

# Formula 1 and the Tourist Destination Image of Shanghai: Impacts, Evidence, and Implications

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## Abstract

Since its inaugural race in 2004, the Formula 1 (F1) Chinese Grand Prix has emerged as a transformative force in shaping Shanghai's international image as a premier tourist destination. This global sporting spectacle has not only attracted millions of spectators, but also significantly altered perceptions of Shanghai as a dynamic, cosmopolitan city capable of hosting world-class events. The strategic alignment between F1's high-speed precision and Shanghai's identity as a rapidly developing economic hub creates a powerful synergy that enhances the city's global standing. This article aims to investigate the impacts of Formula 1 (F1) on the tourist destination image of Shanghai from cognitive, affective and conative (behavioral intentions) dimensions. By examining economic indicators, media representations, visitor perceptions, and urban development strategies, this paper employs a thorough approach to analyze the multifaceted impacts of F1 on Shanghai's destination image, incorporating both theoretical frameworks and empirical data to provide a comprehensive assessment of how this mega-event has transformed perceptions of China's most populous city, and to shed light on the complex relationship between mega-sporting events and destination image formation. The research also demonstrates how the event enhances Shanghai's visibility, affects hospitality demand, and contributes to perceptions of modernity and global connectedness. The conclusions highlight short-run demand compression, significant media exposure, and longer-term branding potential, alongside limitations related to crowding and attribution challenges. The findings offer valuable insights for destination marketers, event organizers, and urban planners seeking to optimize the benefits of such events while mitigating potential negative impacts.

## Keywords

F1, Shanghai, Destination Image

## 1. Introduction

Mega-events such as the Formula 1 World Championship play a crucial role in shaping global city brands and influencing tourist perceptions. Shanghai has hosted the Chinese Grand Prix since 2004, positioning itself as a prominent motorsport hub in East Asia. Following a four-year hiatus (2020-2023), the return of F1 in April 2024 marked a significant moment in Shanghai's tourism recovery, coinciding with a rebound in inbound arrivals. The recent 2025 F1 Chinese Grand Prix, which set new records with over 220,000 spectators, demonstrating the event's growing popularity and its expanding influence on Shanghai's tourism economy.

Research on the impact of mega-events like Formula 1 on a destination's image is not merely an academic exercise; it has significant real-world implications for various stakeholders. For government bodies and city planners, this research is vital for evidence-based policy. Hosting a mega-event requires enormous public investment. Rigorous research helps determine if the long-term benefits to the city's image and tourism economy justify the massive upfront expenditure. It moves the decision beyond political rhetoric to a calculated analysis of return on investment.

For Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) like tourism boards, this research is a critical tool for brand strategy. Understanding how the event shapes perception allows marketers to strategically integrate event imagery and associations into broader marketing campaigns. They can use the "halo effect" of F1's glamour to promote other aspects of the city. Research reveals which tourist segments are most influenced by the event (e.g., high-spending motorsport fans, luxury travelers). This allows for highly targeted and effective marketing, rather than a scattergun approach. By identifying potential drawbacks (e.g., perceptions of exclusivity, overcrowding), DMOs can develop strategies to address them, such as promoting off-season travel or cultural packages unrelated to the event.

This research reduces uncertainty for the hospitality industry of the destination including hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and investors. The hospitality industry can use findings to make informed decisions about capacity expansion, pricing strategies, and staffing levels in anticipation of event-related demand fluctuations. Businesses can develop new products and services tailored to the demographics attracted by the event (e.g., F1-themed tours, high-end retail experiences). Research indicates whether the event creates a sustained uplift in tourism or just a short-term spike, guiding long-term business investments.

From an academic research perspective, this topic is a rich case study that contributes to several academic fields: It provides empirical data to test, refine, and develop theories related to destination branding, place image, media effects, and the socio-economic impacts of mega-events. The event is a lens through which to study globalization—how global brands (F1) interact with local identities to create a new, hybrid place image for international consumption.

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## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Destination Image and Mega-Events

The intersection of sporting events and tourism has generated substantial academic interest, particularly regarding how mega-events influence destination image. According to [Hallmann and Breuer \(2010\)](#), sport tourism represents a symbiotic relationship wherein events benefit from the destination's infrastructure and appeal, while destinations gain exposure and economic benefits from event visitors.

