

# Developing a scenario planning process using a blank piece of paper

Ian Yeoman\* and Una McMahon-Beattie\*\*

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\*VisitScotland, 23 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 3TP, UK

Tel: + 44 (0) 131 472 2388; Fax: + 44 (0) 131 343 2023; E-mail: ian.yeoman@visitscotland.com

\*\*School of Marketing, Entrepreneurship and Strategy, University of Ulster

Jordanstown Campus, Shore Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT37 0QB

Tel: +44 028 9036 6985; Fax: +44 028 9036 6993; E-mail: usm.mcmahon@ulster.ac.uk

*Ian Yeoman is the Scenario Planner for VisitScotland, the national tourism organisation for Scotland. He has a PhD in Management Science from Napier University, Edinburgh and is the author/editor of nine tourism books. Ian is the Editor of the Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management and has taught Revenue Management on a number of university courses. His special interests include the use of modelling techniques to interpret and analyse tourism scenarios and policy.*

*Una McMahon-Beattie is a lecturer, researcher and consultant with the University of Ulster. She graduated with an MSc in International Hotel Management from the University of Surrey. Her research interests lie in the areas of tourism marketing and tourism futures. She is the co-editor of four books and has published widely in the UK and internationally. Una is a Practice Editor for the Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management.*

## ABSTRACT

**KEYWORDS:** *tourism, scenario planning, process, Scotland*

*VisitScotland is the national tourism organisation for Scotland, primarily responsible for mar-*

*keting Scotland as a destination. The agency is also the Scottish Executive's (Government) principal adviser on policy matters relating to tourism and has the ambition to be the best national tourism organisation in the world. In order to reach this goal, it is committed to futures thinking, in particular using scenario planning in order to frame this thinking. This paper describes how VisitScotland designed a scenario planning process based upon three clusters: A scenario planning group, environmental scanning; and a forecasting model/economic analysis.*

## INTRODUCTION

Scenario planning is a process of predicting multiple, plausible and uncertain futures (Hiejden *et al.*, 2002). VisitScotland has started to develop a scenario planning process that will encompass environmental scanning, scenario construction and economic analysis. This paper sets out to explain how an organisation without any history, research or background in scenario planning, developed an idea from first principles, designed such a process and took it through to implementation and the first steps in its development.

VisitScotland (2003) is the national tour-

ism organisation of Scotland whose legislative basis is incorporated under the Development of Tourism Acts of 1969 and 1984. VisitScotland is the lead organisation for tourism in Scotland, responsible to the Minister for Tourism in the Scottish Executive (Government) for destination marketing, tourism policy issues and economic advice. Tourism (VisitScotland 2002) in Scotland is a £4.5bn industry, representing 6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and 9 per cent of all employment. VisitScotland's main domestic markets are Scotland, the north of England and the south of England. In 2002, domestic UK tourists spent £3.7bn and made 18.5 million trips to Scotland. Overseas tourists spent £811m and took 1.6 million trips, with the main overseas markets being North America, Germany, France and the Benelux countries. Scotland is predominantly a UK weekend leisure destination, with UK tourism representing 92 per cent of all trips and 83 per cent of revenue. The vision for VisitScotland is to be the most respected national tourism agency in the world and with the support of the Scottish Executive the organisation wants to increase the value of Scottish tourism by 50 per cent, by 2015.

### SCENARIO PLANNING

The Bali and Madrid bombings, 9/11, war in Iraq, SARS and foot and mouth disease incur a picture of major incidents and uncertainty that have come to dominate the discourse of contemporary media and international affairs (Bierman, 2003). These incidents have had an impact on tourism and led to the importance of communications and crisis management in tourism destination management organisations (Baral *et al.*, 2003). But, in fact, terrorism and other incidents have been a continuous source of disruption for tourism (Brown, 2003; Durie, 2002). The first recorded tourists to Scotland were a consequence of the Napoleonic

