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## **Indigenous branding: Examples from Aotearoa-New Zealand**

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### **ABSTRACT**

We introduce the topic of indigenous Māori branding and provide selected examples from New Zealand (NZ). We briefly discuss the historical background and context for Māori branding in global markets, its potential role in expanding Māori economic development in NZ, and major issues such as cultural respect and intellectual property rights. We draw on findings from recently completed research 2003–2007, “Māori business branding: achieving competitive advantage in global markets (Waka Tohu)”. The Waka Tohu project found that Māori businesses mainly use branding to express and assert their own identity, values, knowledge, and cultural distinctiveness, and to tell their story to the world. This cultural distinctiveness may provide a competitive advantage in certain markets, particularly where it is based strongly on values, integrity and ethics.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Māori cultural elements such as imagery, language, symbols, colours, designs, textures, methods, dance, music, and emotional and spiritual concepts have been inherent parts of Māori culture for centuries. Many of these elements are being increasingly used by Māori and non-Māori enterprises (e.g., companies, businesses, organisations) to express something unique in global markets, and businesses are increasingly capitalising on this cultural distinctiveness. Stafford (2007) defined Māori branding as “a unique cultural association of stories, images, names, and symbols which serves to differentiate competing products or services, and to provide both a physical and emotional trigger to create a relationship between consumers and the product, service, or enterprise” (p.7). There is an emergence of pride at being a successful Māori business in New Zealand (NZ) and branding has become a central way for expressing values and providing a unique statement of identity to the world (Wilson, 2005; Stafford, 2005; NZ Trade & Enterprise (NZTE), 2005a, b; Māori Language Commission, 2006). Selected examples of Māori business brands are given in section 2.3.

In global economies, nation and cultural brand distinctiveness is becoming a significant asset. Many recent articles in NZ (e.g., Wilson 2005; Panoho 2007) discuss the importance of Māori culture as an integral and unique part of NZ branding. Māori are therefore increasingly engaged in discussions on research, knowledge, business, economics, and markets. At the same time, Māori are deeply concerned about cultural misappropriation and insensitivity, ignorance of intellectual property rights, and believe that any branding of NZ through Māori imagery must take place only with their active agreement.

A project, “Māori business branding: achieving competitive advantage in global markets (Waka Tohu)”, was carried out between 2003 and 2007. The project considered the growing importance of branding in global markets and the body of evidence that suggested overseas markets were

responsive to Māori branding (Jones & Morrison-Briars 2004; Wingham et al., 2004; Gibson, 2005; Wilson 2005; NZTE, 2005a, b). It was designed to answer four key questions: what is branding; are overseas markets responsive to Māori branding; can Māori branding be used to gain competitive advantage in overseas markets; and are Māori brands being used to expand Māori economic development. We draw on findings of this recently completed research and from a large amount of other literature and conversations on this topic. The term *Tohu Māori* (Gilbert, 2007) was used in the Waka Tohu project to refer to those elements of Māori culture that establish an indigenous or Māori brand (Gilbert, 2005; Stafford, 2005, 2007). How well this is expressed, and the degree to which it is expressed in the brand was termed its *Māoriness* (Gilbert, 2005).

### 1.1. Indigenous Māori society

Indigenous Māori make up about 15% of the total NZ population of 4 million, with about 80% of all Māori now living in urban areas. Contemporary Māori represent themselves as having values, status, and responsibility acquired through their links to their ancestors. While Māori are fully assimilated into NZ society and are equal under one law, they also like to express themselves as having a different set of views and perspectives based on a distinct indigenous culture where beliefs, knowledge, values, and aspirations may digress from those of the mainstream population. Ancestral lineage (*whakapapa*) provides an origin and a common bond for all Māori, linking them to each other and to the environment. It is this genealogical web that provides the basis for a point of difference and Māori societal structure.