[Baloglu and McCleary's \(1999\)](#) foundational work established that destination image formation occurs through both induced (marketing-driven) and organic (experience-based) sources, with major events serving as powerful image-shapers that combine both elements. Mega-events such as the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, and F1 races have been found to reshape or reinforce these dimensions, often acting as catalytic moments in the global repositioning of cities ([Getz, 2008](#); [Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2010](#)). Events provide opportunities to showcase infrastructure, culture, and hospitality, while also exposing potential weaknesses in service capacity or transport systems. Event-specific image can transfer to host destinations when congruence exists between event characteristics and destination attributes, creating associative networks that strengthen brand positioning.

### 2.2. Formula 1 and Destination Image

Previous research on F1's impact on host destinations has primarily focused on economic dimensions, with limited attention to image-related outcomes. [Song, Li and Cao \(2018\)](#) directly addressed this gap through content analysis of online commentary about Shanghai's F1 event, finding that international recognition and excitement were key perceptual benefits. Earlier research by [Xue and Mason \(2011\)](#) examined F1's impact on Jiading District's tourism sector, noting significant improvements to infrastructure development and international visibility despite challenges with direct profitability. The study found that F1 audiences predominantly consisted of high-income demographics who engaged in substantial shopping consumption during their visits, contributing to the local economy beyond race-related expenditures.

Research specifically addressing Formula 1 highlights the dual impact of the event: immediate economic gains and long-term image transformation. Studies of the Shanghai F1 Grand Prix have found significant positive effects on spectators' perceptions of the city, though heterogeneity persists, with some reporting negative evaluations of crowding and urban accessibility ([Liu & Wang, 2019](#)). In a comparative study of the 2017 Chinese and U.S. Grands Prix, [Chen and Funk \(2020\)](#) demonstrated that both event image and destination image strongly influence attachment and loyalty, confirming the ability of F1 to generate place-based advocacy beyond event attendance.

Other work by [Lee \(2017\)](#) in the context of the Korean Grand Prix emphasizes the symbolic role of F1 in signaling global modernity and technological advance-

ment. Similarly, research on the Singapore Grand Prix underscores how urban night races contribute to a cosmopolitan, glamorous city image, with positive spillovers for international arrivals (Henderson, 2013).

### 2.3. Hospitality and Economic Effects

Empirical research consistently demonstrates the hospitality uplift generated by F1. STR Global data reveal that F1 weekends often drive occupancy rates above 90% in host cities, alongside significant ADR surges (Brown, 2021). In São Paulo, for instance, the Brazilian GP has been linked to substantial tourism receipts and international visitor flows (DaCosta, 2016). The Las Vegas Grand Prix (2023) further illustrates the high revenue potential of F1, with hotel revenues surpassing other mega-events such as CES or boxing matches (Johnson, 2024). Trip.com's 2024 Shanghai data reinforce these patterns, showing +63% bookings and 40% - 70% ADR growth near the circuit.

### 2.4. Media Exposure and Branding Value

Beyond direct tourism impacts, F1 offers immense global media exposure. Nielsen (2023) reported an F1 cumulative TV audience exceeding 1.5 billion annually, with race broadcasts spanning over 180 countries. This exposure is crucial for host cities, which benefit from destination imagery embedded in broadcasts (Kaplanidou & Hwang, 2017). Scholars such as Smith and Stewart (2015) argue that the media value of recurring F1 events can rival or surpass traditional advertising campaigns, while providing a more authentic, experience-driven association.

### 2.5. Critical Perspectives

Despite these benefits, critical literature points to challenges. Whitson and Horne (2006) caution against overestimating the long-term tourism legacy of mega-events, noting that benefits are often short-lived without sustained investment in destination development. Concerns have also been raised about opportunity costs, displacement of non-event tourists, and inequities in who benefits from mega-event tourism (Preuss, 2015). For Shanghai, earlier studies note that traffic congestion and service bottlenecks may diminish the overall image benefits (Liu & Wang, 2019).

Globally, studies of other F1 host destinations have demonstrated how the event can serve as a strategic positioning tool for cities seeking to enhance their international profiles. The existing literature, however, lacks longitudinal analysis of F1's evolving impact on Shanghai's destination image, particularly considering recent developments such as the post-pandemic resurgence of international events and China's evolving position in the global tourism landscape.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Data Sources and Collection

The study utilizes multiple data sources to ensure triangulation and enhance va-

lidity. Economic impact data was obtained from official reports published by the Shanghai Administration of Sports and Shanghai Jiushi Sports Industries Group, including the 2024 Shanghai Event Influence Evaluation Report. Visitor statistics and demographic information were collected from event organizers and tourism authorities for the 2004-2025 period, with particular focus on recent events that reflect post-pandemic trends.