Wars on mainland Europe, which led to the Grand Tours of Scotland. History tells us (Hobsbawm, 2000) that these incidents will always reoccur. If policymakers thought otherwise, they would be naïve and irresponsible. What national tourism organisations must do is to go beyond crisis management as the terrorism threat is now going to be a continuous backdrop for the industry. Additionally, scenario planning must not be seen as a one-off project, as this approach does not encourage momentum within the organisation to change thinking and action change (Seaton and Hay, 1998). VisitScotland's history in scenario planning and futures thinking is rooted in the 'Futures' department of the organisation. This department undertook futures thinking and scenario planning, but lacked a full-time/professional futurologist or scenario planner to carry this out. An example of this was observed by Seaton and Hay (1998) when VisitScotland engaged the Henley Centre in an environmental scanning exercise. The centre invited 60 key informants drawn from both the public and private sector to identify 'drivers of change' and create a 'vision' for Scottish tourism and methods for achieving the vision. The exercise, while motivated by a genuine attempt to get to grips with the future, tended to produce rather predictable platitudes and orthodoxies and therefore was not taken any further.

One way to deal with this problem in a holistic and systematic manner is to use the process of scenario planning (Hiejden *et al.*, 2002), where terrorism is put into the context of tourism, in which it is explored as one variable that influences the tourism demand and supply. If this is not done, a language of crisis and negativity is created that blurs policy makers' decision-making ability (Sparrow, 1998). Rather, policy makers should be using a scenario planning process that can look at the future and make sense of it, then be able

to test shocks such as terrorism incidents against a range of scenarios to understand consumer behaviour, market segmentation and economic behaviour. By adopting a holistic, creative and future thinking process an organisation can create a culture of learning and change, where forward thinking becomes the norm rather than a one-off project syndrome or crisis management ethos; hence the reason for designing a scenario planning process. The use of scenario planning in tourism has received little attention, although early work by the Singapore Tourist Board (Yong *et al.*, 1989) examined a methodological process and marketing implications of a series of events using a Delphi forecast. Tress (2003) used a scenario planning methodology for a participatory landscape study of Denmark. Eden and Ackermann (1998) used scenario planning techniques in strategy building for Scottish Natural Heritage. More recently, the World Tourism Organisation has used scenario planning techniques when dealing with contingency planning (Glaesser, 2003). The main problem has been that, although scenario planning has been used in tourism, much of the work is confidential. Therefore, there is a lack of documented and researched publications in this field.

#### **Designing a scenario planning process at VisitScotland**

Scenario planning is the capability of VisitScotland to perceive what is going on in the business environment, thinking of the consequences of what this means and taking action. The objective is to give Scotland a competitive edge when times get difficult. It is the understanding of the dots on the horizon, perceiving, thinking and taking action in a meaningful way.

The importance of scenario planning is to allow VisitScotland to make sense of the future in a structured manner, from under-

standing trends to developing policy. The development of a scenario planning process started with the appointment of a dedicated scenario planner. The appointment came about due to external comments from the tourism industry that VisitScotland was not paying enough attention to the external environment and assessing how this affected tourism. These comments were more insistent after a number of shocks such as 9/11 and foot and mouth, and demonstrated that tourism was the first industry to be affected by these traumatic events.

Over the last 12 months VisitScotland has started to develop a scenario planning process, based upon three clusters of related work.

#### *Scenario planning group*

Scotland's scenario planning group is a club or guild, which will construct, develop and implement scenarios for VisitScotland and its partners.