The basic tenets of traditional Māori society remain strong alongside more contemporary groupings, beliefs and values (Barlow, 1993; Harmsworth, 2005, 2006; Mead, 2004; Warriner, 1999). Māori terms are commonly used in planning, business and enterprise (Harmsworth, 2005). Contemporary and traditional values influence the way Māori conduct themselves, have tribal status and authority, relate to each other, manage, organise and address issues, and collaborate with other individuals and agencies. The challenge for Māori is how to balance aspirations for cultural enrichment, retaining strong elements of traditional culture such as values, language and knowledge, with those more modern elements of advancement, growth, commerce, and economic development. These challenges are being met in many areas by many Māori groups and organisations, where capacity building, planning, and leadership are essential ingredients. Māori culture is often reflected in the culture of the organisation through custom and protocols, strategic planning, employment conditions, relationships, networking, behaviour, ethics, social responsibility, environmental standards, and branding. The business branding examples given in this paper (section 2.3) are testimony to the importance of Māori culture in contemporary Māori business, and illustrate the importance of branding for expressing cultural identity and uniqueness.

## 2. BRANDING

International interest in branding uniqueness and authenticity is increasing: “The global desire for authenticity favours countries which tend to have more preserved and unique cultures... sense of place culture and character must be evident as a country expands or creates its travel, tourism, trade, and investment offerings” (Country Brand Index, 2007).

Since World War II, modern brands have developed to create differences for products in danger of becoming “hard to tell apart” and “a proven way for companies to capture and exploit their innovations” (Roberts, 2003, p. 30). Branding creates distinctiveness within a crowded market (Panoho 2007). Today, branding includes visual imagery, logos, text, iconography, graphics, and any media associated with creating an identity for a company, product or service. Trademarks, copyrights, symbols, images, and patents have therefore become essential to protect the intellectual property associated with branding (Roberts, 2003; Reihana, 2004; Harmsworth, 2005). A brand helps build relationships and loyalty with consumers to grow ‘brand equity’, where “consumers are brought closer to the business producing the goods and services they need” (Roberts, 2003, p. 24). Many factors underlying a company brand originate with cultural values, ethics, and principles and are used to state what the company stands for – more than just profits (Spiller, 2000; Spiller & Lake, 2003; Henderson & Thompson, 2003; Paine, 2004).

## 2.1. Global branding and standards

Brands are commonly used globally to gain competitive advantage, align with a specific consumer market, signify uniqueness, and establish a point difference from competitors. They may do this by stating authenticity or by demonstrating they are founded on sound principles, values and standards. Internationally, more and more businesses are using a range of methods to demonstrate these standards by measuring and reporting their organisational sustainability, responsibility, and performance. Some of the most common examples include the Global Reporting Initiative (2006), and the Dow Jones Indexes (1999).

## 2.2 History of Māori Branding

Māori branding has always been an integral part of Māori culture and is an active expression of the culture through Maori elements such as language, knowledge, geographic and cultural place names, cultural practices, and artworks (Gilbert, 2005, 2006, 2007).

With colonisation, largely since 1769, these elements have been increasingly used and exploited by outside cultures, beginning with the European. Gilbert (2005, 2007) demonstrated that the use of Māori cultural elements by non-Māori cultures is often directed by a lack of cultural understanding that results in appropriation and exploitation. A key driver for the uptake by foreign cultures was the fascination of something uniquely different from their own culture. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century, for example, saw Māori culture as deeply rooted in Polynesian culture, of mystical ancient quality, and completely exotic. Within the context of Māori trade activities, Gilbert (2005, 2007) identified six distinct time periods, each exhibiting different trends in the way Māori branding was used with the growth of commercialisation, adaptation, and exploitation: first contact (1769–1800); pre-colonial (1801–1841); 19<sup>th</sup> Century (1842–1899); first-half 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900–1945); second-half 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1946–1999); and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2000–2006).

The use of Tohu Māori includes the first contact period (1769–1800), where Māori goods and *taonga* (natural resources) began to be traded for European goods and services, especially among transient groups such as explorers, whalers, and sealers (e.g., Salmond, 1991).

The pre-colonial (1801–1841) period saw trade develop principally around food, the acquisition of new technologies by Māori, and the movement of various *taonga* from their origins. Many *taonga* were increasingly taken offshore for sale, often illegally, for example, *mokomokai* (tattooed heads) were taken to Sydney in 1811 (Gilbert, 2007). A high value began to be placed on Māori goods (e.g., implements, carvings, pendants, *mere*, *patu*, *tiki*, earrings) and *moko* (tattoo), and trade in Māori artworks and *mokomokai* grew. Non-Māori enterprise began to use, and trade Māori goods as a way to differentiate such goods in an international market, and high prices were often paid by foreigners for unique items (Gilbert, 2007).

