings as expressed in the cultural, social, natural, and economic dimensions of people's lives contribute to the uniqueness of 'place' (Gnoth 2007).

Interviewees believed that despite the launching of the newer branding strategy, the idea of Bali as 'The Last paradise' or 'The Island of a Thousand Temples', or any other similar name (as discussed in Chapter 1), would still be maintained. A representative of the Bali Tourism Board, for example, stated that, "we still hope that Bali is the fact that it has thousand temples, the fact that it is called heaven on earth, island of peace, this is the verbal effect which we expect". This statement was also supported by a representative of the Bali Hotels Association. He explained that Bali's idealised identity projected to the international market is based on:

> ... everything that you currently see [in Bali], all of the positive things that you hear [about Bali], and all the things that everyone knows or have been talking about Bali. Everything about Bali before *Bali Is My Life* was launched.

Further, from the analysis of the interview data, Bali destination marketers have attempted to integrate sophistication into the idealised identity. A representative of the Bali Tourism Board explained that, "recently due to Australia's strong currency, we also target the high-end market. We promote Bali as a luxurious destination ... a high-end destination". This statement was supported by a representative of the Bali Hotels Associations. She pointed out that Bali's projected identity, specifically to the Australian market, emphasises Bali as a "safe, secure and *classy* destination."

4.4.2.2 Social environment

Bali Is My Life represents the daily life of the Balinese society and is promoted via 14 icons of the Balinese people. The icons represent the professions of Balinese society and highlight its social environment. These professions are: a farmer, mask sculptor, dancer, Balinese princess, artist, stone carver, student, architect, surfing mentor, spa therapist, chef, shop owner, masseuse, and rafter. Through this

iconographical strategy, destination marketers promote Bali through its people (BHA 2012). A representative of the Bali Hotels Association explained:

> *Bali Is My Life* brand uses Balinese characters to promote Bali. I shouldn't say characters because they are actually real people - about 14 people - we say *Bali Is My Life* because what makes Bali attractive is its people, so we bring up the life of Balinese.

This iconography offers an opportunity for the destination branding strategy to create emotional links between the Balinese and tourists.

While *Bali Is My Life* is aimed at assisting the Balinese to embrace their individual and unique roles in the island, for tourism purposes it is designed to reassert Bali as a genuine, friendly destination of choice for international travellers. The Bali Tourism Board representative stated, "we exhibit a Balinese dancer, Balinese painter, a foreigner painter, a foreign tourist, a foreigner becoming a manager in Bali. That is how we promote [Bali] visually". A representative of the Bali Hotels Association said that the *Bali Is My Life* brand "portrays the people of Bali because it is what makes Bali unique. It is the people, their smile and their hospitality". Figure 4.4 depicts a selection of the 14 icons from the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy.

Figure 4.4: Six icons of the *Bali Is My Life* brand

4.4.3 Bali's idealised overall identity

In this study, the overall identity of a destination is the consideration of both the cognitive and affective identities, which produces a compound identity related to the positive or negative evaluation of the destination. From the analysis of the interview data, Bali's overall identity projected to target markets emphasised the cultural and natural aspects of the island, highlighting peace and harmony through the characteristics and lifestyle of the people in Bali. It was hoped that through this branding strategy the overall projected identity of Bali is positive.

4.4.4 Bali's idealised conative identity

Conative identity is destination marketers' expectation of travellers' behavioural intention towards the destination. The conative component of a destination is related to the intent or action element of individual evaluation of a destination, which is similar to behaviour (Gartner 1993). The Bali Hotels Association representative explained that the aim of Bali's branding strategy conative identity is "for people that like Bali to like Bali even more, to visit even more frequently, and for potential tourists to not be put off by the negative news about Bali". They further explained that through Bali's branding strategy the message they send to target markets is, "if you [potential tourists] want to see Bali experience it yourself, and don't easily believe in negative news". Bali destination marketers hope that through its destination branding strategy, potential tourists will have positive images of Bali and visit the island as a result. While for tourists that have already been to Bali, it is hoped that they will repeat their visit and recommend Bali through word-of-mouth.

In summarising the findings of this phase of the research, Figure 4.5 outlines the idealised identity that Bali destination marketers aim to project to target markets. As can be seen, Bali destination marketers aim to promote Bali as a "unique destination". Cognitively the branding strategy places emphasis on Balinese culture and traditions, and affectively it emphasises Bali's atmosphere. This is translated into Bali's destination branding strategy by projecting Bali's authentic identity through its people and traditions. According to Baloglu and McClearly (1999), the projected

identity of a destination should represent the true identity of that place. This concept can be seen in Bali destination marketers' efforts in formulating Bali's destination brand. The interview participants believed that by promoting the culture and people of Bali, they will attract more tourists to experience the unique Balinese way of life.

(A) COGNITIVE IDENTITY

Natural resources and environment
- Natural scenery
- Beaches, ocean, mountains
- Climate
- Variety and uniqueness of flora and fauna

Tourist infrastructure
- Budget hotels to five-star hotels

Tourist leisure and recreation
- Theme parks
- Entertainment
- Sport activities
- Marine tourism

Culture, history, and art
- Hindu religion
- Beliefs
- Customs and traditions
- Art and temples
- Way of life – Balance of life, Simple way of life

Political and economic factors
- Safety and security
- Price

(B) AFFECTIVE IDENTITY

Atmosphere of place
- Exotic
- Relaxing
- Second home
- Classy destination
- Island of thousand temples, Island of paradise, Island of peace
- Mystic place
- Getaway destination
- Pleasant place
- Attractive and interesting place

Social Environment
- Hospitality and friendliness of local residents
- Quality of life

(C) OVERALL IDENTITY

- Positive

(D) CONATIVE IDENTITY

- Potential visitors to visit Bali
- Repeat visitors to visit frequently

Figure 4.5: Bali's idealised identity

4.5 Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity

A destination's idealised identity is that which destination marketers aim to project. However, what is actually projected may differ from what was intended. This section discusses Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity.

An analysis of web materials revealed that the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* branding strategy does not have an online presence. This was acknowledged by representatives of the Bali Government Tourism Office who claimed that due to funding issues, the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* brand marketing communications strategy through Web 2.0 has yet to be improved. However, the *Bali Is My Life* online marketing communications effort, which is managed by the Bali Hotels Association, is emphasised heavily online compared to other forms of media used to promote the brand. *Bali Is My Life* has its own official website (http://www.balihotelsassociation.com/bali-is-my-life/), as well as its own Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/baliismylife). For this reason, the findings presented in this section relate only to *Bali Is My Life*.

The twenty-first century marketing environment requires a redefinition of the role of information agents in shaping destination images (Govers & Go 2005). With the advancement of technology, particularly with regard to Web 2.0, destination marketers have the opportunity to enhance their destination competitiveness. Bali's destination marketers agree on the importance of Web 2.0 as an influencing factor in the success of their branding strategy. As stated by the representative of the Bali Hotels Association, the developer of *Bali Is My Life*, "the reason we decided to do online marketing is because now it is not the era of advertisement or public relations, now it is more about social relationships."

The following sections discuss how Bali's idealised identity is projected on Web 2.0. For consistency and to allow comparative analysis, this is described using the cognitive, affective, overall, and conative components of destination identity.

4.5.1 Bali's Web 2.0 cognitive identity

4.5.1.1 Natural resources and environment

Natural resources such as beaches, waterfalls, mountains, lakes, and deserts have attracted tourists to particular destinations (Beerli & Martin 2004). The projection of Bali's natural resources and environment were mentioned as a part of the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy. In the interview, the representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that Bali's identity projected through *Bali Is My Life* is Bali's "culture, climate, flora and fauna, those are the things, the first image that we try to make sure that we are creating". This was supported by another representative from the Bali Hotels Association, who claimed that people visit Bali because of the attractions the island provides which are "its nature that consist of water, ocean, mountains, etc". These attributes are projected through photographs posted on the *Bali Is My Life* official Facebook page. As MacKay and Couldwell argue, photographs are important in successfully creating and communicating positive images of a destination (MacKay & Couldwell 2004).

Figure 4.6: Scenic photography from the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

The photographs shown on the *Bali Is My Life* web presence include pictures of Bali's natural scenery such as beaches, mountains, rice fields, forest, flora and fauna. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association commented on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page activities and advised that they "mainly post photos ... photos of scenery and most of the time the photos of the scenery posted are places that are not common for tourists."

4.5.1.2 General and tourist infrastructure

A well developed general and tourist infrastructure can enhance the attractiveness of a destination (Beerli & Martin 2004). In terms of general infrastructure, photographs and information about Bali's newly developed airport and toll road are presented on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page; while for tourists, upmarket hotels and resorts are depicted through photographs. This is in line with Bali's branding strategy to project Bali's idealised identity as a "classy destination" that also caters to the upscale market.

Figure 4.7: Photographs of Bali's airport and toll road on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

4.5.1.3 Tourist leisure and recreation

Entertainment, sports activities and adventure

Recreation activities such as golf, trekking, water sports, night life, and pubs can also add to the attractiveness of the destination (Beerli & Martin 2004). The *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page presents various tourist entertainment options, events and activities through the photographs and news posted on the website. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that, "we often portray activities such as diving sports". The *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page highlights activities such as beach sports, golf, and the international tennis tournament through numerous posted photographs and information on these activities. Events, spas, dining and shopping activities are also projected through photographs and interactive messages to attract attention from web followers.

Figure 4.8: Photographs of entertainment and activities depicted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

4.5.1.4 Culture, history and art

Customs and ways of life

An informative section on the history and culture of Bali is also provided on *Bali Is My Life* official webpage. The webpage offers information on Bali's customs and traditions through informative messages and photographs. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that, "to compete with other destinations, we can compete through Bali's culture ... this is what we sell to foreigners, Bali's culture, traditions ... this is its uniqueness". This was supported by another representative of the Bali Hotels Association who stated that, "when you think about people you have got to think more

Figure 4.9: Cultural photography posted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

cultural than anything else, whether it's music, whether it's lifestyle, and that the people of Bali want to welcome you to Bali."

4.5.1.5 Political and economic factors

Safety and security

Factors affecting the socio-political environment such as political stability, safety, crime rates and the threat of terrorist attacks influence tourist decision-making (Beerli & Martin 2004). One representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that, "the first thing we hope is that Bali is safe and secure because it is the most sensitive issue about Bali". This issue was expressed on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page through posted notes on news regarding Bali's safety and security factors. One example was a note posted on news regarding the downgrade of travel warnings to Bali by the Australian government (Life 2010). Further, notes reporting on the

implementation of "Tsunami Ready" programs as a means of minimising risk in the event of earthquakes in Bali were also posted to reassure tourists and potential tourists that Bali is a safe destination.

4.5.2 Bali's Web 2.0 affective identity

4.5.2.1 Atmosphere of destination

The atmosphere of a destination can be described as fun, relaxing, stressful, fashionable and family oriented (Dwivedi, Yadav & Patel 2009). Through the *Bali Is My Life* web presence, Bali's atmosphere was projected through pictures and photographs giving an impression of a fun, relaxing, fashionable, and family oriented place. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that, "Bali is a warm place, not just in terms of its climate, but its people. They welcome you and you want to come back". While another representative of the Bali Hotels Association explained that, for the Australian market in particular, the identity emphasises on, "Bali as a second home. Bali is where you can kick back and relax". These identities are especially prominent on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page through photographs of destination attractions and panoramas that portray pictures of a relaxing place.

Figure 4.10: Photographs of relaxation posted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

4.5.2.2 Social environment

The *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy places an emphasis on promoting Bali through the hospitality and friendliness of its people. The use of iconography is evident on the *Bali Is My Life* official website and its Facebook page. The use of visual images

as a marketing communication tool enables destination marketers to communicate a variety of messages in a more interesting, vibrant and fascinating way. Destination image represents a combination of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with places (Day, Skidmore & Koller 2002). This approach to marketing communications can enhance a destination's competitiveness. In the *Bali Is My Life* web presence, this was shown through pictures and stories relating to specific iconic images. A representative of the Bali Hotels Association mentioned that, "we use *Bali Is My Life* because Bali's main attraction is its people". He further stated that, "if all the Balinese were immigrated, there would be no indescribable essence of spirit, which is why we project the life of the people of Bali". This view was supported by another representative from the Bali Hotels Association who stated: "a lot of people like Bali because of the people". She further explained that Bali's people were the reason underlying the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy. She stated that, "we accentuate photographs of people because what make Bali unique is its people, their smiles, and their hospitality."

Figure 4.11: Photographs of Bali's friendly people posted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page

4.5.3 Bali's Web 2.0 overall Identity

Bali's Web 2.0 overall identity seems to be a function of cognitive and affective identity. Cognitively, it provides information and facts about Bali. While affectively, it portrays Bali's idealised identity through places, people and nature to evoke

emotions. Bali's overall identity in its web presence displayed positive news and information about Bali.

4.5.4 Bali's conative identity

Bali's conative identity projected via Web 2.0 targets tourists who have been to Bali by displaying photographs to reinforce positive images. While hoping to target potential or new tourists, most of the people who are actively engaged in conversations on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page are those who are currently in Bali or who have already visited Bali. Most of the postings made by Bali destination marketers on *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page were also targeted to people who had visited Bali. This concurs with the statement made by a representative of the Bali Hotels Association who said that most of the postings on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook were designed to reinforce the perception that, "Bali is beautiful".

Figure 4.11 outlines the components of Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity. Categorisation was modified by merging a number of attributes that were afforded limited or overlapping attention in the interviews.

