

Notre-Dame is burning: Coping with the destruction of heritage

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Abstract

Research has found that consumers can foster deep bonds with heritage sites. But what happens when the heritage is destroyed? Drawing on the literature on brand personification, we study consumers' reaction to the destruction of heritage. Through a social network analysis on the Notre-Dame cathedral fire, we show that the destruction of heritage is perceived by consumers as the loss of a human person. We thus propose a heritage mourning process composed of five components: shock and denial, anger and sadness, questioning about life, sharing memories and recovery. Finally, theoretical and managerial contributions are offered for.

Keywords: *heritage; brand personification; social network analysis*

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