The trade and export of Māori goods greatly increased later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (1842–1899). NZ became a prime settlement and tourist destination. Agricultural commodities were increasingly traded and exported. Māori dominated an emerging tourism industry in this period (e.g., tours around Rotorua geothermal areas, Māori villages, the pink and white terraces – Tarawera). Documentation of Māori culture grew, published mainly through a European perspective (Durie, 1998, p. 54), and non-Māori enterprise increasingly adapted and modified Tohu Māori. As part of a thriving tourist industry, a proliferation of tourist items were produced – trinkets, cups, teaspoons, plates, carvings, table cloths, cushions, toilet-roll holders – all using Māori symbols and imagery to some degree (Gilbert, 2007).

With the increase in transport networks, trade, and communication, the world became smaller in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900–1945). Politics and conflict on one side of the world began to affect the other, and large numbers of Māori were involved in the two world wars. Stories of Māori military prowess abounded, and Māori brands began to reflect this romantic notion. Indigenous images and stories showed a Māori warrior race – noble savages with fearlessness, strength, courage – and products such as “power chief” (i.e., was tetraethyl lead), using the *rangātira* (chief)

brand, and Māori brands such as casein, native sauce, and varnish, where brands associated themselves with strong Māori chiefs, exemplified the era.

Between 1946 and 1999 air travel and communication expanded again, and trade between countries increased. Māori, still suffering the damaging effects of early colonisation, became increasingly urbanised, and subject to globalisation. Māori culture, however, was being rebuilt, a strong cultural identity became important, and this period signalled a new contemporary cultural renaissance (e.g., 1975 Waitangi Tribunal Act; establishment of the Māori language commission in 1987). Māori industry began to grow, Māori business development accelerated, a Māori economy emerged, and NZ business made increasing use of Māori iconography in marketing and product lines (e.g., the Air NZ *koru*). By the 1990s there was a new global fascination with the Māori tattoo, and *moko* (Ngahua Te Awekotuku, 2007) became a fashion statement in mainstream global populations and was popularised by overseas celebrities.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2000–future), global trade, travel, telecommunications, the internet, the world-wide web, and marketplaces have opened the world to information, knowledge, images, and culture without boundaries. People now define culture for themselves and Tohu Māori and Māori iconography are used by Māori and non-Māori enterprises in NZ, and, for a variety of reasons, by international businesses. Tohu Māori still intrigues – it still creates a point of difference. Lack of understanding and exploitation of Tohu Māori have become growing concerns and there are major issues with undermining cultural integrity and the misuse of intellectual property (Mead, 2002, 2005; Reihana, 2004; Harmsworth, 2005; Gilbert, 2007; Panoho, 2007).

### 2.3 Examples of contemporary Māori business branding in NZ

#### **Wakatu Incorporation** <http://www.wakatu.org.nz/index.cfm>

Wakatu Inc. is a very successful Māori enterprise of both land and sea, with a national and international focus. Its major business interests are in aquaculture, fisheries/seafood, wine, horticulture, forestry, commercial property and developments, and it is steadily expanding into both tourism and exporting. It has become a leader in Māori branding and international marketing. About 90% of Wakatu's products are exported into international markets – the biggest markets include USA, Australia, and the UK. Other markets that are becoming increasingly important include Canada, Switzerland, South Africa, France, India, Ireland, Spain, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, China, and Germany. As a company it is the founder of the successful Māori brand KONO and Tohu wines Ltd.

#### **KONO NZ** <http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/>

KONO is a range of premium NZ food and beverages, owned by Wakatu Incorporation of Nelson. It is the first Māori-owned family brand in the retail market.

- Kono NZ fruit [http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono\\_fruit/](http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono_fruit/)
- Kono wine of NZ [http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono\\_wine/](http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono_wine/)
- Kono NZ seafood [http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono\\_seafood/](http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/kono_seafood/)
- Kono Manuka honey <http://www.wakatu.org.nz/kono/honey/>

#### **Tohu Wines Ltd.** <http://www.tohuwines.co.nz>

Tohu Wines Ltd, established in 1998, was the first indigenous wine company to export high quality wines from NZ. It is a joint venture company with Wakatu Incorporation, and partners Ngāti Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust (NRAIT 1993), northern South Island (Te Tau Ihu) and Wi Pere Trust (1899) Gisborne. The idea of Tohu wines initially started in the early 1990s following discussions with Wakatu Incorporation. Tohu is distinctly Māori and proud to be an indigenous company. This point of difference separates them from other wine companies in NZ and globally. Wakatu Inc. wanted to put their unique indigenous culture up front and tell their story by the use of branding and exporting high-quality product lines.