(A)COGNITIVE IDENTITY

Natural resources and environment
- Beauty and richness of the scenery
- Beaches, ocean and mountain
- Climate and weather
  - Tropical place
- Wealth of countryside
  - Rice paddies
- Variety and uniqueness of flora and fauna

General and tourist infrastructure
- New airport and highway
- Luxurious hotels and resorts
- Restaurants

Tourist leisure and recreation
- Entertainment
- Sport activities
- Marine tourism
- Events and festivals

Culture, history, and art
- Hindu religion, temples
- Beliefs
- Customs and traditions
- Handicraft
- Gastronomy
- Way of life – Balance of life, Simple way of life

Political and economic factors
- Safety and security

(B) AFFECTIVE IDENTITY

Atmosphere of place
- Exotic
- Relaxing
- Second home for Australians
- Sophisticated destination
- Place with fame and reputation - Island of thousand temples, Island of paradise, Island of peace
- Mystic place
- Getaway destination
- Pleasant place
- Attractive and interesting place

Social Environment
- Hospitality and friendliness of local residents
- Quality of life

(C) OVERALL IDENTITY

- Positive

(D) CONATIVE IDENTITY

- Repeat visitors to visit frequently
- Potentials tourists to visit Bali

Figure 4.12: Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity

From the thematic analysis of the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook, it can be concluded that the cognitive identity projected on Web 2.0 covers a range of attributes such as natural resources and environment, general infrastructure and tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, Balinese culture, history and art, and political and economic factors. The affective identity covers the atmosphere of the destination and its social environment. These attributes were conveyed through postings of photographs, famous quotes and questions on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page which creates interactions between Bali destination marketers and travellers. Information on interesting events and the government's effort to improve the safety and security of the island were among the postings on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page. These discussions have generated responses from international tourists; most of who indicated that they were Australian.

4.6 The congruency between Bali's idealised identity and its Web 2.0 projected identity

This section seeks to explore whether Bali destination marketers' idealised identity is congruent with what they display on Web 2.0. The comparative assessment shows that there is a moderate level of congruency between Bali's idealised identity and its Web 2.0 identity. Two key things have been identified when comparing Bali's idealised identity and Bali's Web 2.0 identity.

First, although Bali destination marketers aim to project Bali's identity cognitively and affectively, Bali's idealised identity placed greater emphasis on the affective component of the destination. Bali destination marketers' intention was to project Bali as a unique destination by accentuating its culture and the Balinese people. They believed that promoting Balinese people and their culture would attract more tourists. The use of uniqueness for a destination brand is meaningful for the effectiveness of its strategy, as this gives a competitive advantage that helps consumers to differentiate the place among other competing destinations (Goodall 1988). In their tourism official websites, these images were mainly portrayed through photographs, but the image descriptors were limited. Overall, this implies that **Bali's idealised**

identity in emphasising the affective component of Bali is congruent with Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity.

Second, Bali's idealised identity was aimed to target both tourists who have been to Bali and potential tourists who have not visited Bali. Echtner and Ritchie (1993) suggest that people that are less familiar with the destination have images that are based more on the attributes, functional aspects, and common features of the destination. The *Bali Is My Life* Facebook promotes captivating images of Bali through photographs. The amount of *written* content on Bali's attributes is minimal by comparison. Further, the amount of information on safety tips or other concerns that potential tourists could use to help them prepare for their visit to Bali was very limited. This lack of information may be a barrier in attracting potential tourists to visit Bali. The *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page seems to capture more people who were currently in Bali or have been to Bali. This shows that **Bali's idealised identity to attract repeat visitors and potential tourists to visit Bali is not congruent with their Web 2.0 identity** in communicating this message.

4.7 Summary

This chapter explored Bali's idealised identity and how this identity has been projected through Web 2.0. The findings show that there is some level of congruency between Bali's idealised identity and its Web 2.0 identity. The findings of this chapter build towards a deeper understanding of Bali's destination identity. These findings will later be used to assess the effectiveness of Bali's destination branding strategy. The next chapter discusses the findings from phase two of the study.

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BALI'S DESTINATION IMAGE

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, Bali's destination identity was analysed via in-depth interviews and a review of the strategies used around Web 2.0 to brand Bali as a tourist destination. This chapter focuses on exploring participants' perceived images of Bali as a tourist destination. Section 5.2 summarises the participant and interview details. Next, in Section 5.3 findings of the analysis of the interview data are presented, followed by a concluding remark of Bali's destination image in Section 5.4. Finally, Section 5.5 provides a summary of the chapter.

The shaded section in Figure 5.1 represents the part of the research model discussed in this chapter.
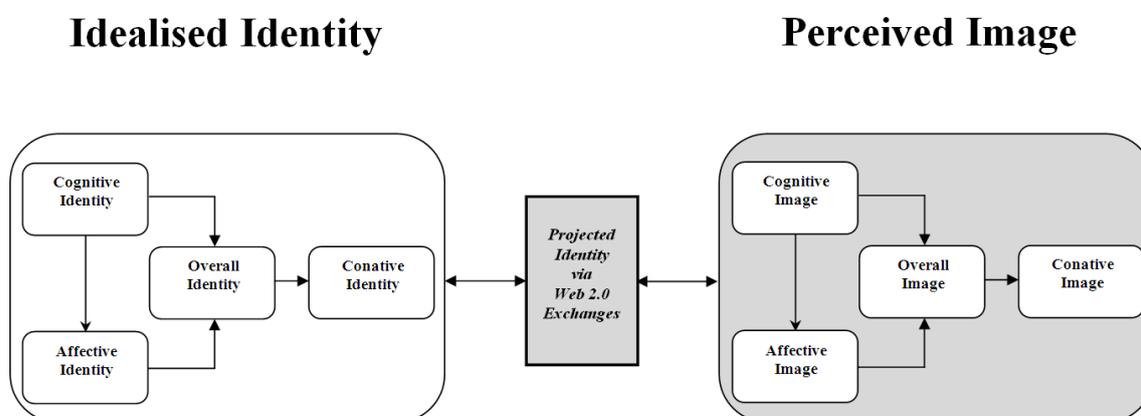
Figure 5.1: Research framework

5.2 Data collection and research participant profile

A total of 12 Australian residents were interviewed between December 2012 and February 2013. The in-depth interviews were conducted online using Skype, which enabled interview participants to be sourced from around Australia. The interviewer and the research participants were all located in Australia during the time of interview. All of the participants in this second phase of the study indicated that they were actively engaged in the online activities related to travel. These activities included writing travel blogs and travel reviews, posting and sharing photographs of their past travelling activities, and posting questions related about travel on travel forums via Web 2.0 platforms. All participants in this study indicated that they had searched for information about Bali on the Internet, specifically through travel websites, blogs and forums. As interviewed participants had not been to Bali, they had not posted any travel blogs about that destination. Each interview was approximately 30 – 40 minutes in duration (see Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Profile of interviewed participants

No	Research Participant	Gender	Age	Region	Web 2.0 activities			
					Search for travel info	Share travelling activities and photos	Post questions	Write travel reviews and blogs
1	Sabina	Female	40	Melbourne	✓	✓		
2	Elina	Female	31	Sydney	✓	✓	✓	
3	Jaclyn	Female	31	Sydney	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Divya	Female	30	Melbourne	✓	✓	✓	
5	Geena	Female	26	Adelaide	✓	✓		
6	Sheela	Female	26	Melbourne	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Samantha	Female	23	Gold Coast	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Tim	Male	67	Melbourne	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Patrick	Male	58	Canberra	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Daniel	Male	43	Melbourne	✓	✓		
11	Dimitri	Male	36	Perth	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Nadal	Male	31	Sydney	✓	✓		

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the profiles of research participants and their typical Web 2.0 activities. The names of the participants have been changed to protect their identities.

The Web 2.0 source that was mentioned most during the interview was Facebook, TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet, government official websites, and Youtube. Divya and Daniel believed that TripAdvisor and Lonely Planet are the best source to search for travel information. Similar to Geena who claimed to "tend to read a lot of people's blogs and reviews of what the place looks like" on TripAdvisor. While Dimitri, Patrick and Nadal trusted that the official government websites and official destination websites are the most reliable source of information for traveling purposes. In searching for travel related information, Dimitri would use the Web 2.0 to obtain information on "what to do, what to see, what to expect, the custom, the local people, the rules, the food" in a destination he plans to visit. All 12 participants mentioned that they have a Facebook account.

Some of the participants would post photos and information about their traveling activities, at the same time would post questions on their Facebook friends' postings on destinations they have not visited. For example, Tim claimed to be a "Facebook person" when he travels, he said that he would "take photographs and put up comments on Facebook". He further explained that he would post questions for information about a destinations, Tim stated "I can ask my friends whether they have been there and what to do in those places". Some of the participants are also engaged actively in writing travel blogs and reviews on Web 2.0. For example, Samantha creates her own travel blog where she posts reviews on places she had been to. Tim on the other hand explained that he would actively participate in travel blogs by posting questions at the same time a regular contributor of travel blogs.

5.3 Perceived images of Bali as a tourist destination

Beerli and Martin's (2004) classification of destination image, which was discussed in the literature review, was used to analyse the transcript data. As was the case for the phase one interviews, two themes, natural resources and natural environment,

were merged into natural resources and environment, due to limited or overlapping discussion about them. In addition, general infrastructure did not feature in the interviews. Hence it was not used in the categorisation process. Bali's destination image classification is presented under the categorisation of cognitive, affective, and conative images, which reflects the research framework of this study based on the previous work of Song and Hsu (2013). The final classifications were as follows: natural resources and environment, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, and political and economic factors, which were categorised into the cognitive image of Bali, while social environment and atmosphere were categorised into the affective image of Bali. Each of these image attributes is discussed in the following sections.

5.3.1 Cognitive image

Cognitive image is one of the components that form the image of a destination (Gartner 1993). It is an individual's evaluation of a destination based on the belief and knowledge about the attributes of that destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Pike & Ryan 2004; Stepchenkova & Morrison 2008). The cognitive images of Bali as a tourist destination held by participants were categorised thematically into natural resources and environment, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, and political and economic factor.

Travellers access a wide-ranging selection of sites on Web 2.0 platforms as part of their travel decision process (Cox et al. 2008). Analysis of interview data indicates that the research participants placed importance on searching for information about tourist destinations as part of their planning and selection activities prior to choosing a destination. Some of the participants said that although the dominant source they used to search for travel information was the Web 2.0, they also find information from offline sources such as trusted people, friends and relatives or from travel agents. For example, Tim said that he generally searched travel information online, but "occasionally collect travel brochures to get some ideas for things to see". Similar to Jaclyn who explained that "the majority of time I would do my travelling research on the Internet, then from time to time when I walk passed a travel agency, I

would pick up some brochures". While Divya explained "I would normally Google, alternately, if I speak to a friend and I realise that they have travelled to the destination I plan on going to, I might take their advice as well". In relation to their Web 2.0 activities, participants were generally involved in reading people's travel websites and blogs, travel forums, official travel websites, and browsing photographs of travel destinations that were available online. All of the participants who were interviewed confirmed that their pre-visit images of Bali influenced their travel decisions. One participant, Sheela, said that she would browse the Internet and "... do as much research as possible on Web 2.0, make notes from it and print out the materials". While another participant, Elina, said that, "80 percent to 90 percent" of the Web 2.0 travel information from travel websites and forums influenced her travel decisions. Samantha stated that the Internet influenced her travel decisions heavily, especially from individuals she trusted on Web 2.0, she would "look at their photos and see whether or not I'd like to look at the place and if I do, I might [be] thinking more seriously about going there". Participants conveyed the understanding that their Web 2.0 activities influenced their choice of travel destination as well as their travel plans and activities during their stay. This supports the view that Web 2.0 plays a role in consumers' destination image formation process (Lo et al. 2011).

The following sections discuss the participants' cognitive images, using the themes mentioned in above, of Bali in detail, supported with interview extracts.

5.3.1.1 Natural resources and environment

Bali's natural resources and environment emerged as a common theme across most of the interviews. Through the information that participants gathered online, Bali was described as a "tropical place", with "greenery and landscapes" and "rice paddies". Dimitri talked about the most popular image he has of Bali as "the rice field on the hill. And I imagine Bali is a very green island with a lot of vegetation". Similarly, Tim, described Bali as a "very tropical, very luxurious, and very green" destination. However, among all the images related to natural resources and environment during the interviews, "beaches" featured strongly. For example, when asked about the first

thing that comes to mind when thinking of Bali as a tourist destination, Jaclyn described Bali as a destination with "a very beautiful beach and pretty area". Similarly Elina explained that from her Web 2.0 activities, the image of Bali she held in her mind consisted of "Beach… A lot of beaches ... it's like those shacks at the beaches, near the beaches, sunset, and people holding their bottle of beer. That's the image I get a lot."

These images of Bali led into further perceptions that Bali is an unpolluted land with low traffic congestion. Divya explained that for her this image makes Bali a "very attractive" destination to visit. She saw Bali as "a place where you are not reliant on driving around as much as perhaps you would be in places like Australia and New Zealand". The interview extracts above indicate that participants have positive images of Bali's natural resources and environment. The overall nature of the landscape and the climate of the destination is the one parameter of a destination's core attractiveness which can be a determinant of visitation (Crouch & Ritchie 1999). Further, the attractiveness of a destination can be substantially enhanced with a pristine unpolluted and well-preserved natural environment (Silva, Kastenholz & Abrantes 2013). This was regarded as the image of Bali's natural resources and environment among interview participants.