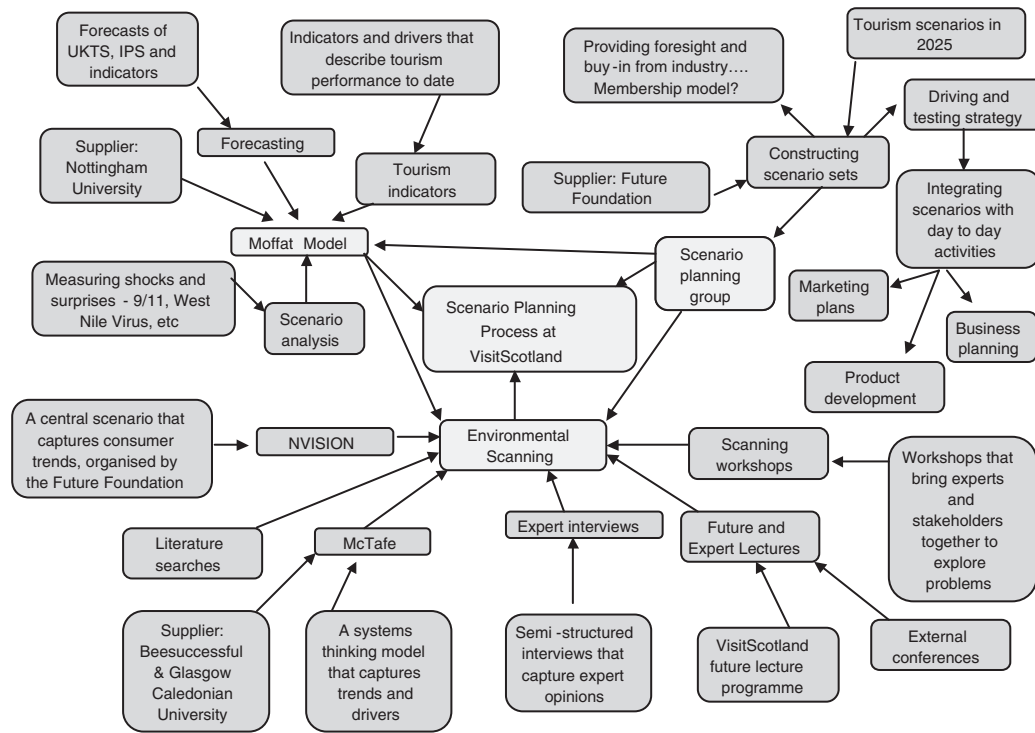
#### *Environmental scanning*

This is a qualitative process (not just one technique) of capturing shocks, surprises, trends and drivers that will influence and shape tourism in a systematic and sensible manner.

#### *The Moffat Model*

This is an economic and forecasting model that paints a picture of the present, produces forecasts of the future and measures the economic impact of shocks and surprises on the tourism sectors. The purpose of the Moffat Model (VisitScotland, 2003) is to quantify scenarios. It was developed partially in response to a demand for 'real figures', as most of the policy makers felt more comfortable with quantitative data, rather than qualitative measures. This demand for 'figures' was also partly driven by the need for a comfort zone, where

Figure 1 Scenario planning at VisitScotland



policy makers could more easily understand scenario planning.

These three clusters of related work depend upon each other to ensure a holistic and systematic approach to scenario planning, as seen in Figure 1. This approach to scenario planning has come about after extensive consultation and observations of other organisations' approaches. Advice was sought from Scottish Enterprise and Shell International about scenario construction, whereas the Scottish Executive gave advice on economic modelling and Strathclyde University on environmental scanning. The three clusters are a representation of the organisation's needs to deliver a process that can create change both within the organisation and the industry. The remainder of this paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of these clusters.

### SCENARIO PLANNING GROUP

Scenario planning is a process that provides the capability to think about the future. For example scenario planning at Royal Dutch/Shell allows executives to think about the future and events that may impinge upon strategy; it provides them with the skills needed to manoeuvre the organisation and, over time, to create change. Arie de Geus (1988) called this 'Adaptive Organizational Learning', where the organisation creates a capability to understand, create and manage change that leads to competitive advantage.