#### **Kia Kaha clothing** <http://www.kiakaha.co.nz/index.pasp>

Kia Kaha clothing began in 1994 as a whānau (family)-based company and produces high quality Māori clothing (apparel). Kia Kaha, meaning “be strong and fearless”, “stand tall”, “be proud”, fuses traditional and contemporary Māori imagery and design on all its clothing range. It uses Māori design to make its products unique, specializing in high-quality apparel with authentic and distinctive Māori designs to global markets.

**Aotearoa Fisheries** <http://afl.Māori.nz/>

Aotearoa Fisheries Limited (AFL), the largest Māori-owned fisheries company in Aotearoa/NZ, was formed through a unique pan-iwi agreement and consequent legislation – the Māori Fisheries Act 2004. AFL has four main trading brands:

- Moana Pacific Fisheries Ltd
- Sealord
- PFL Prepared Foods Limited
- Pacific Marine Farms Ltd.

Its vision is to be the key investment vehicle of choice in the fishing industry for all Māori tribes (iwi), to maximise the value of Māori fisheries assets, and to ensure they are a strong seafood business delivering growth in shareholder wealth to iwi. AFL has developed a distinct Māori brand to achieve this. The AFL logo represents a stylised map of Aotearoa/NZ and is based on the story of the ancestor *Maui Tikitiki a Taranga*. The Māori name for the South Island – *Te Waka a Maui* – refers to the canoe that Maui used. The Māori name for the North Island – *Te Ika a Maui* – means the fish of Maui. The stylised fishing line (*aho*) that runs over the land refers to AFL’s companies throughout Aotearoa; and as a Māori-owned company it links all tribal groups. The logo evokes both the strong seafaring traditions and legends of Māori ancestors and a distinctive NZ image, including the *paua* (abalone) inlay, to shareholders, clients and customers domestically and internationally.

**Ngai Tahu Seafood Ltd.** <http://www.ngaitahu-seafood.com/>

Ngai Tahu Seafood (NTS) is owned by the Ngai Tahu tribe who are the main Māori tribe of the southern islands of NZ. Over the 1000 years since Ngai Tahu settled in NZ they have developed a seafood heritage and knowledge second to none. NTS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ngai Tahu Holdings Group, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of Te Rūnanga o Ngai Tahu (TRONT) <http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz/>. Today the company has a nation-wide presence, with retail and wholesale seafood businesses, and is also a major seafood exporter. The underlying philosophy of Ngai Tahu Seafood is underpinned by Ngai Tahu values, central to which are respect and sustainability.

**Whale Watch Kaikoura (Kaikoura)** <http://www.whalewatch.co.nz/>

Whale Watch® Kaikoura Limited (WWK) is recognised as one of NZ’s most distinctive and successful tourism ventures. It is a community trust (Kaikoura Charitable Trust), owned by the Māori people of Kaikoura in partnership with their affiliated tribes represented by the organisation Te Rūnanga O Ngai Tahu (Ngai Tahu Holdings Ltd) based in Christchurch <http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz/Main/Home>.

**Hapene – Made in NZ** <http://www.hapene.com/>

Hapene is an enterprise started by Christall Rata in 1999, in Feilding, in the north island of NZ. An innovative, patented method releases the muka (or fibre) within the plant leaves of harakeke (*Phormium tenax*), the NZ flax plant, to produce a unique net-like textile – dried, stored and transported harakeke leaf – that is sold as attractive recycled card packaging, bouquets, etc., following a distinct and unique Māori process of values, practice, and design.

## 2.4 Branding NZ

Branding has become a significant part of NZ’s strategy for expanding economic development and diversity through such avenues as export growth, innovation, and tourism (NZ Trade & Enterprise

[NZTE], 2005a,b; GIAB, 2003, 2004), and authenticity and distinctiveness are cited as central to defining a national identity.