5.3.1.2 Tourist infrastructure

Ease of access to Bali

Ease of access was mentioned in a favourable manner relation to the distance between Australia and Bali. All the interviewed participants were aware that Bali is a travel destination, which is close to Australia. The impression of the proximity between place of residence and the travel destination forms a positive image of that destination, and the likelihood of travel to that destination becomes higher (Lee, Scott & Kim 2008). When interviewed participants were asked about their image of Bali from their Web 2.0 activities, Tim said that Bali is "a very geographically attractive place". Similarly, Sheela thought that Bali is a popular tourist destination for Australians because of its proximity. She elaborated:

You can see a lot of people going to Bali. It seems to be a destination where people go to because it's cheap. It's close to Australia, and they get to experience something very different than what Australia has to offer. (Sheela, Female, 26)

Participants also associated this attribute with cheap airfares. This formed a favourable image of Bali in their minds. Sabina, expressed how travel distance affects her choice of travelling destination, "as I am now based in Australia, I am more concentrated into travelling around Asia". This is similar to a previous study which found that Australians take proximity into account in their decision to visit a destination (Tapachai & Waryszak 2000). In addition, the perception of cultural differences between Bali and Australia, together with its proximity provided added value towards participants perceived images of Bali as a travel destination. While Bali is perceived to be close to Australia geographically, it was also perceived to be an "exotic" destination. Sheela explained that from her online searching activities, she had the impression that, "Bali seems very exotic, very traditional and it seems very appealing". This perception is similar to that of Samantha's and Divya's, who suggest that Bali is "very tropical" which "goes with exotic". Research participants' perception of Bali as an exotic destination is accentuated due to its accessibility. These perceptions have formed a favourable image of Bali as a tourist destination. It can be concluded that the impression of proximity to a travel destination contributes to the formation of a positive image of that destination.

Hotels and accommodation in Bali

"Nice resorts and hotels in Bali" were often mentioned in the interviews. Participants explained that the photographs on the Internet showcasing beautiful hotels and resorts with stunning views of Bali have helped form images of Bali as being "very luxurious". Patrick explained that the information and photographs on hotels and accommodation presented on Web 2.0 gave him the impression that there are many "really lovely resorts" in Bali. Another participant, Tim, held similar images of Bali, which he had gained from the pictures he had seen online. He said, "Bali looks very tropical, very luxurious, very green, that's the image I get of Bali". While Jacyln

said, "I've seen some photos and discussions online that there are nice hotels that are just next to the beach where you can just go out and you would have your own private beach". This finding supports the notion that certain types of accommodation such as beachfront hotels, resort facilities and high-end facilities, are likely to create an image of an upscale destination (Sirgy & Su 2000).

5.3.1.3 Tourist leisure and recreation activities in Bali

Recreation activities such as trekking, water sports, nightlife and clubs can add to the attractiveness of a destination (Beerli & Martin 2004). Adventure and sports activities, shopping, nightlife and entertainment were some of the leisure and recreation activities associated with Bali's that were mentioned by interviewed participants.

Adventure and sports activities in Bali

Sport and recreation have increasingly become a motive for tourists to go on holiday (Markovic & Petrovic 2013). This theme emerged in the interviews with participants. Water sports, trekking, hiking and bungee jumping were among the many outdoor activities mentioned in the interviews. These types of activities were also perceived to be relatively cheaper to do in Bali compared with Australia. As Elina commented, "I'm guessing there would be water sports that I can do there that are going to be so much cheaper than Australia. So I would definitely like to do that". Another participant, Geena, also explained that in her mind Bali offers a variety of daytime activities ranging from sightseeing to adventure activities. As she stated:

> I'd probably be more interested in sightseeing and more day time activities. If there's temples to visit, markets to visit, do bike riding, swimming, snorkelling ... I'd like to do some diving and that sort of thing. (Geena, Female, 26)

Shopping in Bali

According to Butler (1991) the relationship between tourism and shopping can be categorised in two ways. First, shopping may be the main purpose of the trip.

Second, shopping is done as a secondary activity during a trip, which is most likely motivated by something other than shopping. Participants of this study fell into the second category. Although a number of participants showed an interest in shopping, Bali was not perceived specifically as a shopping destination even though participants were aware of the island's shopping opportunities. For example, Sheela stated, "I don't really associate Bali with good shopping; I sort of associate it more with the experience."

However, participants did show an interest in shopping for souvenirs and handicraft items that were considered unique to Bali, and well-known among Australians. From the photographs Elina had seen on Web 2.0 in searching for information about Bali, she mentioned the famous locally made "Bintang" beer and expressed her interest in purchasing the "Bintang shirt" to bring back to Australia. Elina commented, "from the photos I have seen, it seems like that everyone who goes to Bali has a Bintang shirt". Jacyln emphasised that her main reason for shopping in Bali was for unique products of the island, and to "buy souvenirs for friends". As she further explained, "I like to collect things that I personally like – souvenirs that will always remind me of the good times. It doesn't have to be expensive things but it must be unique". Despite the interest in shopping for collecting unique and famous items of the island, participants comments on this topic suggest that they do no perceive Bali to be a destination primarily for shopping.

Entertainment in Bali

Kuta, a tourist area in Bali that is famous among Australians, was mentioned by a number of participants in the interviews. Participants had the impression of Kuta as a place where most of the busy night clubs and bars are located. It was perceived as an area full of parties, and overcrowded by Australians, contributing to a negative impression of Kuta. These negative impressions of Kuta were, in most cases, strong. Despite this, while Kuta did not appear to be their place of main interest in Bali, participants still expressed an interest in visiting the area. This implies that a place with a strong negative image can still raise interest for potential visitors even though it may not be their first preference. For example, Sheela indicated that she was not

very interested in what Kuta offers, she said, "I wouldn't want to be in the part of let's say Kuta which I imagine where the most night clubs are ... but I might just go there to visit". While Nadal explained that his image of Bali was more about exploring the island and less for the partying activities. As he stated, "If I'm going to Bali for a party, that would be kind of a weekend getaway, for two, three or four days with your friends then come back." Nadal further explained:

> When I searched for photos of Bali online, it gave me two different extremes. First, it's extremely crowded, showcasing images with youngsters and the foreigners. You don't see many locals in that area. Second, my online search will either give me a beach or a nice landscape picture, but when there are people in it, it will be foreigners. I'm not sure whether that's their marketing strategy so that makes you feel that you are at home. (Nadal, Male, 31)

On the other hand, from Daniel's online activities, he expressed his interest in exploring the night life, and visiting the bars and clubs in Bali. As he elaborated:

> I would definitely go to night clubs. If I'm there seven days I'd probably go two days to clubs as well, having a couple of beers. But it must be safe, not too crazy. I would go to the pub and dance and drink. I would choose a different date from the schoolies or maybe not go into the area where all the night clubs are. Kuta, is it Kuta? I would go somewhere else. I'm sure there is somewhere else to go for the night clubs. (Daniel, Male, 43)

Sport facilities, shopping facilities, nightlife and entertainment are considered important to the tourist experience even in a destination that is mostly valued for its natural environment (Nadeau et al. 2008). Comments from the participants show that they value these types of activities in Bali. However, it was not their main image of Bali as a tourist destination.

5.3.1.4 Culture, history and art

Customs and the Balinese way of life

All participants interviewed in this phase of the research perceived Bali to be a destination that possesses a rich and unique culture. Balinese culture, history, temples, and Balinese dancing featured in their discussions. In discussing their images of Bali, most of the research participants expressed high interest in exploring an authentic side of Bali by engaging with the "real culture and lifestyle" of the local people. Geena said, "Bali actually has the culture and tradition of its own as opposed to Australia". While Sheela explained, "from the search I have done and reading what other people say about Bali on the Internet ... tradition, temples, culture are the things that I would associate Bali with ... it seems very attractive". The perception that Australia and Bali are culturally different has helped formed a positive image of Bali as a tourist destination. This confirms the argument that cultural differences create a favourable destination image which can influence an individual's decision to visit that destination (Tapachai & Waryszak 2000).

Temples in Bali

Temples were featured in the interview discussions and a number of participants considered temples as representative of their image of Bali and part of their rationale for wanting to visit the island. This indicates that unique structures and buildings provide a sense of tradition and heritage which tourists appreciate and they contribute to the perception of a destination's authenticity (Michaelidou et al. 2013). Sheela said, "I would associate Bali with tradition, temples, and culture. I find these sorts of things more appealing". Similarly, Tim commented, "I'd be interested in the culture of Bali. I'd be interested in particular places in Bali that have traditional associations for Balinese people, like temples". These statements suggest that Bali's culture, history, and art feature prominently in the images of Bali, forming a positive image in the mind of the participants. This implies that cultural uniqueness constitutes a key element of a destination's attractiveness and supports previous studies which

conclude that culture, history and art are significant factors in influencing tourism (see for example Dwivedi, Yadav & Patel 2009).

Gastronomy in Bali

Food experiences contribute to the cognitive component of destination image formation (Silkes, Cai & Lehto 2013). The interviews with research participants indicated that food is an important aspect for tourists in a foreign place, and can be seen as a representation of a destination's uniqueness. For all the research participants, Balinese food held appeal. This was evident in their interest in exploring Balinese food. In communicating her image of Bali, Divya, for example, described Bali as "a place where you can explore a lot on food". Similarly, Elina explained that she would "Google on whatever is known locally, checking out the local food of Bali". While Tim said that exploring different types of food is one of his interests in his travelling activities. He added, however, that he was concerned about food hygiene, as he said, "I guess that's another thing about Bali. I'm not quite sure whether it's safe to eat the food, whether it's clean". Tim's comments indicate that impressions of a destination's cleanliness can extend to image of food available within a destination. This supports the findings that tourists who place gastronomy as an important element of their holiday experience would actively search for information about local gastronomy, locally-produced food, and high-quality cuisine (Boyne, Hall & Williams 2003).

5.3.1.5 Political and economic factors

Safety and security in Bali

Safety is one of the most important concerns for tourists, especially in destinations with a history of political instability (Grosspietsch 2006). The analysis of the interview data showed that safety and security issues were important for the research participants when making decisions about travelling to Bali. As indicated earlier, the Bali bombings that occurred in 2002 and 2005 and the subsequent warnings issued by the Australian government (Henderson, J 2003), resulted in a decline in the

number of international tourists visiting the island (Putra & Hitchcock 2006). Despite this, during the time of the interviews, most of the research participants did not express concerns about Bali's safety and security. This suggests that this may now not be such a significant issue for Bali as a tourist destination. As Elina said:

> Because it [the Bali bombing] was so long ago I wouldn't be concerned, not now. But if it happened say last year then I would consider. It would affect me. In the recent past nothing major happened so I wouldn't be concerned, the only thing I would browse information on is where it is and then avoid staying in that area. That's what I would do, yeah. (Elina, Female, 31)

There was a general view among participants that after the bombings, Bali became a safer tourist destination. This perception was formed because participants believed that since the bombings, Bali tourism authorities had placed higher importance on security across the island. This perception is clearly seen in the following interview extract:

> I think Bali is safe. After the bomb blast and everything, I think people have got more cautious. Even the authorities have got more cautious. So I'd probably check the Australian Government travel affairs website and I'll keep in touch with the news. So if there was something glaringly wrong I wouldn't go there. (Geena, Female, 26)

Similarly, another participant, Dimitri, thought that, "Bali has probably now become the most secure place in the world. The checks in Bali would probably be extraordinary, from the sea, from airport, yeah, everything."

However, among some of the older participants, there remained a level of concern about Bali's safety and security because of memories of the bombings. Additionally, their image of safety became more unfavourable in light of recent reports in the Australian media on negative incidents concerning Australians in Bali. Patrick showed some concern, commenting:

… the Bali bombing, and also there have been reports over the years about alcohol killing people as well, or making them very sick. Is that solved? I think there are still safety and security issues in Bali. (Patrick, Male, 58)

When Samantha was asked about her image of Bali's safety and security, she also thought that Bali was "a bit unsafe". However, this perception was not related to the Bali bombings, as she said that she has forgotten about the bombings. Her concern was towards recent incidents occurring in Bali. She explained:

I think my perception is really influenced by a lot of the news reports that I've seen. I understand that you take everything with a grain of salt, but it feels like the frequency of death reports and things like that from Bali are quite high. So that's part of the reason why I never travel there as well. (Samantha, Female, 23)

The importance of the media as a catalyst in destination image formation has been highlighted in previous research (Gunn 1972) suggesting that the media has the potential to contribute to negative images of destinations (Michaelidou et al. 2013). The interview data of this study shows that media reports, whether they are on the Web or on other communication channels, can create negative impressions of a destination depending on the incident, time and frequency of the reports. Negative publicity on social media and online news sites affected Samantha, Tim and Patrick, and appeared to contribute to their negative images of Bali. However, for other participants, these reports did not have a substantial affect on their views of Bali as a tourist destination. For example, Dimitri said:

I heard a lot of stories from the local newspapers here about the Australians that got involved in drugs scandal. Nobody ever tricked these tourists or put something in their bag. It was their choice. (Dimitri, Male, 36)

And Sheela said:

> I don't think there are any issues really. I mean I know there has been stuff in the papers about like people dying because of drinking bad alcohol and things like that, and little muggings. But overall, I think no matter where you go, you just have to be a little bit careful anyway, and just be careful about not being ripped off. I think that kind of stuff can happen in a lot of places. I wouldn't necessarily think of Bali as a very dangerous place. And the Bali bombing happened so long ago that it's not even one of the first things that I think of when I think of Bali. (Sheela, Female, 26)

People's pre-visit images of a destination's safety and security are affected by past and current incidents in that destination. Negative media coverage can have a considerable impact on images of a destination, particularly when such coverage relates to human caused or natural disasters (Gartner & Shen 1992; Sönmez & Sirakaya 2002). The interview data here indicated that the degree to which an individual attitude towards a destination would be affected by negative reports depends on the extent to which that person considers the reports to be a significant threat to their safety. This differed for each individual. In addition, the recency of an event can affect the destination image, even if temporarily.

Price in Bali

International travellers are price-sensitive (Crouch 1992), and most Asian destinations are generally more competitive in terms of price than Australia (Dwyer, Forsyth & Rao 2000). Participants of this study also believed that Asian destinations are considerably cheaper than non-Asian destinations. Elina, for example, thought Bali to be "a very affordable place to go". This image was strengthened during times when the Australian dollar is strong. Geena viewed the cost of travel to Bali and the tourist activities once there as "relatively cheap". She further explained that due to the exchange rate, accommodation, flights, food and shopping would be cheaper in Bali when compared to other non-Asian destinations. This idea was expressed among a number of interviewed participants. For example, Divya described her image of

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Bali as follows, "I guess in a lot of ways it's an economical tourist destination. It's easier to travel to Bali by planning less [logistically] than you would for, example to US or UK or some other destination of that kind". The image of "cheap travel" appealed to participants and Bali was seen as an affordable place to visit which seemed to contribute to their positive images of Bali as a tourist destination.