Based upon this ethos, a scenario planning group has been set up in order to embrace the organisation and industry, and to get both to think about the future of Scottish tourism. The group is not about a one-off project, but rather a process of

learning and development in which an organisation can focus in a constructive way on the future beyond short-term political turmoil (McLellan and Smith, 1997), which has been associated with many national tourism organisations in the past. This turmoil is based upon, 'if there is a problem, let's review it' (Lederer, 2003; Kerr, 2004), which leads to short-term decision making and constant political and organisational review, where policy makers become focused on structures, roles and responsibilities rather than the long-term strategic position and proposition.

As VisitScotland is the lead advisory body for tourism in Scotland, it has a responsibility to create a strategic conversation about tourism with industry and policy makers from a wide range of public sector organisations. VisitScotland is a public sector agency whose prime responsibility is the marketing of Scotland as a destination, therefore it can bring players and stakeholders (Eden and Ackermann, 1998) together to focus their minds on increasing the value and importance of tourism. The aim of the group is to find answers to a number of questions, including:

'What actions does VisitScotland and its stakeholders need to take to ensure tourism is the *first and everlasting industry* of Scotland to 2025?'

This question is based on VisitScotland's vision of tourism as Scotland's 'First and everlasting industry' (Yeoman and Lederer, 2004). This comes from the desire to be Scotland's premier industry in terms of GDP, employment and status; the main reason to live, work and play in Scotland. Those who have responsibility for tourism now must take the right decisions to ensure a lasting future.

The choice of the year 2025 ensures that the scenarios show real change and are not just an extension of the present. One of the

trends that will have an impact on Scotland and tourism by 2025 is the change to Scotland's demographics. Research highlights (Hay and Yeoman, 2004) that Scotland will have more people over 65 than under 21 by 2025 and a critical dependency ratio for those in work supporting those out of work. This means less economic activity in Scotland by 2025, which will affect business tourism, labour supply and fiscal policy.

In addressing this core question it is expected that the scenario planning group will explore the following, more detailed, questions using the scenario planning techniques of 'hexagons' (Hodgson, 1992) and 'Futurescoping' (Future Foundation, 2004):

- Which markets will thrive and which will decline to 2025?
- Which product offers will thrive and which will decline to 2025?
- How will consumer needs and wants change to 2025?
- How will supply-side and structural issues assist or hinder the development of Scottish tourism to 2025?

In answering these questions the scenario planning group will identify actions that are specific, feasible and commercially viable to optimise decision making on strategy, product development, marketing and communications issues. The overall aim of the group is to identify the actions that need to be taken today and tomorrow, so that an optimal economic and sustainable industry for tourism in Scotland through to 2025 can be developed. One of the challenges, however, is getting people to think about 2025, as most of them will not be in the same job in 20 years' time, and have difficulty in thinking more than one year ahead. Scenario thinking is not a natural activity for most people and getting them to think this way is, in itself, a very big challenge.

The Future Foundation, a leading consumer think tank, has been appointed as the supplier for this project. As it was not considered to be a one-off project, the Future Foundation has been engaged on a three-year timescale in order to construct the scenarios, develop the group and ensure that the scenarios are embedded within VisitScotland and partner stakeholders. By ensuring the scenarios are embedded, a thinking process (De Geus, 1988) occurs linking to policy and actions. The group is being limited to 12 organisations that work in Scottish or international tourism. These organisations are recognised as ‘big players’, not necessarily in terms of value or volume of business, but they are defined as those that have ‘power’ to create meaningful change in terms of the value and volume of Scottish tourism. Invitations to join the group were sent to 80 organisations. These potential members were identified by the senior management team at VisitScotland, the scenario planner and the Future Foundation. Invitations were sent to a broad range of organisations that had a serious interest in Scottish tourism, including banks, national enterprise companies, hotel groups, environmental charities and whisky companies. The final composition of the group is a representation of sectors and interests found in Scottish tourism.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING**

The world is full of information and knowledge; in fact, there is too much information, which leads to information overload. Environmental scanning is an intelligence service that produces a systematic process for deciding which information to observe and follow, and that understands the trends and drivers that shape the development of its businesses (Temtime, 2003; Hines, 2003). The environment creates problems and opportunities for organisations, therefore it is important

for organisations to detect, capture and link information to strategic and tactical directions.