It has been estimated NZ brands could deliver billions of dollars of trade advantage. The International Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index (The Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index 2007) ranked NZ as the 10<sup>th</sup> strongest nation brand in the world in 2005 (The Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index 2005a), calculating a brand-value figure of \$102 US billion for NZ for that year (The Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index 2005b). The question of what makes NZ companies, products, and services distinct from those of other countries has been widely discussed in the last 10 years by a number of NZ agencies and commentators (e.g., NZTE Brand NZ (Gibson, 2005; NZTE 2005a,b; Wilson, 2005; Oram, 2008). It was concluded that most national brands have been leveraging off NZ's size, geographical isolation, history, and indigenous culture (Wilson, 2005).

### 3. CULTURAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

#### 3.1 Māori issues regarding intellectual property rights

Most of the Māori IP issues in Aotearoa-NZ relate to the misuse and exploitation of *Tohu Māori* e.g., images, symbols, words, products, trademarks, cultural knowledge and *taonga* (natural resources) (Wihongi et al., 1991; Williams, 1997; Mead, 2002, 2005; Panoho, 2007). Such misuse and exploitation indicate the need for robust systems and mechanisms to protect cultural heritage and traditional knowledge (*mātauranga Māori*) in the public and international arena. Several examples indicate this widespread and frequent misuse of Māori cultural elements:

- Inappropriate use of Māori words and place-names for products and services
- The trademarking, patenting, and copyrighting of Māori names in NZ and other countries (e.g., Moana, the name of well known NZ Māori singer was trademarked in Germany, denying her rights to use her own name on tour)
- Other countries using and abusing Māori images, patterns, symbols for fashion labels (e.g., French designers)
- Frequent misuse of Māori songs, *waiata*, and the ignoring of intellectual property
- Fiat introduced an advert of women imitating the Māori dance, the *haka*
- Plastic symbols and images, such as *tiki*, made in other continents such as Asia
- The fashionable but inappropriate use of Māori tattoo (*moko*) without customary or spiritual understanding
- The Danish company Lego uses Māori cultural symbols, imagery and words in 2001 for hi-tech toys and games (e.g., Bionicle), thereby upsetting many Māori over the inappropriate use of traditional knowledge
- The Sony entertainment empire generated concern from Māori in 2003 over its computer game "The Mark of Kroy" (Kingi Gilbert, pers. comm., 2007)

#### 3.2 International forums giving recognition and protection

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and Trade (GATT) is a comprehensive multi-lateral agreement on intellectual property (Reihana, 2004) that protects most things except indigenous cultural knowledge. GATT is now administered by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and NZ as a member abides by many international laws and is party to the agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights. However, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) has provided the main forum for international debate concerning the interplay between intellectual property (IP) and traditional knowledge, genetic resources, traditional cultural expressions (folklore), and, since 2000, has been developing a range of practical tools to enhance the IP interests of the holders of such knowledge, resources and expressions (see <http://www.wipo.int/tk/en/index.html>).

In terms of putting indigenous knowledge and IP issues onto the international agenda it has been the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 1993) that

has given the most profile to this issue. In NZ many protection mechanisms for indigenous rights and IP rely largely on the Treaty of Waitangi and the Mataatua declaration.

### 3.3 Treaty of Waitangi

In NZ most cultural heritage protection is derived from indigenous rights based on the foundation and partnership document the Treaty of Waitangi signed between Māori and the Crown in 1840. Various strands of legislation, policy, and strategy recognising indigenous rights are based on Treaty principles (Williams, 1997). A Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975 as a consequence of the Waitangi Act 1975 and over 1000 claims have since been lodged with this tribunal to hear historic and contemporary Māori grievances dated back to colonisation. Many of the claims refer to natural resources, indigenous rights, and indigenous flora and fauna. One claim in particular, the *Wai 262 claim* lodged in 1991 by a pan tribal Māori group (Wihongi et al., 1991), is specific to the protection, control, conservation, management, treatment, propagation, sale, dispersal, utilisation, and restriction of the use and transmission of indigenous knowledge including the Māori language and NZ's indigenous flora and fauna and the genetic resource contained therein (Statement of Claim). It claims "*te tino rangātiratanga*" or Māori authority, control and decision-making over *taonga*. The claim is significant because it gives the Waitangi Tribunal an opportunity to rule and make recommendations in the area of traditional knowledge, how it is used, by whom, and for what purposes – including commercial purposes.

