LEISURE CARDS, SOCIAL MARKETING, E-GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENSHIP

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Introduction
As in retailing and commercial services discount cards are widespread in public leisure services (about 85% in GB), sometimes as a means of encouraging use and customer loyalty, more often as a means of trying to overcome poverty and deprivation (Collins, 2003a); swipe card technology has made it easy to overcome the stigma of producing evidence of eligibility at the reception till; smart card technology can give managers and public service providers a great deal more information about customer profile and behaviour. But this paper will argue that it can also link with many other public and commercial functions to implement the concept of e-government and active citizenship.

Methods
Literature and practice reviews and advice/consultancy for national (Collins, 2003b) and local clients (VAGA, 2005).

Findings
While adopted widely, I have been critical of most of the card schemes, because

- they have not situated their Cards as part of an overall pricing and anti-poverty policy
- few have dedicated budgets and staff, or enough of either
- few practice active, outreach marketing to target groups in their meeting places, most using passive low-effectiveness means like posters and leaflets
- most limit their offers to public sports services, with less than a third extending even to public arts, or including commercial retail and professional services which help to attract in particular women and older people, and support small firms with no skills in marketing, and
- many had allowed financial pressures to reduce their discounts below an effective threshold for poor people.

Even with other of these limitations, the effect of including arts and commercial services is clear from Table 1. A few 'front-runners' have done better and attracted over 100,000 cardholders. The paper will update these figures.

Table 1: Take up of Leisure Cards in English and Welsh local authorities

Type of Authorities	With commercial services	(n=)	Without commercial services	(n=)
London	21,594	(8)*	8,646	(14)
Metropolitan Districts	14,138	(10)	10,773	(12)
Unitary Authorities	16,029	(13)*	14,234	(16)*
Non Metropolitan English Districts	5,975	(17)	8,320	(52)
Unitaries in Wales	-		5,454	(6)
Total	432,042	(48)	841,459	(100)

Source CIPFA (2003)

* each skewed by one 'front runner' with over 100,000 card holders

The government (DCMS, 2002) and Sport England want to see at least a 1% annual increase in participation; to do this means involving some of the 'hard-to-reach' groups, using social marketing, that is the tools and methods of commercial marketing applied to behaviours that are difficult to change, or not popular – reducing smoking, or alcohol intake, using condoms for safe sex, better diet, and exercise (Andreason, 1995; Donovan and Hedley, 2003; Kotler et al, 2002). There has never been a sustained, TV-based marketing campaign for sport in the UK. Carter (2005) argued that it should

Results

Five months into the project and three stitching centres in Nairobi, two in deprived areas, are already producing 600 balls per week made of reinforced leather, which – if punctured – can easily be mended. By the end of the first year of production Alive & Kicking will have made close to 50,000 balls.

The standard ball has been approved by the FA and by Sven-Göran Eriksson, the England manager, and was inspected by Jerome Champagne and by Dr. Joseph Mifsud of UEFA when they visited Nairobi. Major companies and development agencies are already buying the balls in bulk.

Confirmed large orders include:

Corporate Entities	No
General Motors	500
Safaricom Foundation	850
Nairobi Bottlers (Coca Cola)	1,000
East African Safari Rally	1,200
DHL	550
Youth/Health Agencies	
MYSA	250
Red Cross	360
UNICEF	3,000

The Alive & Kicking project has also attracted media attention. Even before we had started production Reuters commissioned a short film that went out to seventeen African countries.

Discussion/Implications

Alive & Kicking was set up in response to a year-long feasibility study on the acute shortage of affordable balls and sports equipment in East Africa. It is thus our goal to develop counterpart operations in other African countries, which face the same challenges as those we are addressing in Kenya. We have already received requests to establish stitching cooperatives in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Sudan and South Africa.

South Africa is of particular significance in the expansion of our project as the host of the World Cup in 2010, representing a continent whose population is largely deprived of opportunities to play ball games and which is in dire need of assistance in the battle against AIDS. This will be a unique opportunity to highlight our project and emphasize the importance of equitable access to affordable and suitable sports equipment, such as footballs, if we are to ensure that vast populations are not excluded from the power of sport.

Alive & Kicking is a working example of how the inherent links between sport, international development, health and education can be exploited to radically improve the lives of, potentially, millions of people.

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receive the same backing as safe driving and anti-smoking, of £30m p.a. Leisure and library cards as major municipal direct-to-citizens services, could be part of such a campaign.