5.3.2 Affective image

Another component that forms the image of a destination is its affective image (Baloglu & Brinberg 1997; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Kim, Seehyung & Yoon 2003; Stern & Krakover 1993; Walmsley & Young 1998). Affective image is an individual's emotional evaluations about the strengths and weaknesses of a destination (Baloglu & Brinberg 1997). Emotional evaluations include feelings of pleasant - unpleasant, relaxing - distressing, arousing – sleepy, and, exciting – gloomy (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Russell, Ward & Pratt 1981). The attributes of affective image that are evaluated in this study include atmosphere of place and social environment.

5.3.2.1 Atmosphere of destination

The notion of Bali being "Relaxing" was associated with its affective attributes. Interviewed participants perceived Bali to be an island destination where the main purpose was to relax. From their Web 2.0 activities, research participants described Bali's atmosphere through words such as "a very chilled place", "beautiful and quiet", "peaceful place", "laid back", and "a getaway destination". Ateljevic (2001) suggested that nature and society become increasingly separated in cultures with highly-developed technologies. Under these circumstances, an opportunity to temporarily escape to a destination that offers close interactions with nature is perceived to be highly attractive. The interview findings of this study showed that participants' perceived Bali to be a destination with opportunities for new experiences that are appreciated among Australians. From her observations, Elina, commented, "from the photos online, it looks like a paradise. You just want to go away and just get away from this big city and everything. That's the image I get of

Bali." While Geena thought that from the pictures she had seen via Web 2.0 "it [Bali] feels like sort of a getaway from the daily grind sort of place, a getaway from the usual city life sort of place."

Another major appeal of Bali is its image as a destination with a daily life and environment that contrasts with everyday life in Australia. From her observations of online pictures, Sabina had seen, she commented, "when I think about Bali I think about colours. In my imagination everyone is wearing lots of different colours ... and there are lots of flowers around you". While another participant explained:

> If I go to Bali I think the main purpose would be for relaxation to get away from whatever that is here in Sydney... It's a really nice place to relax because it's really pristine, and it seems that it's really quiet. So it seems like it's a good getaway place. Especially for honeymoon or like you just want to be alone or chill out and be in a different place basically. (Jacyln, Female, 31)

The above images of Bali highlight the important motivation of escaping the daily routine. Escapism motivations embrace the need for peace and quiet (Prebensen, Skallerud & Chen 2010).

5.3.2.2 Social environment

Contacts with local residents and other tourists can create an impression of hospitality in a destination (Nuttavuthisit 2007). In this study, the social environment was associated with interaction with Balinese people, both with each other and with foreign tourists. The interview findings showed that the large number of Australian tourists in Bali provided a strong image of Bali's social environment. Overcrowding, however, specifically with the number of Australians in Bali, appeared to unfavourably affect the image that participants have of Bali. Images of Australians constantly "partying, drinking and having fun" made Bali less attractive for some participants who were more interested in the cultural and traditional aspects of Bali. For some participants this tarnished their image of Bali and impacted on their intentions to visit the island. Sheela explained this from her perspective, "when every

other Australian goes to Bali. I think it becomes a little bit less appealing, for example Kuta is not really a place that I find very interesting". Another participant, Dimitri, also expressed this view as he mentioned, "I found it is a very popular destination among Australians, so it means it will be very loud, crowded by tourists, and noisy". Despite these negative views, overall Bali was perceived to be "a people friendly place". Many of the research participants viewed the Balinese people as friendly and hospitable towards tourists. For example, Elina described the Balinese people as "very nice". She said that, "in my mind, the picture I get is that the people [of Bali] are very friendly."

5.3.3 Overall image

Tourists' overall image of a destination is the consideration of the cognitive and affective images which produces an overall or compound image related to the positive or negative evaluation of the destination (Frías, Rodríguez & Castañeda 2008). The interview results showed that participants formed varied overall images of Bali. These images include those that were positive, negative and neutral. The section below discusses in detail how these different overall images affect behavioural intentions to visit Bali, or their conative image.

5.3.4 Conative image

The conative image of a destination is developed from the intent or action component of an individual destination evaluation; it is similar to behaviour (Gartner 1993). As expected, participants who held positive images about Bali included the destination in their future travel plans. While those who held neutral feelings showed some interest in visiting Bali, but they did not consider Bali as a priority in their future travel plans. Participants who held negative images of Bali showed no interest in visiting the destination. This supports the argument that destinations with stronger positive images will be included in an individual's destination holiday choices (Echtner & Ritchie 1993). Accordingly, destinations with neutral or weak images may not be included in an individual's destination choice (Woodside & Lysonski 1989). The following interview extracts demonstrate this phenomenon.

Samantha, who mentioned earlier that she had a negative impression of Bali's safety and security, explained that her overall image of Bali is "not really positive. I would say it's fairly neutral. It's sort of an okay kind of place. But it's not somewhere that I really plan on kind of going". While another participant with negative images of Bali explained:

> I'm a bit frightened to go to Bali. Naturally I keep thinking of the two Bali bombings, and the number of Australians who died there, so I'm not sure whether Bali is a secure destination. That worries me. Then recently in the past couple of weeks there were a couple of Australians who died in Bali from drinking contaminated cocktails, and so events like that, things like that make me think it's not really a safe place to be. I just think, well, I could get that tropical experience say in Malaysia or Singapore, without the worry of being bombed or poisoned by a drink. (Tim, Male, 67)

In contrast, research participants with a positive image of Bali, tended to have positive attitudes towards Bali and indicated that they were inclined to visit the destination. Their comments indicated that they have a strong intention to visit Bali in the future. For example, Sabina showed a strong desire to visit Bali. She said, "100% I will visit Bali. It just depends about the time - next year for sure". Similarly, Divya said, "I still would say that if I could visit it this year, on a scale of 1 to 10 perhaps 10."

While Geena explained how her online searches together with stories from people who have visited Bali have made her want to visit Bali. She stated, "I would love to visit Bali; it's from what I've seen online. And from what I've heard from people". And Elina said, "It's definitely one of the places I want to go. I would definitely go to Bali". These comments confirm the relationship between participants' image of a destination and their behavioural intentions to visit that destination. This supports previous studies that have found that overall images of destination influence future behaviour intentions (Beerli & Martin 2004; Chen & Tsai 2007; Chen, Hua & Wang 2013).

Participants' intentions to visit Bali were reflected in their conative images of Bali. Participants' conative images of Bali were illustrated through their opinions on Bali as a place "to get away from home" or "to get away from the daily grind" and "to experience something different". In the context of tourism, 'tourists immerse themselves in a dream world and idylls of tourism consumption' resulting in a romanticised appreciation of nature (Ateljevic 2001, p. 119). This image influences intentions to visit that destination. As illustrated by one research participant:

> To me Bali feels like a new horizon. Even though I know that a lot of people go and visit Bali a lot. But for me, it's sort of an untouched destination. I want to go to Bali to experience a different culture and traditions and do things that are different from what I normally do in Australia. (Geena, Female, 26)

The intention to experience a different environment away from the normal routine emerged as a dominant reason for participants to consider travelling to Bali. These intentions were predominantly to explore the authenticity of Bali, its culture and people, and to try, for example, Balinese authentic cuisine. This is similar to the findings of a previous study by Day, Skidmore and Koller (2002) which demonstrated that tourists tend to be motivated by images that involve activities conveying a sense of authenticity. Such activities can develop a tourist's feelings of closeness to that particular local culture, including their nightlife, performances and cultural activities, and engaging in friendly interactions with the locals. In this study, most participants were attracted by images of Bali that conveyed authenticity. As one participant stated when describing her conative image of Bali:

> I'm not very fond of the commercialised places. I have a feeling the actual cultures and traditions are probably a little bit lost in the commercialised place that sort of make a tourist happy, but I prefer the unconventional places rather than the places that are frequented by tourists. They overcharge, you may not be able to see experience as much, and they might sort of change it to suit the visitors. (Geena, Female, 26)

Participants often mentioned Bali's unique culture and its people when they conveyed their conative images of Bali. To discover the local culture and Bali's traditions and to have encounters with the locals motivated many of the research participants to visit Bali in the future. This reveals the importance participants placed on the opportunity to interact with the Balinese during their visit to Bali. Additionally, participating in local events brings new experiences and a sense of involvement with the local tradition (Michaelidou et al. 2013). As one participant said:

> I want to have a look at the nature, some really nice temples to go to, so you can really understand the culture. I wouldn't mind to have a look at some dancing. Maybe even try to participate and try to learn to do something even though it is really hard. I would really enjoy doing it. I'm really looking forward to doing something and have a look around. (Sabina, Female, 40)

The motivation to interact with local Balinese people stems from a desire to engage in authentic experiences. According to Wang (1999), authenticity is characterised by either nostalgia or romanticism where tourists idealise a way of life that seems to be a truer reflection of themselves, accents sentiments and feelings, and enables them to transcend their daily lives. As Daniel explained, "I definitely want to meet local people and see how they live and see some honest real Bali culture". Another participant, Patrick, expressed similar intentions, "I want to see more of the country-side and where there is still some traditional Balinese culture, and practices like farming, what Bali was like maybe 30 years ago perhaps."

Bali's authentic cuisine was also highly appreciated among participants who expressed their desire to explore Balinese culture through food. The term "Street food" was mentioned by a number of participants in expressing their intention to explore Balinese local cuisine. "Street food" was believed to represent the authentic taste of Balinese food. As put forward by Jacyln, "I prefer going to street food and eating the real Balinese taste not the one altered to tourists taste". Hotels that are well-established internationally and commercialised places were not considered to

provide authentic Balinese food. As Nadal stated, "[I am] a bit of a foodie, so I want to look at cuisines. Not in the five stars hotel, but road side food where I can try some traditional, genuine Balinese food". Geena elaborated on the importance of experiencing authentic Balinese food:

> For local cuisine, I'd rather go to a smaller place rather than to some commercialised place because they might change the taste ... make it less spicy, just to make visitors happier. I prefer to experience it the way it's meant to be experienced. (Geena, Female, 26)

Participants' comments indicate that they valued images of authenticity, offering a sense of participation and interaction with the local culture, as well as the opportunity to explore Bali's authentic cuisine. These are strong attributes of visitors' conative image of Bali. This suggests that there is a relationship between a destination's food image and people's intention to visit that destination (Karim & Chi 2010).

5.4 Bali's destination image as perceived by Australian residents

Figure 5.2 below presents the classification of Bali's destination image among research participants. The interview findings show that research participant images of Bali, mostly formed through their Web 2.0 interactions, consisted of positive and negative impressions of the island. Among the positive impressions of Bali, the most prominent image of Bali among the research participants was the image of Bali as a getaway destination for relaxation purposes. Beaches and a relaxing atmosphere were particularly highlighted by all participants. Bali's natural beauty and scenery, beaches, culture and art, economical purchases, friendly residents, and a relaxing atmosphere were perceived positively. Overall, the analysis of the interviews suggests that Bali's nature, culture and price are the most attractive attributes of the island, while the proximity between Australia and Bali appeared to offer Bali an advantage in attracting Australian tourists.

(A) COGNITIVE IMAGE

Natural resources and environment
- Beaches
    - Beautiful beach
- Climate and weather
    - Tropical place
- Wealth of countryside
    - Rice paddies
- Beauty and richness of the scenery
    - Greenery landscape
- Low traffic congestion

Tourist infrastructure
- Ease of access to destination
- Hotel and accommodation

Tourist leisure and recreation
- Adventure and sports activities
- Shopping
- Entertainment

Culture, history, and art
- Customs and ways of life
- Temple

Culinary culture
- Authentic food

Political and economic factors
- Safety and security
- Price

(B) AFFECTIVE IMAGE

Atmosphere of place
- Relaxing
- Chilled place
- Beautiful and quiet
- Peaceful
- Getaway destination
- Familiar to Australians
- Paradise place
- Luxurious
- Colourful
- Exciting and pleasing

Social Environment
- Hospitality and friendliness of the local residents
- Overcrowding with Australian visitors

(C) OVERALL IMAGE

- Positive
- Negative
- Ambivalent

(D) CONATIVE IMAGE

- To experience different environment and atmosphere
- To explore Bali's authentic cuisine
- To explore Bali's culture, tradition, art, and history

Figure 5.2: Bali's destination image

At a theoretical level, participant responses revealed the existence of cognitive, affective, and conative images of Bali through the information provided on Web 2.0 in evaluating their pre-visit image of the destination. This confirms that destination image is comprised of both cognitive and affective image (Baloglu & Brinberg 1997; Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Kim, Seehyung & Yoon 2003; Stern & Krakover 1993; Walmsley & Young 1998), and conative image (Camprubí, Guia & Comas 2012; Gartner 1993; Matos, Mendes & Valle 2012; Pike & Ryan 2004; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil 2007). Furthermore, responses about the same attribute can be perceived differently by each interviewed participant. A clear example was in relation to the image of Bali's safety and security which generated both positive and negative images. This duality in perceptions for destination attributes is not uncommon and relates to the differences in people's motivations for exploring specific destinations (Ryan, Chris & Cave 2005). The affective images identified in this chapter support the work of Russell (1980) that affective image dimensions such as "relax" are part of people's construction of emotion and these images conform to the affective grid scale (relaxing-distressing and exciting-gloomy) for the measurement of affective images (Russell, Ward & Pratt 1981).