### 3.4 Mataatua Declaration

In June 1993, nine Māori tribes (*iwi*), led by Ngāti Awa (Bay of Plenty, North Island), convened the first International Conference on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The conference included Māori, indigenous delegates from 14 countries, as well as non-indigenous advisers and professionals with an interest in this field, who met to consider a wide range of relevant issues. The resultant document was the Mataatua Declaration (Mataatua Declaration 1993), ratified by over 150 indigenous representatives from 60 United Nation Member States, and Māori tribes belonging to the National Māori Congress. The Declaration addresses a number of significant issues, including:

recognition that indigenous peoples are the exclusive guardians of their knowledge, and as such must be the ones to define it, must be first beneficiaries of it, must be respected for their right to create new knowledge or discover new aspects of traditional knowledge, and must be the ones to decide whether to protect, promote or develop their knowledge (Mataatua Declaration 1993).

### 3.5 Other forms of recognition, authenticity, and protection

Many other initiatives and groups have been established in NZ to consider cultural recognition, authenticity, and rights. These include the establishment of the Māori trademark advisory committee set up within the Intellectual Property Office of NZ (IPONZ), Ministry of Economic Development, under the NZ Trade Marks Act 2002. Another important initiative for safeguarding standards and quality for Māori culture is *Toi Iho* established at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and developed for Māori artists in Aotearoa-NZ. It is a Māori registered trademark used to promote and sell authentic, quality Māori arts and crafts (see <http://www.toiho.com/>).

## 4. ADVANCING THE MĀORI ECONOMY

### 4.1 What is a Māori enterprise or business?

A Māori enterprise (e.g., trusts, incorporations, companies, businesses) has been defined in many ways, and key characteristics include various levels of Māori participation: Māori operate the business; Māori own the business; the business employs Māori staff; the business incorporates a distinctly Māori style of governance and management (TPK, 2003; Story, 2005; Harmsworth, 2006); the business may focus on Māori frameworks or philosophy (*kaupapa Māori*). (see for example, Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL) & Federation of Māori Authorities (FOMA), 1997; Durie, 2003; Harmsworth, 2005; NZ Institute of Economic Research Inc.(NZIER),

2003; Te Au Rangahau, 2006; Te Puni Kokiri (TPK), 2002; TPK & FOMA, 2003; 2007; Warriner, 1999).

Durie (2002, 2003), posed the broad question “how is a Māori business distinguished from any other business”, and identified the following six key outcomes that could be used to evaluate a Māori business’s contribution to Māori development and advancement: *Tūhono* (aligns a Māori business to Māori aspirations through comprehensive consultation); *Pūrotu* (transparency and responsibility to the wider community); *Whakaritenga* (balanced motives, not just profit making); *Paiheretia* (integrated goals, using effective management); *Puāwaitanga* (best outcomes within wider social, cultural, environmental and economic, perspectives and goals); and *Kotahitanga* (unity and alliance that encourages cooperation). Durie postulated a business could then be measured by its focussed contribution to Māori development and advancement by, for example, the part it plays in a Māori network such as a hapū (sub-tribe), rōpu (group) or community; how it adopts Māori values in both governance and management (Story, 2005); the principles and goals it uses to shape a Māori business ethic; how it is geared towards Māori realities and recognises Māori diversity; and lastly how it creates choice for Māori consumers (Durie, 2003, p. 246). In addition, to be effective nationally and internationally, a Māori business should operate in a bicultural way that should embrace established global principles.

#### 4.2 The Māori economy

The Māori economy is that part of the NZ economy where Māori well-being is inextricably linked to the health of the NZ economy (Whitehead & Annesley, 2005) but it is difficult to distinguish and quantify (NZIER, 2003), and largely depends on determining the key characteristics of Māori enterprises before micro- and macro-analyses can be made (Durie, 2003; TPK & FOMA, 2006, 2007). To date it has been defined by quantifying all Māori assets owned and income earned by collectives such as Māori owned trusts and incorporations, Māori owned businesses, and service providers (TPK & FOMA, 2007; Whitehead & Annesley, 2005). The Māori economy tends to be driven by Māori collective aspirations and development, and represents a space where cultural and economic aspirations combine (BERL & FOMA, 1997; Durie, 2003; Harmsworth, 2005; NZIER, 2003, 2007; Smith, 2004; TPK, 2007b; Whitehead & Annesley, 2005). This economy has been influenced by a series of complex historical events that have shaped Māori participation in the NZ economy and produced a strong and vibrant Māori economy that is evident today (Gillies et al., 2006; TPK, 2007a).