Moreover, the advent of smart card technology could put leisure in the van of another government policy, of using electronic means to inform, poll and serve citizens - E-government – on which all authorities must have made progress by 2006. There has been a 5-year National Smart Card Scheme, and Table 2 shows that, indeed, in authorities already working to introduce smart cards, leisure and libraries are the most popular functions.

Table 2: Smart Card schemes –desired functions

Function	Nos	% of total	Function	No	% of total
Leisure	24	49	E-purse	12	24
Bus/train fares	24	49	Car park charges	11	22
Cashless school meals	22	45	Connexions/Education	8	16
Library borrowing	22	45	LA payments	4	8
Authentication/proof of age	19	39	Home Care	3	6
Use computers/info kiosks	15	31	Prescriptions /medical reg.	2	4

Source: National Smart Card Forum, 2005

Implications
Multi-functionality is necessary to cover the cost of card readers, software, data management systems and marketing. Once enough people have signed up, the database is a valuable property, and can be used to run promotions tightly targeted at particular groups or areas (down to street block scale), to undertake local consultations and pools and simpler forms of market research. It is a chance for leisure to lead in technological and also social policy terms, for a change, while also helping the many tiny local professional and retail businesses in ways they cannot help themselves. Mobile phone companies, banks and chainstore/supermarket retailers are showing us the way.

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ADVENTURE SPORT TOURISM IN RURAL REVITALIZATION: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC EVALUATION

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Context

The world is becoming increasingly urban, and the pace of urbanization continues to accelerate (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, 1996). One of the side effects is a growing imbalance in the economic and social development of rural regions relative to urban centres. The imbalance can become a self-amplifying process as younger and better-educated rural residents move from rural areas into cities (where opportunities are thought to be greater). This has two immediate effects. First, the social fabric of rural communities is eroded. Second, rural areas become less desirable places to live or work, with the result that the economic base of rural areas deteriorates. Governments throughout the world are increasingly concerned to find means to revitalize rural areas. Although a number of tactics have been tried, the introduction or elevation of tourism, particularly adventure forms of sport tourism, as a revenue source has been a fairly common tactic (Kneafsey, 2000).

In order for a sporting activity to contribute to the overall tourism development of a host destination, that activity must be integrated with the other tourism products and services like accommodation, meals, shopping (Chalip, 2001). Sport tourists may desire activities for accompanying family members who do not participate in the sport. They may seek additional activities for themselves to enhance their overall experience. However, sport organisations typically lack the networks, structures, and skills required to work effectively with tourism providers (Weed, 2003). This can serve to further weaken the value of sport to a rural community's economy.

Despite widespread advocacy of sport tourism as a rural development tool, and high hopes for the benefits it is expected to bring, very little is known about it's effects on rural communities. In particular, the separation of sport from tourism in governance structures, and of sport and tourism from other economic development infrastructures has been shown to inhibit its application (Weed, 2003), suggesting a need to examine the efficacy of sport tourism as a tool for rural revitalization.

Methods

This study employed ethnographic methods to explore the opportunities and disappointments associated with a Portuguese rural community's use of paragliding in its mix of tourist attractions. Fieldwork was conducted during June and July 2003. Data gathering included observation, interviews, and review of archive materials. Specifically, the first author observed the daily life of Linhares da Beira. This included mingling with crowds around paraglider landing sites, attending the local church, eating in local restaurants and cafés, and socialising informally with locals and paragliders. Observations were logged in a research journal, and the informal socialising with paragliders and community residents was complemented with formal interviews. One set comprised detailed interviews with 6 female and 3 male key informants (either leaders of local paragliding groups or people playing a central role in the community's political and economic life), and the second of opportunistic interviews conducted as opportunities arose (15 paragliders and 27 local residents). Further, diverse published and unpublished reports providing background data on Linhares da Beira and its tourism marketing were reviewed.

Results

Although paragliding in Linhares da Beira has been popularly identified as a successful application of adventure sport tourism for rural revitalisation, interviews with local business people, observation of paragliders and their own descriptions of their behaviours suggested that paragliding was <u>not</u> well positioned to contribute substantially to the local economy. Except for a one-week tournament in August, when local accommodation and restaurant were filled with competitors, spectators and their families, paragliding has only a small impact on the community because most gliders are day trippers, prefer to socialise with one another, and shop and eat outside the community. Throughout the