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the image of Bali held by 12 Australian residents. These images formed largely from their Web 2.0 activities. The findings show that the use of Web 2.0 to gather information on an unvisited destination can have an influence on a consumer's perceived image of that destination. This implies that Web 2.0 plays a major role in influencing travellers' pre-visit images of Bali, which in turn influences behavioural intentions to visiting the island. Further, interview results have shown that Web 2.0 as an image-forming agent does not operate in a vacuum. In other words, Web 2.0 does not work alone in forming consumer images of a destination. Despite the increasing popularity of Web 2.0 as an information source in the tourism industry, other traditional sources, such as TV, newspapers, and word-of-mouth, still help consumers develop images of a tourist destination. The findings of this phase of the research will now be used to evaluate the congruence between

Bali's destination identity and participants' perceived destination image of Bali. This will help evaluate the effectiveness of Bali's destination branding strategy.

6

THE CONGRUENCY BETWEEN BALI'S DESTINATION IDENTITY AND DESTINATION IMAGE

6.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters, Bali's destination identity and Bali's destination image were discussed. In this chapter, similarities and differences between Bali's destination identity and Bali's destination image is identified. Section 6.2 presents a comparison of Bali's destination identity and Bali's destination image. The purpose of this comparison is to explore for the congruence between Bali's identity projected on Web 2.0 and its perceived image among the research participants. Next, in Section 6.3, the effectiveness of Bali's Web 2.0 destination branding strategy is discussed. Section 6.4 then reflects on the research model with a view to modifying it as a consequence of the research. Finally, Section 6.5 provides a summary of the chapter.

6.2 Congruency between Bali's destination identity and destination image

The findings from the comparison of Bali's destination identity and its destination image revealed a number of similarities and differences. This is similar to those previous studies on other destinations [see, for example, Andreu, Bigné & Cooper

(2001); Grosspietsch (2006); Kim, Soyeon & Lehto (2012); Michaelidou et al. (2013); Song & Hsu (2013)] where similarity and differences were found between the destination's projected and perceived images. The reasons for these differences can be attributed to the ways in which Bali's destination identity and destination image was framed by Bali's destination marketers and the research participants. Bali destination marketers are concerned with an identity, or image, that is focused on Bali's positive attributes. On the other hand, the research participants refer to both positive and negative attributes of Bali that are comprised of a number of cognitive and affective components. The following sections describe them in detail.

6.2.1 Bali's cognitive identity and image

6.2.1.1 Natural resources and environment

The Bali destination marketers interviewed in this study indicated that Bali's natural resources, which include the natural beauty and scenery, are among the island's most attractive attributes. These attributes were projected through the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page via photographs of scenic views, a variety of natural settings such as paddy fields, beaches, lakes, and through animal life. Interviews with the research participants also revealed that they had an image of Bali as a destination with an abundance of natural resources, which they gathered from pictures of rice paddies, beaches and landscapes. Beaches were the most prominent image for them. This shows that in terms of Bali's natural resources and environment, Bali's projected identity via Web 2.0 corresponds with destination marketers' idealised identity of Bali. Further, it indicates that Bali's destination marketers branding efforts in portraying Bali as an island destination using beautiful scenery is effective, as those attributes appear to resonate with interviewed participants' image of Bali.

6.2.1.2 General and tourist infrastructure

General infrastructure was not mentioned during the interviews with the Bali destination marketers. Yet, in the *Bali Is My Life* official Facebook page, information and accompanying photographs showcasing Bali's newly built international airport

and roads were provided. This information was given to update *Bali Is My Life* Facebook readers and followers on the development of Bali's general infrastructure. In terms of tourist infrastructure, a range of hotels and resorts was communicated via photographs. During the interviews with the research participants, tourist infrastructure was mentioned in relation to the ease of access to Bali and its proximity to Australia, as well as in terms of the hotels and resorts that were perceived favourably. However, information on the development of Bali's general infrastructure did not reach potential visitors. One reason for this is due to the fact that interviewed participants had not discovered the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page thus they were not able to obtain information on the latest infrastructure developments in Bali. This indicates that there is some congruence between Bali's idealised identity projected via Web 2.0 and the research participants' perceived images of Bali.

6.2.1.3 Tourist leisure and recreation

Bali destination marketers who were interviewed indicated that efforts have been made to promote a variety of tourist activities to the Australian market including marine tourism, beach and water sports activities, sports and golf tourism. In its Web 2.0 marketing activities, photographs and information of places and activities about leisure and recreation were posted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page. Further, photographs of national and international events held in Bali were also promoted on this Web 2.0 platform. For example, sports events such as the Women's International Tennis Tournament and the Golf tournament were promoted using photographs. With regard to leisure and recreation, Bali destination marketers' projected images of tourist activities were congruent with those of interviewed participants who saw Bali as a destination for sports activities and adventure.

Another strong image of Bali, which was not always perceived to be favourable among interview participants, was its nightlife entertainment, particularly the partying and clubbing scene in Kuta which was considered to be overcrowded with tourists. As the Bali destination marketers were aware of this unfavourable image of Bali, they avoided using photographs to portray this image on the *Bali Is My Life*

Facebook page. Bali destination marketers claimed that they were aware of this image among tourists. Due to this, they promoted "entertainment that also caters to the high-end market" to change travellers' negative perceptions of Bali. Despite this effort, it seems that Bali's image does not extend to it being perceived as a destination offering high-end entertainment.

6.2.1.4 Culture, history and art

Bali destination marketers showed that Balinese culture and tradition is at the core of Bali's idealised destination identity and was emphasised to attract visitors to Bali. The idealised identity projects Bali as a destination with a unique culture and traditions. This identity was communicated on Web 2.0 platforms via numerous photographs and information about Balinese culture, history and art. This included depicting rituals and ceremonies that are part of Balinese tradition. Other photographs presented Balinese art, dancing and its temples. In addition, Balinese culture and traditions were projected using the images of Balinese people, and their different roles in their society. This indicates that the projected identity on Web 2.0 reflects Bali destination marketers' idealised identity. The interviewed participants also perceived Bali to be rich with culture and traditions. This image was formed through pictures they had seen online, and stories from friends and relatives who had been to Bali. This shows that there is congruency between the projected identity and perceived image of Bali as a destination with regard to rich culture and tradition. This finding is similar to that of Grosspietsch's (2006) study in which visitors showed strong interest in the traditional lifestyles, particularly in destinations that are still regarded to be reasonably exotic and unspoiled.

While Bali's culinary culture did not emerge during the interview with Bali destination marketers, it was sometimes presented on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page. There were a number of photographs showing different types of authentic and modern Balinese cuisine, including those of international tourists eating different types of authentic Balinese food in one of the traditional night markets. Such images corresponded

with participant images and contribute to their overall image of Bali as a tourist destination. There was, consequently, some level of congruence on the positive image of culinary culture in Bali, but not to a high degree. This is similar to the findings of the study by Michaelidou et al. (2013) in which local cuisine was found to be valued greatly by tourists but only marginally represented in destination websites.

6.2.1.5 Political and economic factors

Bali destination marketers placed a high level of importance on projecting Bali as a safe and secure destination. This was projected on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page through provision of information on security measures, such as the "Tsunami Ready" programs. Bali destination marketers explained that a hotel that is certified as "Tsunami Ready" has implemented certain standards to ensure that it is prepared to mitigate and react to a tsunami threat. Postings were also made about Australian government announcements to downgrade its travel advisory warnings about Bali (Bali Is My Life 2012). Further, Bali destination marketers provided information on future international events to be held in Bali, such as the APEC conference 2013. This was designed to send a message to potential tourists that Bali is internationally recognised at the highest level as a safe and secure destination. Interviewed participants also indicated that safety and security are major influencers on their travel decisions. This demonstrates congruence between the perceptions of Bali destination marketers and those of interviewed participants about the importance of a good safety and security destination image. However, concerns surrounding Bali's safety and security by a number of participants show a moderate level of congruency.

6.2.2 Bali's affective identity and image

6.2.2.1 Social environment

The underlying message of Bali's destination brand is "to embrace the life of Bali". This includes Balinese culture, tradition, and its lifestyle which are experienced through the people of Bali. To convey this message, Bali's destination brand

emphasises the affective image component of its identity. In projecting this identity on Web 2.0, Bali destination marketers aimed to convey a harmonious social environment. This accentuates local residents' friendliness by showcasing photographs of Balinese people living harmoniously together and also blending with foreigners. Yet, interviewed participants held strong images of numerous Australians visiting Bali and congregating and partying in the island's busier areas, such as Kuta. This perception was acknowledged by Bali destination marketers and work was being done to combat this unfavourable perception. For example, a representative of the Bali Hotels Association stated that, "some people from Australia do not want to go to Bali because they feel that there are too many Australians in Bali". She further explained that through its branding strategy other locations in Bali are promoted, catering to Australians who prefer quieter, more exclusive experiences. This was implemented by promoting Bali as a "classy destination" specific to the Australian market. Nonetheless, this image did not fully resonate with participants' perceived image of Bali in terms of its social environment as they tended to hold on these images.

6.2.2.2 Atmosphere of place

The interview findings showed that Bali destination marketers aim to project Bali as a "unique destination", a "second home" for Australians to "relax". This identity was projected on Web 2.0 through the word "relax" and various photographs of natural scenes, calm beaches, and flora and fauna. The Australian residents who were interviewed in this study associate Bali as a destination for relaxing. But "unique" or "second home" was not mentioned. To explain this, the concept of "second home" may not apply to people who have never visited Bali.

This supports the idea that feelings and emotions play an important role in tourists' travel decision-making processes especially when they are already familiar with the destination, thus affective image attributes are an important selling point to attract repeat visitors (Prentice 2004). In this study context, participants perceived images of Bali were largely based on their cognitive images. While Bali destination marketers

emphasised projecting the affective images of Bali as tourist destination, a larger effort is required if this image is to be accepted by people who have not been to Bali.

6.2.3 Bali's overall identity and image

Bali's identity projected via Web 2.0 corresponds moderately to Bali's idealised identity, which emphasises the positive aspects of Bali as a tourist destination. Bali destination marketers claimed that when negative news about Bali is reported, they counter this with positive stories and post notes on their Web 2.0 platforms to demonstrate to target markets that they are working to mitigate and manage any identified issues.

6.2.4 Bali's conative identity and image

Despite Bali destination marketers' intentions to attract repeat visitors as well as new tourists to Bali, the conative identity they projected on Web 2.0 is predominantly targeted towards those who have visited Bali. Many of the captions posted on the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page were targeted towards people who are currently in or who have visited Bali before. When consumers have limited access to information on a destination that they have not visited, a mismatch between the destination's projected identity and consumers' perceived images of that destination may occur, affecting their behavioural intentional to visit the destination. This was shown from an interview with a participant, Nadal, who said that most of the photographs and images about Bali that he had seen online showed more of the "partying scene" when he was more interested in the cultural aspects of Bali. While this identity was projected through the *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page, it did not reach the potential tourists; so consequently, there could be no impact on tourists' behavioural intention towards Bali in this respect.

6.3 The effectiveness of Bali's Web 2.0 branding strategy

From phase two of the data collection, among the 12 participants interviewed for this study, a number of participants indicated that they had found the official tourism

website of Bali, while the rest stated that they have not came across it. To explore the effectiveness of Bali's Web 2.0 branding strategy, the level of congruency between Bali's destination identity and destination image was explored. The level of congruency is classified into high, moderate, and low. A high level of congruency indicates that participants' perceived image of Bali is the same as how Bali destination marketers desire Bali to be perceived in the mind of target markets. A moderate level of congruency indicates that participants' perceived image of Bali is similar to Bali's destination identity, however is not fully captured and slight incongruence exist. A low level of congruency indicates that participants' perceived image of Bali is not similar to Bali's destination identity. The findings of this study show that overall there is a moderate level of congruency between Bali's projected identity and its perceived image. Table 6.1 summarises the congruency between Bali's idealised identity and its projected identity on Web 2.0, and also the congruence between Bali's projected identity on Web 2.0 and its perceived image among interviewed participants.

Table 6.1: Level of congruency between Bali's destination identity and destination image

Destination identity and destination image components	Level of congruence	
	Bali's idealised - Bali's projected identity	Bali's Web 2.0 projected identity - Bali's perceived image
Cognitive		
Natural resources and environment	High	Moderate
General infrastructure	Moderate	Low
Tourist infrastructure	High	Moderate
Tourist leisure and recreation	High	Moderate
Culture, history and art	High	Moderate
Political and economic factors	Moderate	Moderate
Affective		
Social environment	High	Low
Atmosphere of destination	High	Moderate
Overall	Moderate	Moderate
Conative	Low	Low

Bali destination marketers were to some extent successful in projecting an identity that was accepted by potential visitors to Bali. This further implies that there is a level of effectiveness in Bali's Web 2.0 destination brand strategy. However, the findings also showed that certain themes identified in the projected identity of Bali did not have corresponding perceived image themes. This suggests that there are gaps between the identities projected by Bali destination marketers and the images perceived by interviewed participants, from both perspectives. Young (1999, p. 385), refers to the "zone of consensus" where the place production and place consumption are in the area of imaginative agreement. He also (1999, p. 386) described gaps as the "zone of producer surplus" or the "zone of consumer surplus". In this study, "zone of producer surplus" represents the projected identities created by Bali destination marketers that were not adopted by participants. While "zone of consumer surplus" indicates the themes that were considered important to participants, these were not projected by Bali destination marketers. According to Young (1999), destination marketers should minimise the "zone of producer surplus" and "zone of consumer surplus" and maximise the "zone of consensus". The findings of this study resonate with those of Grosspietsch (2006) in the sense that the same image dimension is perceived differently by visitors and tour operators (destination marketers).