In 2002 the Māori economy contributed around \$700 million or 7.5% of NZ’s total annual agricultural outputs (NZIER, 2003). The Māori commercial asset base has recently (2005/2006) been estimated to be worth \$16.5 billion (TPK, 2007b). At present, 52% of the Māori economy is concentrated in primary industry such as farming, forestry, fisheries, and agriculture, while 40% is in the tertiary sector, representing growing numbers of Māori who are self-employed and entrepreneurs (TPK 2007b).

Recent evidence shows the Māori economy is steadily expanding (NZIER, 2007; Smith, 2004; TPK, 2007b; Whitehead & Annesley, 2005). As the Māori asset base grows, so does its contribution to local, regional and national economies. The estimated value of Māori exports in 1999/2000 was about \$650 million (NZIER, 2003) and in 2001 the total annual tax contribution from the Māori economy was \$2.4 billion (NZIER, 2003).

#### 5. CULTURAL VALUES AND ENTERPRISE

Cultural values lie at the heart of Māori culture (Marsden, 1988; Barlow, 1993; Mead, 2004). Therefore it is these same values that most Māori businesses adopt to guide both their direction, performance, and internal and external relationships (Warriner, 1999; Durie, 2003; Harmsworth, 2005), and their planning and strategy implementation towards Māori development and advancement (Harmsworth et al. 2002; Durie, 2003). Key cultural values integral to Māori enterprise include: *whakapapa* (ancestral lineage, ancestral rights); *tikanga* (custom, tradition, protocols); *rangātiratanga* (status, authority and control); *mana, mana whenua, mana moana* (based

on *whakapapa*, represents power, control, status, leadership); *manaakitanga* (caring for, looking after, hosting); *whānaungatanga* (relationships, family connections); *kotahitanga* (unity, consensus, participation); *urunga-tu* (participation); *tohungatanga* (the retention and use of knowledge to benefit the tribe or business); *kaitiakitanga* (environmental guardianship); *tau utu utu* (reciprocity, giving back what you take); and *wairuatanga* (spiritual well-being, taking into consideration the spiritual dimension).

## 6. CONCLUSION

Māori enterprise is making a major contribution to the NZ economy, and also to regional economies but quantifying this contribution is difficult. Indigenous branding is being used widely by Māori enterprise and appears well positioned to play a major role for Māori enterprise and Brand NZ (NZTE 2005b) in global markets as long as strategies are robust, based on Māori values, knowledge and integrity, and follow a set of effective and appropriate guiding principles (e.g., Durie, 2003). A large range of issues are associated with indigenous branding but these can be resolved if Māori and indigenous peoples are active participants in branding by setting guidelines, principles, and standards. Indigenous branding based on the ethos of Māori development and advancement could therefore be well poised to provide Māori businesses with a global competitive commercial advantage. Findings from the Waka Tohu project showed that the majority of Māori enterprises were primarily using indigenous branding to confirm a cultural identity and reflect core values. The Māori brand was commonly being used to tell a story (Stafford, 2007), whether personal or ancestral, historical or modern. At the heart of each Māori enterprise was a pride in being Māori and a desire to communicate that to the world, and Tohu Māori was commonly used to express this. In contrast, non-Māori businesses were found to be using Māori branding primarily to strategise and rationalise Māori-ness into a business opportunity, motivated by profit or brand position or to demonstrate cultural empathy (Jones et al., 2005; Gilbert, 2006). The future challenge for most Māori enterprises, as with all indigenous enterprises, is how to balance aspirations for cultural enrichment – which retain and strengthen cultural definition and wellbeing, including values, customary practice, language, technology, and knowledge – with aspirations to pursue advancement, growth, commerce, and economic development. It is equally important to sustain a point of difference and uniqueness within the culturally amorphous tide of globalisation, consumerism and materialism.

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