Information and knowledge is held in multiple forms, both explicit and implicit. John Sparrow, in his book, ‘Knowledge in Organisations’ (1998), classifies this information and knowledge as types of mental material, forms of thought and kinds of thinking. Sparrow draws upon five types of mental material that human beings process. These are semantic understanding, episodic memories, skilled behaviour, tacit feel and unconscious interpretation. Two forms of thought, propositional and imagistic, are considered. The final element of the knowledge equation is the type of thinking that is occurring. Sparrow proposes three types of thinking: reasoned, mood and autistic. In total, humans process up to 30 types of knowledge, therefore any environmental scanning process cannot rely on just one technique or methodology to elicit this knowledge. Environmental scanning must use a variety of mixing and matching methods in order to attain its goal. This is likened to a *bricoleur*, a maker of quilts who assembles chosen pieces of material into a coherent whole (Levi-Strauss, 1966). More formally, environmental scanning involves a triangulation, or crystallisation, of methods which, at VisitScotland, are: McTAFE; the development of a remarkable people network; training; using the nVision scanning tools; running a number of systems thinking workshops for staff; as well as a series of seminars and futures lectures for staff and people invited from industry.

#### **Tourism alternative futures evaluation (McTAFE)**

In order to understand the environment in a systematic manner that brings together an appreciation of political, economic, social and technology drivers, McTAFE provides

a means to capture these issues and determine their importance and relationship to Scottish tourism. McTAFE draws upon principles of the CAFÉ methodology that was developed by Strathclyde University (Brightman, 2004). The methodology has been altered to suit a systems thinking approach called 'Hexagons' (Galt *et al.*, 1997) or their commercial name of IDONS. The role of McTAFE is systematically to identify, interpret and qualify critical uncertainties and track change. The process acts as an early warning device, seeking to reveal shocks, surprises, trends and drivers that shape tourism. Through identifying the drivers that shape tourism markets, consumers and products, based upon wider environmental factors, VisitScotland now has a means to observe the environment and to take appropriate action.

#### **Remarkable people network**

Remarkable people are defined as intensely curious but sharp observers, who understand the way the world works and who have their finger on the pulse (Hiejden *et al.*, 2002) of change. The concept comes from Shell International, founded on the principle that a search for innovative thinking needs to take place outside the organisation. This means identifying individuals who are not normally part of the strategic conversation within an organisation or even, in this case, the tourism industry, but who are conversant with the industry structure, language, driving forces and key uncertainties, and whose structured knowledge overlaps areas where VisitScotland's knowledge is fragmented, unstructured or lacking. Remarkable people can think outside the box, triggering leads that will have implications for tourism. Basically, these people are experts in a particular field or have a profound foresight of issues that will have an impact on tomorrow's possible actions. At VisitScotland, remarkable people are used to bring their expertise on

a particular subject, to act as market intelligence or are used to test the rigour of the present scenario thinking. Remarkable people knowledge is disseminated within the organisation through news bulletins, environmental scanning workshops, reports or scenarios.

#### **nVision**

nVision is a subscription online service comprising of an online resource, telephone consultancy, seminars and workshops. It provides a comprehensive understanding of social, cultural and economic trends as well as focused analysis and raw data. The service is available at [www.nvisiononline.co.uk](http://www.nvisiononline.co.uk) and is provided by the Future Foundation. The advantage of the service enables a one-stop shop for latest consumer and related trends that are available instantly. The back-up service is quick and efficient allowing focused analysis of scenario issues. The importance of the service from a scenario planning perspective allows employees at VisitScotland to understand the underlying assumptions behind the main trends that are shaping tourism. By inviting staff at VisitScotland to the training seminars run by nVision, and encouraging them to use this information resource directly without going through the scenario planner, it has also provided for a 'quick win', thus helping to change people's understanding of scenario planning and their understanding of the drivers that shape the process. This has helped to get people to think about the importance of scenario planning, because part of the problem of becoming an adaptive organisation is that scenario planning is talking about the future, when many people have difficulty coping with the present.