The information available to Bali's potential tourists on Web 2.0 comes from various sources. Bali destination marketers cannot control all the information on Web 2.0 that is related to Bali. Some of the information may not be aligned with Bali's idealised identity. Hence, if Bali destination marketers' official website is not effective in reaching its target audience, it may create a mismatch between Bali's projected identity and its destination image as perceived by potential tourists. Interview findings with the research participants also showed that some of the contents about Bali on Web 2.0 have generated negative images about the island. A number of participants felt that most of the pictures they had seen online were not impressive. For example Nadal commented:

> When I searched about Bali on the Internet, the impression I get about Bali is
> it is more of a cheaper fun destination for internationals without showing the

cultural heritage. That [Bali's cultural heritage] doesn't come out prominently. Bali comes to me as a place for surfing, fun, drinks, and cheap accommodation. Not to explore local traditions, cuisines, or try to understand their rich cultural heritage. (Nadal, male, 31)

While Tim said:

It seems to me that the online marketing concentrates on the luxury, the beauty of the island, and the very comfortable accommodation. But for me that's not such a big thing. It seems to me a little bit empty. I could go somewhere else. Just going to a place because it has beautiful tropical forest and marvellous accommodation wouldn't be enough for me. I would want some more depth, particularly more cultural depth. I would like to learn more about the people, the culture, and the history of Bali. That would attract me more. (Tim, male, 67)

Despite the efforts made by Bali destination marketers to project Bali's Web 2.0 identity as a destination that promotes culture and tradition, Nadal's and Tim's comments indicate that consumers have access to a large amount of information that can blur the image of Bali.

The information that consumers receive tends to be limited and simplified by stereotypes and is also influenced by information that is beyond the control of the tourism authorities (Andreu, Bigné & Cooper 2001). Nadal's perception about Bali shows that, for him, the projected identity of Bali as a destination with its own unique culture and tradition has not been effectively projected on Web 2.0. Due to the limited information or ineffective online promotion of Bali, the research participants are not able to develop an accurate image of Bali before visiting the destination. The idealised identity that Bali destination marketers aim to portray to target markets is actually the image that the research participants are interested in seeing. However, the interview findings indicated that Bali's idealised identity is not

being communicated effectively on Web 2.0. This has contributed to a mismatch between Bali's projected identity and its perceived image as a tourist destination.

Destination marketers should understand how tourists' images are formed and the factors that influence this formation process (Chon 1992a). Thus it is essential to understand how tourists search for information to help them make their travel decisions. Bali destination marketers need to provide the *right* information through the *right* media channels to portray the idealised identity effectively. Through the *Bali Is My Life* branding strategy, Bali is projected as an island destination that is safe, secure and sophisticated, offering unique experiences through its culture, people and lifestyle. Interview findings with the 12 Australian residents show that this identity has not been fully captured in their perceived images of Bali.

6.4 Reflection on the research model

Based on the research findings, the research model presented in Chapter 2 as Figure 2.1 has been modified. This modified model is presented in Figure 6.2.

The initial research model of this study (see Figure 6.1) comprised only Web 2.0 as the mediating factor on effective destination branding communications. However, the study findings indicate that offline sources such as TV, news media and traditional word-of-mouth, cannot be ignored in the spread of destination information. Offline sources still play a role despite the extensive use of Web 2.0 for people's travel investigation purposes. Depending on the preferences of each individual, traditional sources are used to complement the information they gather via Web 2.0. Consequently, offline sources are included in the final research model. From some of the interviews with the research participants it is clear that they are not always able to distinguish which information sources contribute to their images of Bali. Further, consumers' image of a destination can be formed by a combination of the information gathered from their Web 2.0 activities together with the information gathered from offline sources. This is shown from the additional arrow that connects the projected identity via offline source with projected identity via Web 2.0 exchanges.

In addition, as offline sources are a form of one way communication, the arrows point one way. This explains that destination marketers act as the sender of the message to inform consumers of the destination identity, while consumers act as the receiver of the message forming a destination image from those messages. While in Web 2.0 exchanges, both destination marketers and users of Web 2.0 can contribute to the content in the Web 2.0 platform, making each have the role in the image formation process. Hence the arrows are presented in both directions.

Both cognitive identity/image and affective identity/image together forms an overall image of a destination. Cognitive identity/image directly impacts the overall image and also indirectly influences it through the affective identity/image. Thus, the arrows linking cognitive – affective – overall are as originally proposed. Conative image, or the behavioural component, on the decision about whether or not to visit the destination is the result of image assessment during the cognitive, affective and overall phases. The findings show that research participants' intention to visit Bali was influenced by their overall image of Bali. Thus, these parts of the research model remain as originally proposed.

# Idealised Identity
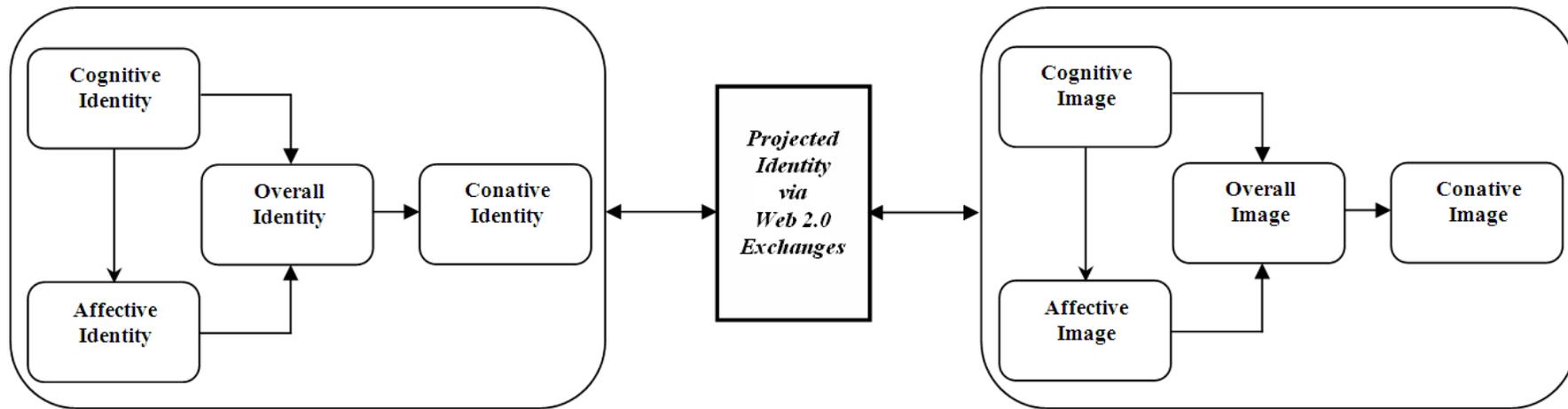
Perceived Image

Figure 6.1: Proposed research model

# Idealised Identity

Perceived Image
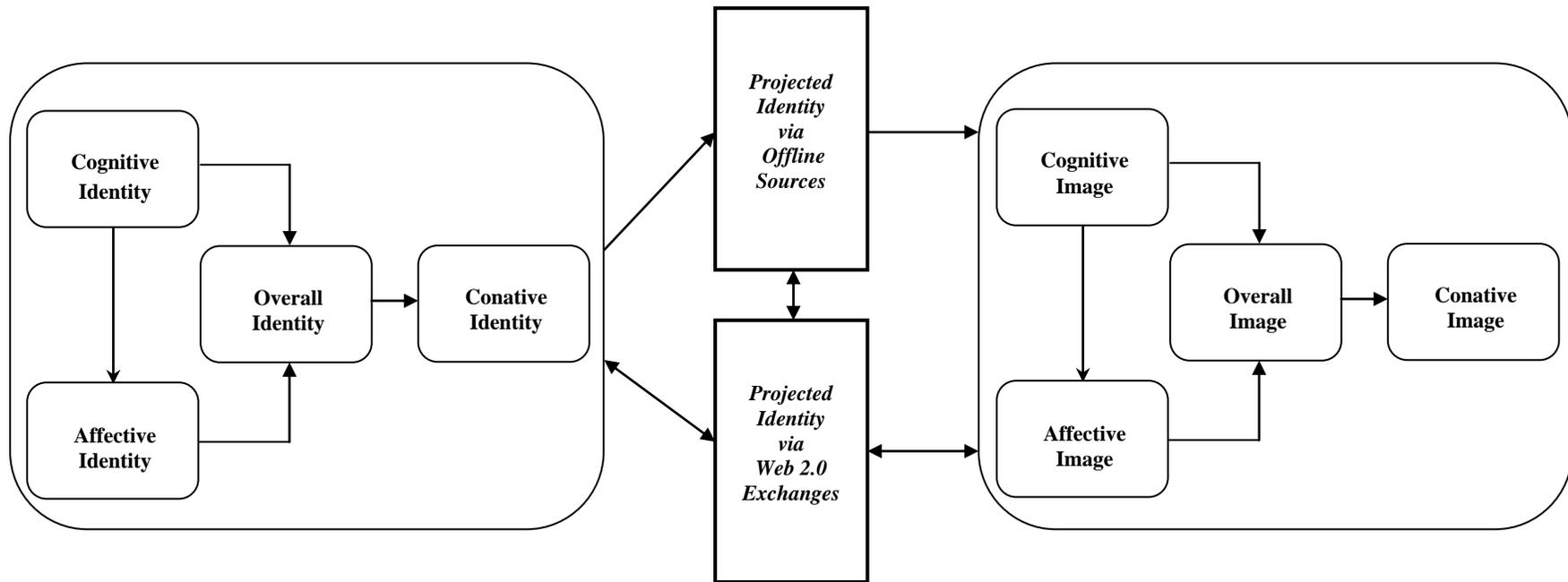
Figure 6.2: Revised research model

6.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has reported the findings relating to how Bali is perceived as a tourist destination in comparison with Bali's projected identity. The findings were used to evaluate the effectiveness of Bali's destination branding strategy within the Web 2.0 environment and refine the research model. The findings from this comparison showed that certain themes identified in the projected identity of Bali correspond with the perceived destination image held by the participants. However, the importance that Bali destination marketers and research participants place on each of these themes varies. The analysis also showed that certain themes identified in Bali's destination identity did not correspond to Bali's destination image. For example, Bali destination marketers project the image of Bali as a safe and secure destination to the Australian market. Yet, these issues are still seen to be a concern for a number of interviewed participants, preventing them from visiting Bali.

7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by summarising the major findings presented in the previous chapters and highlighting the implications of those findings. A summary of the study is presented in Section 7.2, followed by a review of the major findings of the study in Section 7.3. Section 7.4 discusses the role of Web 2.0 in Bali's projected identity and its perceived destination image. Next, Section 7.5 presents the theoretical and managerial implications of the study findings relating to the research questions. This is followed by a discussion on the limitations of the research in Section 7.6. Finally, Section 7.7 provides recommendations for further research on the topic.

7.2 Summary of the study

In recent decades, tourism has accounted for the largest contribution to Bali's economy (BGTO 2010). However, Bali's tourism industry faces a number of ongoing challenges, including a growing number of competitors and the threat of further terrorist attacks. To overcome these issues, Bali destination marketers developed a destination branding strategy aimed at promoting and enhancing the competitiveness of the island as a tourist destination. While this strategy was

launched in 2007, and is now integrated into Web 2.0 platforms, very little research has been undertaken to explore the efficacy of this strategy. This study explored this issue by using destination identity and destination image as the basis for the underlying conceptual framework and it developed a model of destination branding in a Web 2.0 environment. This study explored the congruence between Bali's destination identity and destination image focusing on the role of Web 2.0 as the mediating factor. It explored whether Bali's destination brand resonates with its target markets by using brand identity and brand image as the key points of comparison. The study focused on Australian residents because Australia is one of Bali's most important target markets. The central research questions emerged from these research goals were:

1. How effective has Bali's destination brand (Bali's projected identity) been in communicating Bali's idealised identity to its target markets?
2. Is Bali's perceived image as a tourist destination congruent with Bali's projected identity?
3. What role does Web 2.0 play in the consumer image formation process as relates to Bali?

The first question was explored through the examination of how Bali's identity is projected on Web 2.0 and whether it corresponds with Bali's destination marketers idealised identity of Bali. The second question examined the similarities and differences between Bali's destination identity and how it is perceived by Australian residents. Finally, the third question examined how consumers perceived Bali's destination image through their Web 2.0 activities, and how this affected Bali's destination branding strategy.

To answer the research questions, both promotional materials on Web 2.0 and key informant interviews were collected and analysed. Interviews with Bali destination marketers were conducted to examine Bali's destination branding strategy, which included the identity that they intended to project to target markets. Eight tourism representatives who were responsible for Bali's tourism marketing and planning were interviewed in October, November and December

2011 using a snowball sampling technique. Bali's official *Bali Is My Life* Facebook page, created by Bali's destination marketers, was used as the primary source to explore Bali's idealised identity projected on Web 2.0. Qualitative thematic analysis was used to extract identity descriptors from texts and photographs from the websites. These descriptors were also used to compare what was said during the interviews and what had been projected on Web 2.0 in relation to Bali's destination identity.

To explore Bali's perceived image as a tourist destination, 12 Australian residents who had not been to Bali were interviewed. The research participants were all active users of Web 2.0 in gathering information for their travel purposes. All the participants had Bali in their 'list' of potential destinations and had searched for information about Bali online. Thematic analysis of the interviews with Bali destination marketers and online material produced by marketers revealed that Bali communicated its destination brand by projecting both cognitive and affective identities. However, Bali's affective attributes were accentuated in Web 2.0 communication, particularly via the *Bali Is My Life* Web 2.0 presence.

7.3 Conclusions

7.3.1 Bali's projected identity

This research revealed that there are two destination marketing strategies for Bali: *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* and *Bali Is My Life*. Through these strategies, Bali destination marketers emphasise affective components, including the idea of a peaceful destination with a great life balance. Messages are projected through images of peace and by portraying the lives of Balinese people. In addition, destination marketers promote Bali to the Australian market as a destination that is safe, secure and sophisticated. Bali destination marketers thus portray multiple identities to suit different market segments.

The two strategies are similar and complement one another. However, despite this, the existence of two brands may create distorted messages conveyed through

various communication channels and prevent Bali's brand identity from 'standing out' among other destinations. Internal consistency and congruency is an important factor in corporate branding and marketers must continuously monitor whether the identity projected in the communication channels is as intended.