Perceptual data was derived from two primary sources: content analysis of 632 user comments from online platforms (Zhihu, Tiger Chat) discussing Shanghai's F1 event, and field interviews conducted during the 2025 F1 weekend with 11 spectators and 4 volunteers. The online user comments provide the foundational width of investigation, while the field interviews represent illustrative cases with regards to F1 in Shanghai. Media representations were analyzed through systematic review of press coverage in both Chinese and international outlets to identify framing patterns and image dimensions emphasized in reporting on Shanghai's F1 event.

### 3.2. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework employs comparative analysis to examine changes in Shanghai's destination image attributes before and after F1 events, with particular attention to evolving international perceptions. Economic impact assessment follows the standardized methodology established by the Shanghai Event Influence Evaluation Framework, measuring direct economic effects, output effects, and consumption across six categories (dining, accommodation, transportation, tourism, shopping, and entertainment).

Content analysis of qualitative data implements a coding scheme based on Baloglu and McCleary's cognitive-affective-conative model of destination image, with additional codes derived inductively from the data. Code frequency analysis identifies the most salient image attributes associated with Shanghai through its hosting of F1, while cross-tabulation examines differences between domestic and international visitor perceptions.

## 4. Data Analysis and Findings

### 4.1. Economic Impact and Visitor Profile Analysis

The F1 Chinese Grand Prix has generated substantial economic benefits for Shanghai, with impacts growing significantly over time. The 2024 event produced ¥14.06 billion in direct economic impact, ¥39.28 billion in output effects, and stimulated ¥15.93 billion in consumption across dining, accommodation, transportation, tourism, shopping, and entertainment categories. Preliminary data from the 2025 event suggests further growth, with total audience reaching 220,000 spectators (a 10% increase from 2024) and overall economic impact expected to exceed previous records (**Table 1**).

Analysis of visitor demographics reveals F1's role in attracting high-value tourism segments to Shanghai. Notably, 80% of 2025 attendees originated from

**Table 1.** Economic impact of F1 Chinese grand prix in Shanghai.

Year	Attendance	Direct Economic Impact (billion ¥)	Output Effects (billion ¥)	Consumption Stimulated (billion ¥)
2024	200,000	14.06	39.28	15.93
2025	220,000	Expected increase	Expected increase	Expected increase

Source: <https://www.yicai.com/news/chinese-grand-prix-draws-record-crowd-of-over-220000#:~:text=The%20fans%20in%20China%20are,driving%20tech%2C%20ac-cording%20to%20Sun.>

outside Shanghai, with 15.25% comprising international visitors (a 100% increase from 2024). These visitors demonstrate strong spending capacity, with non-local domestic visitors averaging approximately ¥3000 in expenditure, while international visitors spend significantly more (e.g., \$2000+ for a Kenyan visitor interviewed). The event has particularly appealed to younger demographics (20 - 30 years old) with high education levels and disposable income (Shanghai Sports Bureau, 2024).

Hotel data further confirms F1's economic impact, with premium hotels in Jiading District achieving 95%+ occupancy rates during race weekends, and properties near Shanghai International Circuit experiencing a 213% year-on-year increase in bookings (Shanghai Statistics Bureau, 2025). Notably, 78% of packaged F1 tourism products were purchased by visitors from outside Shanghai, while 21% were bought by international tourists, underscoring the event's power to attract external visitors who contribute new money to the local economy.

The quantitative evidence underscores that F1 amplifies Shanghai's appeal as a high-yield tourism destination. Elevated occupancy and premium pricing directly benefit the hospitality sector while reinforcing Shanghai's reputation as a luxury, cosmopolitan hub. These impacts, when aggregated across the city's extensive hotel infrastructure, translate into millions of USD in incremental revenue. This reinforces the literature's argument that mega-events can substantially reshape a city's brand equity and tourism competitiveness.