#### **Systems thinking workshops**

The purpose of the systems thinking workshops is to bring together stake-

holders and experts in order to explore and share thinking on a specific topic that will have an impact on tourism. Many of the topics examine the degree of disruption of tourism caused by shocks; these include 'Scenarios for the G8 Summit' (Yeoman and Lennon, 2004), 'West Nile disease' (Yeoman *et al.*, 2004), and 'Foot and mouth' (Yeoman and Lennon, 2004). The workshops follow a format of presentations, discussion of issues, visual modelling of issues, policy implications and action points. Two interactive visual modelling techniques are used: cognitive mapping or hexagons.

Cognitive mapping enables a modeller to represent a participant's individual thoughts on a problem situation. The map itself shows a series of linked ideas, with arrows indicating how one idea might lead to another, ie it is a sign-directed map expressing chains of cause and effect among the issues comprising and relating to the problem area. Colin Eden and Fran Ackermann describe the approach in the book, 'Journey Making' (Eden and Ackerman, 1998). The approach is supported by a computer package called 'Decision Explorer' (Jones, 1993).

Hexagons, or their commercial name of IDONS (Hodgson, 1992), according to Dodds and Hocking (1994), assist in the process of introducing and structuring ideas. Hodgson (1992) states that:

'Concept mapping with IDONS is the process of rendering tacit models sharable by use of representation mapping. This mapping is done by means of a variety of techniques which are like moving diagrams. The fundamentals of the process involve, in a group session, individuals noting down ideas on magnetic, coloured hexagons, which are placed on white-board. These hexagons are then clustered to show related concepts and connections to ideas. The

flexibility of the method means that it can be used in various contexts and provides a means to stimulate creative thinking and eliciting a collective view of ideas'. (p. 227)

Through a series of workshops this allows the exploration of issues and the surfacing and challenging of assumptions, through using visual models, which act as holding devices or cryptic labels of knowledge where participants explore their own, and others' mental models of the problem situation. The workshops bring structure to messy problems in which these mental models can be negotiated, leading to a range of clear and agreed actionable outcomes (Yeoman, 2004).

### **Seminars**

These seminars differ from the systems thinking workshops, as no visual modelling takes place and the purpose is networking, learning and information. The seminars bring together a range of experts on a subject, who make presentations to an invited audience. For example, a forthcoming seminar on the 'Impact of Enlargement of the EU' will bring together speakers on 'Consumers in Eastern European Nations', 'A Comparative Analysis of New EU States National Tourism Organisations' and 'Financial Support for New EU States Tourism Projects'. The audience will be VisitScotland's International Marketing Department, suppliers and providers of tourism products and policy makers.

### **Futures lectures**

The futures lecture programme is designed to form debate about trends and drivers that will have an impact upon tourism in the future. The lectures are open to VisitScotland staff and industry and are free. Twelve to fourteen lectures take place every year, using high profile speakers from industry, think tanks and academia.

Topics covered so far or planned include: The Impact of Demographic Change on Scottish Tourism; The Future of Financial Services in Scotland; Revenue Management and the Low Cost Carriers; Scottish Tourism in 2015; The Future of the Barnett Formula and Fiscal Policy; The Future of Transatlantic Aviation; and Festivals as Creative Destinations.

### **THE MOFFAT MODEL**

The Moffat Model (Blake *et al.*, 2004) allows VisitScotland to quantify the future, by explaining the present state of tourism through economic indicators. Forecasting the future using econometrics and measuring the impact of shocks or changes in policy, it was computable general equilibrium modelling, which is an integrated economics tool. An integrated approach is necessary as traditional forecasting techniques are of limited use in predicting shocks or changes in variables (Blake *et al.*, 2004; Prideaux *et al.*, 2003).