7.3.2 Bali's perceived images

The findings of this study further support the view that the images people have about a destination influence both their behavioural intentions towards the destination and the destination's marketing success. This is particularly true in the pre-visit phase of information gathering for those who have never visited a specific destination. People often make decisions based on their images, beliefs and perceptions about a destination rather than the reality of it. It is essential then for destination marketers to make Bali more appealing with a united identity that represents the island in a positive light and attracts potential visitors.

Despite the extensive branding efforts made by Bali's destination marketers, Bali's projected identity has not been fully embraced by potential travellers from Australia. None of the 12 Australian residents who were interviewed in this study mentioned or had heard of the *Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti* or *Bali Is My Life* brands. Further, despite their Web 2.0 activities, particularly in searching information about Bali on the Internet, none of the participants mentioned Bali's official tourism website (http://www.balihotelsassociation.com/bali-is-my-life) or its Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/baliismylife). Despite this, participants gathered information from other travel websites and blogs, forming an image of Bali in their mind. Participants' overall image of Bali was positive, focusing on what to see and to do, the social environment, and its relaxed atmosphere. However, a number of participants expressed concerns about Bali's safety and security due to the frequent negative reports in the media.

Bali's identity as a destination that emphasises life balance and friendliness through its people, as well as a unique culture and tradition, was prominent in both the interviews and on websites. Yet, participants' perceptions of Bali did not

resonate with the particular brand identities. This implies that there is a low level of congruence between Bali's destination identity and its perceived images.

7.4 The role of Web 2.0 in Bali's projected identity and perceived destination image

Three main issues have been identified in evaluating the role of Web 2.0 in examining the congruence between Bali's destination identity and destination image.

1. Web 2.0 gives new meaning to the image formation process.

The identity of a destination projected through its destination brand is only one factor among others playing roles in the consumer image formation process. There are intermediary factors between the destination and receivers, sometimes modifying, enhancing, and diminishing the information cues being transmitted (Gartner 1993). This is particularly true when destination marketers project their identity via Web 2.0 applications. Personal stories posted on Web 2.0 platforms about a holiday experience not only inform potential travellers, but also provide information to destination marketers about visitors' perceptions and expectations. Destination marketers can make use of this information to better understand the potential traveller and refine their destination branding strategies accordingly.

In today's Internet era, the use of Web 2.0 in the travel industry continues to gain popularity. Users of Web 2.0 are interested in more than just obtaining information about the destination provided by the destination marketers. They also look at travel blogs and forums created by people who have travelled to the destination to seek reliable feedback and travel advice. For travellers who have visited a destination, Web 2.0 acts as a medium to share their experiences, enabling them to project their post-visit images as a result of their visitation. For potential visitors, Web 2.0 acts as a source of travel information that can give them insights about a destination, either positive or negative. Consequently, consumer perceptions may or may not be congruent with the destination's identity

as created by destination marketers. Bloggers on Web 2.0 are also creators of a destination image that could affect consumers' image formation. Travellers' blogs are seen as credible sources of eWOM, and their postings on Web 2.0 can influence the images of potential visitors. This supports the finding that consumers are not only receivers of destination image information, they also actively share and construct images on the Internet (Dwivedi 2009). The information flow-on from Web 2.0 cannot be controlled by destination marketers who are now faced with the constant risk that their projected identity will be distorted. In summary, the existence of Web 2.0 has made the relationship between destination identity and destination image dynamic rather than static.

2. Web 2.0 does not work in a vacuum

Despite its influence on the consumer image formation process and its focus within this study, it must be acknowledged that Web 2.0 does not work in a vacuum. The image formation process is based on a few impressions chosen from a flood of information (Reynolds 1965). This flood of information can derive from Web 2.0 platforms, and traditional word-of-mouth, TV, books, newspapers, and brochures. This was evident in this study with participants reporting that some of the images they held about Bali were formed from multiple sources including but not limited to Web 2.0. This implies that in projecting Bali's destination identity, destination marketers should manage their communication strategies through Web 2.0 as well as traditional exchanges. Further, consumers' sense of trust about each communication channel determines how much the information on that channel influences their images of a destination. In this study, Web 2.0 was reported to be a trusted source of information and generally used as a starting point for research about the destination. This implies that other communication channels cannot be replaced by Web 2.0, but they should be used to complement one another.

3. Affective identity is difficult to project on Web 2.0

The identities projected through Bali's online branding strategy show that Bali's affective identity is more prominent than its cognitive identity. The texts and

photographs posted on Bali's official tourism website and Facebook page project the affective identity of Bali rather than its cognitive identity. Despite destination marketers' emphasis on promoting Bali's affective identity, it is challenging to project emotional cues to travellers who have not been to Bali. People who are less familiar with the destination have images based more on the attributes, functional aspects, and common features of the destination (Echtner & Ritchie 1993). Therefore, reigniting emotions and feelings in travellers who *have* visited Bali through words and photographs on Web 2.0 is likely to be effective but projecting affective identities online through words and photographs is more challenging for potential travellers who have not been to the destination as they have not experienced those emotions with the destination.

7.5 Research contributions and implications

7.5.1 Theoretical contributions

This study has made three key theoretical contributions. Each is discussed below.

1. First, this study enriches the existing body of knowledge regarding the application of destination branding in tourism. It also adds to the image literature by providing empirical evidence concerning pre-visit image formation with Web 2.0 as the source of information. In the area of destination branding, there are limited frameworks that evaluate a destination brand from the perspective of both the managerial and consumer sides. Previous research focused mainly on the destination brand identity or on the destination brand image. There has been limited research which effectively explores and understands gaps between the projected identity and what is being perceived by consumers. This study evaluated destination branding strategy by using destination image as the underlying concept. It brings a new focus to the literature concerning a number of aspects on image studies. First, this study explored the congruence of Bali's projected identity and its perceived images. The relationship between a destination's projected identity and its perceived image is important to evaluate the success of a destination's image promotion

strategy (Stabler 1990). Further, with the booming technology adoption in the tourism industry (Buhalis 2000; Lo et al. 2011), it is critical to understand the role of Web 2.0 in destination image formation. The current research compared Bali's projected identity and its destination image with Web 2.0 as a marketing mediator. The outcome of this research contributes to the ongoing discussion on destination image and destination branding management.

2. Second, this research focused on Bali, Indonesia as the study site. Few empirical studies have been undertaken previously on Bali or on Indonesia's branding strategy. Thus, this study provides insights into how an Indonesian destination practices its marketing and how individuals from different cultures interpret the destination. Bali has a long history of tourism. However, this is the first time that it has implemented an official branding strategy to promote the island.

3. Third, in phase two of this study, Skype was used as a means to gather interview data. This provides an insight on how Skype can be used as a research medium. The use of Skype as a means to collect interview data was effective and efficient. As a result of this choice of communication method, the researcher was able to conduct face-to-face interviews with participants who were situated in various Australian states many miles from the researcher's location in Melbourne. Using Skype also benefited the research in terms of reduced costs and ease of access. Furthermore, both the researcher and the participants were able to conduct the interview in a safe and convenient location within each person's personal space.

7.5.2 Contributions and implications to management practice

This study confirms that pre-visit image can have a substantial influence on the way potential tourists perceive Bali as a tourist destination. It also confirms that different information sources are influential factors in the consumer image formation process as well as in the behavioural intention towards a destination. Thus, Bali destination marketers should place great attention on providing sufficient and relevant information to its target markets. This is particularly important for people who have not visited Bali as they develop their image

through secondary data. Further, destination marketers must not only attempt to project an identity that is aligned with their objectives, but they should also understand consumer behaviour and the factors that influence consumer destination choice (Andreu, Bigné & Cooper 2001). In other words, destination marketers' image promotions should *emphasise not only the destination's unique features but also aspects that will support the needs of potential tourists*. If Bali's destination marketers are able to address these issues, Bali is more likely to gain a better position among its competitors.

The findings of this study suggest that the images of Bali held by participants were formed based on cognitive and affective elements. Since consumers' formation images are based on both cognitive and affective components, Bali destination marketers should *consider both cognitive and affective identities* in their destination branding strategy**.** By projecting a strong and positive cognitive identity, potential visitors' beliefs and knowledge about the destination will be strengthened. Projecting a strong affective identity will help to strengthen potential visitors' positive feelings or emotions towards the destination. This in turn will lead to positive behavioural intentions with people being more willing to visit Bali.

Destination marketers need to implement *constant surveillance and monitoring* of their destination branding strategy on Web 2.0. Due to the difficulty of controlling information on the Internet, destination marketers should promptly address any negative images that may further the gap between its destination identity and perceived images. This will enhance the likelihood or congruency between the destination's projected identity and its perceived destination image.

Destination marketers need to gain an understanding of how consumers view potential destinations and how this will affect their travel decisions in response to the projected brand identity. This is important in regards to how destination marketers should communicate their intended destination identity effectively. With the advancement of technology, consumers have access to almost all the information they are searching for. Consumers are in search of both positive and

negative information about destinations to help them in choosing their travel destination. Consequently, ***destination marketers need to be honest*** to their potential consumers in providing information about the destination they promote.

Bali destination marketers should evaluate their branding strategy and consider a number of improvements. Bali's promotion of an idealised identity has been successful to a certain degree but more effort needs to be made in their Web 2.0 branding strategy. This will help marketers reach out to potential tourists and align Bali's destination identity with its perceived destination image. Bali destination marketers could ***use the image attributes that are preferred by both themselves and potential visitors***, especially identities that are highly regarded, to effectively promote the island. For example, themes such as the authenticity of culture and tradition can be emphasised more when promoting a general sense of Bali as a holiday destination. Destination identity and destination image are more fluid than was previously thought, and given the open and interactive nature of Web 2.0, there are even greater opportunities to develop Bali's identity collaboratively with potential visitors.

This study gives insights on how Bali destination marketers approached and executed the island's first official branding strategy and how members of a key target market responded to the strategy. The findings of this study provide useful information for Bali destination marketers to help them evaluate their current branding strategy. Identifying existing gaps between a destination's projected identity and its perceived images is critical to determining the effectiveness of a destination's branding strategy in resonating with their target markets. Furthermore, Bali destination marketers should understand the factors that contribute to any incongruencies and try to minimise the existing gap in image formation. This study provides insights to tourism authorities and marketers on the importance of issues surrounding brand identity/image congruence. The findings of this study are particularly important for Bali destination marketers in helping to form an appealing destination identity on the Internet.

There are two points that need to be evaluated in exploring the effectiveness of a destination brand in a Web 2.0 context. These are:

1. A destination's idealised identity and its Web 2.0 identity together with traditional communication channels should be congruent. The idealised identity refers to the identity of the destination created by destination marketers. Destination marketers must ensure that the idealised identity is communicated effectively through all communication channels and they must minimise any distorted identity. This should be achieved through a careful communication strategy that conveys consistent messages across all media channels. The spread of information, particularly on Web 2.0, cannot be fully controlled and managed by destination marketers, thus destination marketers should continuously monitor how the destination is portrayed on all media channels and ensure that it is communicated effectively and in line with the idealised identity. In this study, the messages that Bali destination marketers aimed to convey to target markets were not entirely communicated through their Web 2.0 platforms. This can create larger gaps between destination identity and destination image. Thus, there is a need to evaluate destination marketers' idealised identity and what is actually being projected on Web 2.0 platforms and other communication channels. Communication is fundamental and with the advancement of information technology, conveying the right message to the right market and at the right time becomes even more complex but no less essential.

2. Destination marketers should aim to manage the congruence between the destination's Web 2.0 identity and its destination image. This congruency is important because it relates to consumers' travel decisions. Positive perceived images lead to the intention of visiting the destination, while negative images may decrease the likelihood of visiting the destination. There are various factors that influence individual's perceived images about a destination. Technophile tourism consumers rely heavily on Web 2.0 in searching and gathering travel information (Beldona 2005). Despite this, their image formation process cannot be separated from other information sources (in the model for this thesis these are represented by traditional exchanges). This includes word-of-mouth, TV, newspaper, and

anything outside the Web 2.0 platform. The amount of information on Web 2.0 that can influence the consumer image formation process also depends on the trust an individual feels about the reliability of that information. Thus, despite the advancement of technology which has had a big impact on tourism, traditional exchanges still play a role in the consumer image formation process.

7.6 Limitations

This study focused on the congruence between Bali's destination identity and destination image as perceived by Australian residents, through Web 2.0 platform. It focused on supply and demand in terms of image formation process and how the role of Web 2.0 affects this process. The findings provide an illustration of Bali's destination image marketing performance, however, this study has some limitations.

Case study of Bali. A common limitation of qualitative research can be the small sample size, making generalisations difficult. As this study focused specifically on Bali's destination branding strategy in the Web 2.0 environment, these specific results cannot be extended to other destinations. Nevertheless, the findings provide useful insights on the process of image building and formation between destination identity and destination image. Thus, the final version of the research model of this study can be applied to other destinations with different settings, and can be used to compare image attributes across destinations.

Researcher bias. In qualitative research, in order to gain in-depth information, sufficient time is needed to work intensively with a small number of participants (Lunenburg & Irby 2008). One drawback of this approach is the possibility of observer bias, making support for rejection of a hypothesis more difficult to achieve (Cooper & Schindler 2006). In addition, the researcher's Balinese heritage may also be a source of bias. To overcome the researcher's personal subjectivity, ongoing engagements with experienced researchers were instigated throughout this research. In depth-interviews with 12 people were conducted to gain deep insights into the image formation process in the Web 2.0 environment.

The use of this method enabled the study to capture "the full dynamics or richness inherent in the process of destination choice" (Dann 1996, p. 42). Thus, through this method, deeper understanding and a holistic view of the destination and image formation process was captured.