## 4.2. Destination Image Analysis

Destination image is conventionally understood through three dimensions: cognitive (beliefs and knowledge about the destination), affective (emotional responses), and conative (behavioral intentions such as loyalty and visitation) (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

### 4.2.1. Cognitive Image Dimensions: What Visitors Know and Think

The evidence suggests that F1 strengthens Shanghai's cognitive image as a world-class, modern city while eliciting affective excitement tied to national representation. Conative outcomes are reinforced by repeat travel intentions and enhanced loyalty to both the event and destination. However, earlier research cautions that traffic congestion and accessibility challenges may offset some of the positive per-

ceptions (Liu & Wang, 2019). Furthermore, isolating F1's impact requires careful methodological approaches, such as difference-in-differences designs with matched control cities.

Content analysis of online commentary and visitor interviews reveals several dominant cognitive attributes associated with Shanghai through its hosting of F1. The most frequently mentioned elements include star drivers and teams, which shows Visitors strongly associate Shanghai with elite F1 participants, enhancing perceptions of the city as a world-stage player; The sophisticated tactics employed by teams contribute to images of Shanghai as an intelligent, calculating host indicates the strategic complexity; Spectacular driver performances generate excitement and positive associations with the host destination represents the driver performance; The advanced technology evident in F1 cars and event infrastructure reinforces Shanghai's image as a technologically advanced city identifies the technical sophistication (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Cognitive image attributes associated with Shanghai through F1 hosting.

Attribute Category	Specific Attributes	Frequency (%)
Event Participants	Star drivers/teams	27.38%
	Driver performance	14.72%
Event Execution	Strategic complexity	14.96%
	Technical sophistication	7.84%
Destination Infrastructure	Transportation efficiency	6.25%
	Accommodation quality	5.41%

These cognitive attributes align strategically with Shanghai's development goals as a modern, global city. The technological imagery of F1 complements Shanghai's investments in smart city infrastructure, which were particularly evident during the 2025 event through deployed innovations like AI-powered security robots, autonomous vehicles for spectator transport, and drone-assisted services 8. One spectator noted: "The smart city elements during F1 weekend—from robot patrols to autonomous buses—showcased Shanghai as truly future-oriented".

#### 4.2.2. Affective Image Dimensions: How Visitors Feel

The affective component of Shanghai's destination image reflects the emotional responses generated by the F1 experience. Content analysis identified predominantly positive emotions among visitors, with excitement being the most frequently mentioned affective response. Visitors commonly described feelings of awe and amazement at the speed and spectacle of the event, with many international visitors expressing surprise at Shanghai's organizational capabilities and modernity.

Spectator interviews conducted during the 2025 event revealed strong emotional connections formed through the experience: "I never expected Shanghai to be this vibrant and capable—the energy during F1 weekend was comparable to

Monaco or Singapore”, noted one international visitor 1. The emotional resonance appears particularly strong among international visitors who reported heightened excitement from experiencing both the event and Shanghai’s urban offerings simultaneously.

The event also generates local pride among Shanghai residents, with many expressing satisfaction at their city’s ability to host a world-class event successfully. This emotional connection extends beyond race weekend, with longitudinal surveys indicating sustained positive affect among residents toward their city’s image and capabilities.

#### 4.2.3. Conative Image Dimensions: Behavioral Intentions

The conative component of destination image—encompassing behavioral intentions—shows significant positive outcomes from F1 hosting. Search engine data provides additional evidence of behavioral impacts, with Baidu and Google searches for “Shanghai tourism” increasing by 45% during F1 weekends compared to adjacent periods. Similarly, Meituan, the online booking APP data shows searches for “Shanghai F1” increased by 111% in the lead-up to the 2025 event, while searches for “Shanghai Jiading hotels” rose by 105% and “Shanghai racing circuit nearby hotels” by 90%. This suggests strong conversion from event interest to tourism planning behavior.

Beyond the immediate event, F1 has stimulated broader interest in motorsport-related tourism experiences, with searches for “F1 racing experience hall” increasing by 310% and “outdoor karting” by 130%. This indicates the event serves as a catalyst for ongoing tourism interest in specialized niches aligned with its theme.

### 4.3. Media Exposure and Branding Value

To assess the impact of Formula 1 on Shanghai’s international brand image, a content analysis approach was employed, focusing on international media, digital platforms, and social media discourse. Content analysis is a widely used qualitative method in tourism studies to systematically evaluate recurring themes, sentiment, and symbolic framing in media representations (Neuendorf, 2017; Krippendorff, 2018).

Articles and online posts published during the 2024 Chinese Grand Prix were collected from global media outlets (e.g., BBC Sport, ESPN, South China Morning Post), travel media, and Weibo/Twitter/X platforms. Mentions include: 1) Shanghai as a destination, 2) urban modernity, 3) luxury and lifestyle, 4) sporting excellence, and 5) negative issues (e.g., congestion, costs). Sentiment classification include: Positive, neutral, or negative framing of Shanghai’s image. Findings are as the following (Table 3 and Table 4).