### **Tourism indicators**

National tourism organisations have become aware of business and government need for comprehensive information about the current context of tourism. Many countries, including Canada, Australia and New Zealand publish indicators as a way to explain the performance of tourism that is related to underpinning economic performance. VisitScotland's indicators are a detailed examination of Scottish tourism, domestic tourism, domestic market trends, international tourism and various tourism sectors, such as business tourism. The indicators for each of the categories are provided as a page of text, numbers, graphs and charts.

Figure 2 shows one of five pages of tourism indicators for Scotland and is concerned with painting the current picture of domestic tourism in Scotland. The data show the contribution of tourism in terms of revenue,

yield and growth as well as other underlying indicators such as interest rates, levels of disposable income and house prices. Further pages use similar illustrations. The intention is to publish the indicators every six months along with forecasts for tourism for the next two years.

### **Forecasting**

Econometric forecasting, which is what the Moffat Model does, can predict the future based on the changes in economic variables that are drivers of tourism. The econometric model uses predictable elements from a time series of international and domestic tourism statistics and accounts for seasonal changes or the intervention of one-off events. The model finds a correlation between the tourism time series with exchange rates, GDP and inflation, then makes a forecast of the future based on those economic variables that are published biannually by OECD. The model predicts domestic demand and the main international markets for Scotland, and estimates trips and spending for those markets. The forecasts can be used to generate scenarios, based upon changes in exchange rates, GDP and inflation, and provide a useful tool based on changes in economic conditions.

### **Scenario analysis**

The scenario analysis element of the model uses the principles of computable general equilibrium (CGE) modelling of the Scottish economy. CGE models are a well-established methodology for measuring changes or shocks in the economy and the effect they have on tourism (Blake and Sinclair, 2003). For example, the model allows for events such as SARS, changes in value added (sales) tax or air passenger duty/tax, as well as a range of optimistic and pessimistic scenarios relating to the future of the Scottish economy. The model provides macroeconomic effects of alternative scenarios on income, employment, welfare,

Figure 2 Scottish tourism indicators

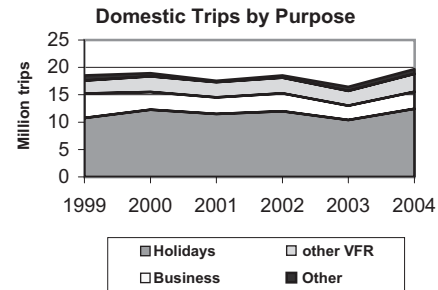
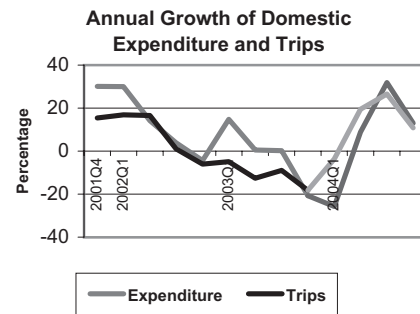
**MAIN TRENDS**

- Domestic tourism expenditure amounted to £745m in the fourth quarter of 2003.
- The number of trips by domestic tourists was 3.8m providing a yield of £199 per trip.
- In 2003, 63% of tourists come to Scotland for leisure trips, 16% visit friends or relatives and 17% come for business.

The total value of expenditure by domestic tourists amounted to £745 million in the fourth quarter of 2003. Domestic tourists made 3.8 million trips in Scotland, with an average expenditure of £199 per trip in the same quarter, compared with 4.6 million trips and a yield of £205 per trip in the same quarter of the previous year.

The main purpose for coming to Scotland is holiday trips with 63% of the total number of trips. Visits to friends and relatives account for 16% of trips, business trips 17% of the total and trips for other purposes account for 4.4%.