Non-visitors. The sample participants of this study were specifically Australian residents who had *not* been to Bali. The study did not seek to compare data with those who are currently visiting Bali or have been to Bali. The images reported in this study are purely those formed through information sources without the influence of any actual experience in Bali itself. This enabled the evaluation of how effective Bali's destination brand been in communicating Bali's destination identity to the Australian residents in this study.

7.7 Recommendations for further research

New insights and understandings were gained from this study, but certain aspects that were not examined in this study should be investigated in the future. Six key recommendations are made for further research.

First, the type of information sources on image formation is an important aspect of image studies. This study showed that Web 2.0 as an information source have influence on the projection of destination identity and destination image formation. However, this study also showed that other traditional communication channels were found to influence consumer image formation process. Therefore, other media in conjunction with Web 2.0 should also be analysed to understand the dynamics between all communications channels, both Web 2.0 and traditional exchanges.

Second, destination image formation ranges from pre-visit, on-site and post-visit images. The destination image in this study focused on consumers' pre-visit images. Participants in this study were those who had not been to Bali, but had considered Bali as a potential holiday destination. Further research can enhance this study by exploring people's perceived images *during* and *after* their visit to

Bali, comparing the results to the perceived images before visitation. By doing this, a more thorough in-depth result on Bali's destination image can be achieved. This would be beneficial for Bali destination marketers, helping them refine their marketing strategies.

Third, other forms of data collection could be done to better understand the influence of Web 2.0 as a source of information for destination image formation. One way is to analyse travel blogs about a destination that are written on the Web 2.0 platform. Through this method, the perceived image of a destination is based on the combination of tourists' perceptions from various cultural backgrounds. By doing this, additional images of a destination could occur and better understanding of the global image of a destination could be achieved.

Fourth, this study does not make comparisons of Bali's destination image as perceived by Australian residents between genders, occupations, and travel experiences which are important for segmenting Australian travellers. Further research should take these factors into consideration to enhance the understanding of Bali's destination image in the Australian market. Further exploration of travellers by breaking down into segments would also be useful to advance the knowledge of differences in travel behaviours.

Fifth, further studies could apply the research model to other destinations and explore the image attributes that emerge in different settings. Finally, to inform the positioning of destinations with respect to their competitors, further research that compares the congruencies between destination identity and destination image of several competing destinations is recommended.

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Appendix A: Information for Bali destination marketers

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali.

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ni Made Asti Aksari as part of a DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Stephen Burgess and Associate Professor Anne-Marie Hede from the Faculty of Business and Law.

Project explanation

This study aims to examine the efficacy of Bali's destination brand which was launched in 2007. It will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali by evaluating the role of Web 2.0 as the influencing agent of destination identity and destination image. This study will contribute to the scarcity in the use of Web 2.0 for tourism, particularly in its influence towards people's image towards tourism destinations and provide Bali destination marketers the opportunity to better understand the role of Web 2.0 in contemporary destination marketing.

What will I be asked to do?

Answer a number of questions regarding Bali's destination brand strategy and the projected identity of Bali. A face-to-face semi-structured interview will include questions on how Bali destination marketers wish Bali to be perceived cognitively, affectively, and overall in the minds of their target markets, specifically in the Australian market. The interview will be approximately 1 hour in duration.

What will I gain from participating?

The result of this study will help to better understand how Australians perceive Bali as a tourist destination and the role of Web 2.0 in destination marketing. A copy of the summarised study result will be provided for you. Hence, it can be used to assist in evaluating Bali's branding strategy.

How will the information I give be used?

The information will be used to understand Bali's destination branding strategy and Bali's identity projected through the Web 2.0 platform.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

There are minimal risks involved in participating in this project. Your identity will remain confidential and you can withdraw from the study and any stage and can opt-out of answering any questions that you are uncomfortable with.

How will this project be conducted?

Bali's destination identity will be explored by conducting face-to-face in-depth interviews with Bali destination marketers. The interviews will be audio recorded with the agreement of the participant.

Who is conducting the study?

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Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148.

Appendix B: Information for consumers

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali.

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ni Made Asti Aksari as part of a DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Stephen Burgess and Associate Professor Anne-Marie Hede from the Faculty of Business and Law.

Project explanation

This study aims to examine the efficacy of Bali's destination brand which was launched in 2007. It will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali by evaluating the role of Web 2.0 as the influencing agent of destination identity and destination image. This study helps to gain an understanding on how consumers' images of a destination are formed through their Web 2.0 activities.

What will I be asked to do?

Answer a number of questions on your thoughts, feelings, and overall image of Bali as a tourist destination from the information you gained through your Web 2.0 activities. Interview will take place through Skype for approximately 30 – 40 minutes in duration.

What will I gain from participating?

One movie ticket voucher at Hoyts cinema and a copy of the summarised study result.

How will the information I give be used?

The information will be used to provide insights into how Australians, through their Web 2.0 activities, perceive Bali as a tourist destination and how their image of Bali as a tourist destination influences their behavioural intentions with regard to visiting Bali.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

There are no risks involved in participating in this project.

How will this project be conducted?

Online interviews will be undertaken with a sample of Australian residents, who are using the Web 2.0 as a means of gathering information about Bali. Interviews will be conducted online, using Skype, to explore participants' evaluation of Bali as a tourist destination in terms of their cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings), and overall images, as well as their conative images (behavioural intentions). The interviews will be recorded with the agreement of the participant.

Who is conducting the study?

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Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148.

Appendix C: Consent form for Bali destination marketers

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to be a part of a study on the efficacy of Bali's destination brand which was launched in 2007. This study will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali. Face-to-face interview will be conducted with Bali destination marketers to understand Bali's identity projected through the internet; and online face-to-face interview with Australian residents to explore their perceived images of Bali as a tourist destination. There are minimal risks associated with this project.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, "[Click here & type participant's name]"
of "[Click here & type participant's suburb]"

certify that I am at least 18 years old* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study:
Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali being conducted at Victoria University by Associate Professor Stephen Burgess.

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by:

Ni Made Asti Aksari

and that I freely consent to participation involving the below mentioned procedures:

- Answer a number of questions regarding Bali's destination brand strategy and the projected identity of Bali through the Web 2.0 platform. A semi-structured face-to-face interview will include questions on how Bali destination marketers wish Bali to be perceived cognitively, affectively, and overall in the minds of their target markets, specifically in the Australian market. Interview will take place approximately 1 hour in duration.

- ☐ I, the person interviewed, agree that the interview will be audio recorded and that the recording of my interview and accompanying material be used for this study.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Date:

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher:

Dr. I Nyoman Madiun
Director of STP Nusa Dua Bali (Bali Tourism Institute)
nmadiun@hotmail.com
+62 361 773538

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148.

[*please note: Where the participant/s are aged under 18, separate parental consent is required; where the participant/s are unable to answer for themselves due to mental illness or disability, parental or guardian consent may be required.]

Appendix D: Consent form for consumers

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to be a part of a study on the efficacy of Bali's destination brand which was launched in 2007. This study will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali. Face-to-face interview will be conducted with Bali destination marketers to understand Bali's identity projected through the internet; and online face-to-face interview with Australian residents to explore their perceived images of Bali as a tourist destination. There are minimal risks associated with this project.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, "[Click here & type participant's name]"
of "[Click here & type participant's suburb]"

certify that I am at least 18 years old* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study:
Exploring the Efficacy of a Destination Branding Strategy in the Web 2.0 Environment: A Case Study of Bali being conducted at Victoria University by: Associate Professor Stephen Burgess.

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by:

Ni Made Asti Aksari

and that I freely consent to participation involving the below mentioned procedures:

- Answer a number of questions on your thoughts and feelings about Bali as a tourist destination from your Web 2.0 activities. Interview will take place through Skype for approximately 30 – 40 minutes in duration.

- ☐ I, the person interviewed, agree that the interview will be recorded and that the recording of my interview and accompanying material be used for this study.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Date:

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher:

Associate Professor Stephen Burgess
Stephen.Burgess@vu.edu.au
+61399194353

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148.

[*please note: Where the participant/s are aged under 18, separate parental consent is required; where the participant/s are unable to answer for themselves due to mental illness or disability, parental or guardian consent may be required.]

Appendix E: Interview protocols for Bali destination marketers

Background to the research and researcher

- **Aims**

  This study aims to examine the efficacy of Bali's destination brand which was launched in 2007. It will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali by evaluating the role of Web 2.0 as the influencing agent of destination identity and destination image. This study will contribute to the scarcity in the use of Web 2.0 for tourism, particularly in its influence towards people's image towards tourism destinations and provide Bali destination marketers the opportunity to better understand the role of Web 2.0 in contemporary destination marketing.

- **Method**

  Bali's destination brand strategy will be explored by conducting interviews with Bali destination marketers. A face-to-face semi-structured interview will include questions on how Bali destination marketers wish Bali to be perceived cognitively, affectively, and overall in the minds of their target markets, specifically in the Australian market. The interview will be approximately 1 hour in duration. The interviews will be audio recorded with the agreement of the participant.

- **Ethics**

  Ethical approval for this study has been granted from the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee.

Background to the participant

- Position
- Years in position
- Role and responsibilities

Background to the participant's involvement in Bali's destination brand

1. Can you tell me about Bali's destination brand?
    a. When was Bali's destination brand first launched?
    b. Were there any specific reasons behind the introduction of Bali's destination brand?
    c. What is the objective or goal of Bali's destination brand?
    d. How long is Bali's destination brand program duration?
    e. Is there any future plan in changing this brand? When? Why?
2. What identity does Bali's destination brand aim to project about Bali?
3. How is this identity being projected in the marketing communications?
    a. Can you provide some specific examples of this?
4. Thinking now about Bali's destination brand web presence, how is this identity being projected in web-based marketing communications? What web-based tools are used to project these images (for examples, Facebook, Twitter, Trip Advisor)?
5. How important do you think Web 2.0 is in terms of Bali's destination brand success? Why do you think that is the case?
6. Thinking now about the Australian market, are you using any Web 2.0 specific strategies to project Bali's identity as a tourist destination? Can you provide some specific examples?
7. How much is the content that Australians are generating on web 2.0 platforms helping to inform you about how Bali's destination brand is working as a tourism destination strategy?
8. Do you 'go back' to your promotional collateral and modify it, in light of the knowledge that you gain from consumers?

9. What type of images do you want Australians to associate with when they think of Bali as a tourist destination?
10. How do you want Australians to feel about Bali as a tourist destination?
11. Do you expect Bali's identity which you projected online will encourage Australians to visit Bali?

Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix F: Interview protocols for consumers

Background to the research and researcher

- **Aims**

  This study aims to examine the efficacy of Bali's destination brand. It will explore whether Bali's destination brand resonates with target markets and impacts their attitudes and behaviours in relation to visiting Bali by evaluating the role of Web 2.0 as the influencing agent of destination identity and destination image. This study helps to gain an understanding on how consumers' images of a destination are formed through their Web 2.0 activities.

- **Method**

  Online interviews will be undertaken with a sample of Australian residents, who are using Web 2.0 as a means of gathering information about Bali. Interviews will be conducted online, using Skype, to explore participants' evaluation of Bali as a tourist destination in terms of their cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings), and overall images, as well as their conative images (behavioural intentions). Interview will take place through Skype for approximately 30 – 40 minutes in duration. The interviews will be recorded with the agreement of the participant.

- **Ethics**

  Ethical approval for this study has been granted from the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee.

Introduction

Before I start the interview, first I want to check that you have received the information sheet and consent form of the interview? Yes/No

And that you have formally agreed to participate in the study? Yes/No

Background to participant

1. Can you please tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. Do you like to travel?
3. Do you search for travel information before you plan your travelling activities?
4. Where do you search for this information?
5. What sort of information do you normally search for?

Background to the participant's involvement in travel blog sites

Now, I would like to focus on your involvement in online activities.
1. Do you participate in online activities?
2. What types of online activities did you recently participate in?
3. Do you actively engage in the online travel discussions?
4. Which online travel discussions do you actively engage in? Is there any specific ones?
5. How did you actively engage in those online travel discussions? Do you write blogs, post comments, questions?
6. How often do you search travel information online?
7. How often do you post comments on online travel discussions?
8. Do you make travel decisions based on the information you obtain from travel websites?

Participant's perceived image of Bali as a tourist destination

Now, I would like you to focus on Bali as a place to travel, or as a place to spend holiday.

- **Cognitive Image of Bali:**
    1. Thinking about your experiences in Web 2.0 activities/online activities, what first comes to your mind when you think about Bali as a tourist destination?
    2. From your travel blog experiences, what are the key features that you now know about Bali that you didn't know before?
    3. Did any particular Web 2.0 exchanges make you think that way?

- **Affective Image of Bali:**
    1. Thinking about your experiences in participating in Web 2.0 activities/online activities, what feelings do you have when you think about Bali as a tourist destination?
    2. From the information you gather on the Internet, from blogs, or articles, or photos, do you feel positive or negative about Bali?
    3. If you can categorise your feeling, is that feeling arousing, exciting, pleasant, relaxing or neither?
    4. If you can categorise your feeling, is that feeling sleepy, gloomy, unpleasant, distressing or neither?
    5. Did any particular Web 2.0 exchanges make you feel that way?

- **Overall Destination Image of Bali:**
    1. Thinking about your experiences in participating in Web 2.0 activities/online activities, what is your general opinion of Bali as a tourist destination?
    2. Is it positive, negative or ambivalent? In what way?
    3. When you searched about Bali on the Internet, and when you see or read something about Bali, what images of Bali comes to your mind? Is it beautiful, peaceful, quiet, crowded or noisy? Does it look boring or exciting?
    4. Did any particular Web 2.0 exchanges make you think that way?
    5. Have you visited any of Bali's tourism website? If yes, which one did you visit?

- **Consumers' Behavioural Intention to Visit Bali:**
    1. Thinking about your experiences in participating in Web 2.0 activities/online activities, how likely is it that you will visit Bali?
    2. When do you think you will visit Bali?

Thank you for your time and participation.