UK disposable income is a key driver of domestic tourism in Scotland and grew in real terms by 3.3% in the year to the fourth quarter of 2003. Domestic tourism expenditure is forecast to grow by 9.5% in 2004 to an annual total of £3,938 and the number of domestic trips is forecast to grow by 14.6% to 18.8 million.



	2003Q1	2003Q2	2003Q3	2003Q4	2004Q1	2004Q2	2004Q3	2004Q4
<b>Domestic Tourism Expenditure (£m)</b>	780	931	1,140p	745p	579f	1,013f	1,503f	842f
growth rate (%)	14.8	0.6	0.2p	-20.7p	-25.7f	8.9f	31.8f	13.0f
trips (million)	3.7	4.1	4.9p	3.8p	3.5f	4.9f	6.2f	4.2f
yield (£/trip)	212	227	233p	199p	163f	207f	242f	203f
<b>Real UK disposable income (% growth)</b>	1.9	1.5	2.5	3.3	2.7f	2.7f	2.7f	2.7f
<b>Bank of England base rate (%)</b>	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.9	4.2f	4.4f	4.7f
<b>UK House Prices (% change)</b>	23.4	21.9	18.6	15.4	8.0f	8.0f	8.0f	8.0f

p : based on provisional data. f : based on forecasts (see notes)

the balance of trade and government revenue, as well as 82 economic sectors, including tourism-related sectors of large hotels, small hotels, bed and breakfast establishments and retail distribution. It can take account of different types of tourism expenditure: by domestic tourists, tourists from the rest of the UK, international tourists and day-trippers.

But the most important feature of the Moffat Model is the integration of the indicators, forecasting and scenario analysis as user-friendly software. The model does not give a final answer about the future, just a means to explain and interpret it. It must be remembered that interpretation is an art not a science, where subjectivity reigns, not objectivity.

Further work is still required on the Moffat Model in order to integrate gross value added (GVA) measurement and CGE modelling with Tourism Satellite Accounts in order to understand the relationships between the tourism sectors with other industries through secondary GVA measurement. The econometric algorithm needs to account for supply factors such as direct flights. The presentation of the indicators needs to be tested, which may lead to a presentation redesign. Such changes are ongoing as this paper is being written.

## CONCLUSIONS

When Dr George Burt, a senior lecturer in scenario planning at Strathclyde University, first spoke to VisitScotland about scenario planning, he said it would take VisitScotland five years to embed scenario thinking into the organisation. At first, the authors did not believe him. They do now. This paper lays out the mechanics of scenario planning at VisitScotland. The ultimate aim of scenario planning is scenario thinking, but it is harder to change thinking and organisational culture than to develop scenarios. The real test for the organisation, if it takes up the challenge of scenario planning, is to embed it into the organisation so that it becomes everyday language and action. If that can be achieved, VisitScotland will deliver its vision to be the world's best national tourism organisation, as scenario planning will allow it to make sense of the future and initiate change in a systematic and holistic manner for an uncertain world.

The key lessons are:

- If you are going to carry out scenario planning, do it properly, not as a one-off project but as a process of thinking
- Both industry and policy makers need a mechanism to make sense of the future

in a holistic and systematic manner. Scenario planning is that mechanism

- Have a dedicated scenario planner who will champion the cause
- Connect to powerful people with a futuristic and visionary outlook to support you. Do not use people who will just criticise you and want the project to fail
- Remember, most stakeholders are talking and acting in the present. They desperately want to prepare for the future. They will come to you eventually, especially when they have a strategic plan to write
- As scenario planning is resource intensive, it requires buy-in from industry and the organisation. This is a constant battle as policy makers, people and politicians will always change
- The scenario planning process must be grounded in research not make-believe (sometimes)
- Use both quantitative and qualitative methods, as means to interpret the future
- Scenario planning is a process, not an answer
- You have to make a connection between scenario planning and your organisation, this means showing how the world shapes tourism, not the other way round
- Be pragmatic rather than grand and look for the opportunity to make the process work.

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