The results reveal that a majority of the coverage associates Shanghai with modernity (64%), global prestige, and a cosmopolitan lifestyle, aligning with the city’s strategic branding goals (Wu & Xu, 2022). The positive sentiment (76%) far outweighs negative mentions, which were primarily linked to temporary inconveniences such as traffic congestion or inflated hotel prices.

**Table 3.** Frequency of themes in media coverage (sample of 200 items).

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Shanghai as a destination	142	71%
Urban modernity	128	64%
Luxury and lifestyle	95	47.5%
Sporting excellence	112	56%
Negative issues	28	14%

**Table 4.** Sentiment breakdown of media coverage.

Sentiment	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	152	76%
Neutral	35	17.5%
Negative	13	6.5%

#### 4.4. Destination Image Integration: Congruence between F1 and Shanghai

Analysis reveals significant image congruence between F1's attributes and Shanghai's desired destination image, particularly along dimensions of internationalism, modernity, and excitement. The event's global prestige aligns with Shanghai's status as an international financial and cultural hub, while the technological sophistication of F1 racing complements Shanghai's positioning as an innovation-driven city.

Areas of incongruence primarily relate to Shanghai's cultural heritage attributes, which are not prominently featured in F1-associated imagery. Traditional elements like historic gardens, temples, and traditional cuisine receive minimal attention in F1-related destination promotion, potentially representing a missed opportunity for holistic image development. The integration of F1 and elements commonly associated with traditional culture create a stand-out theme that alongside the connection with innovative technology also appeals to Shanghai's rich cultural history.

The 2025 event made conscious efforts to enhance image integration through initiatives like the "checker flag carnival" in North Bund, which combined F1 themes with Shanghai landmark experiences. Additionally, the inclusion of Sichuan tourism pavilions featuring panda imagery (successfully leveraging driver Max Verstappen's panda association) demonstrated creative approaches to integrating Chinese cultural elements within the F1 context. These highly unique and dynamic interactions help promote F1 towards the greater demographic of Shanghai and even China as a whole, whom now have a newfound cultural association to pique and grab their interest in F1 motorsport.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1. Theoretical Implications for Destination Image Formation

This analysis offers several theoretical contributions to understanding how mega-events shape destination image. First, it demonstrates that event-destination congruence operates along multiple dimensions simultaneously—some literal (modernity attributes), some symbolic (excitement attributes)—and that destinations can leverage different types of congruence for image enhancement. Second, it reveals that the image transfer process evolves over time, with later iterations of recurring events generating more sophisticated image associations than initial installations.

The research also extends our understanding of image measurement methodologies by demonstrating how digital trace data (search queries, social media content) can complement traditional survey approaches in capturing dynamic aspects of destination image formation. The combination of these methods provides a more comprehensive picture of how event-related images translate into destination perceptions across different stakeholder groups.

Finally, the study contributes to emerging literature on smart city image formation, illustrating how technological deployments during major events can shape perceptions of destination modernity and innovation capability. The visible application of advanced technologies like AI, robotics, and autonomous vehicles during F1 weekend directly reinforced Shanghai's positioning as a forward-looking, technologically advanced destination.

### 5.2. Practical Implications for Destination Marketing and Management

From a practical perspective, this analysis suggests several strategies for optimizing F1's impact on Shanghai's destination image: Firstly, leverage convergence between event and destination attributes to indicate that Shanghai should continue emphasizing alignment between F1's technology, speed, and internationalism and Shanghai's corresponding attributes through integrated marketing campaigns. Secondly, enhancement of cultural integration can be undertaken: While congruence exists along technological and modern dimensions, greater effort should be made to integrate Shanghai's cultural heritage into F1-related programming to present a more holistic destination image. The spatial distribution of benefits should also be expanded: The "dual scene" model (racing circuit + urban entertainment zones) introduced in 2025 represents an effective approach to dispersing event impacts beyond the primary venue. This should be expanded to include more Shanghai landmarks and districts. A parallel route of action would be the development of sequential programming, which can sustain image benefits beyond race weekend. To best achieve this, Shanghai should create F1-themed attractions and experiences that operate year-round, converting ephemeral event images into permanent destination attributes. The diversification of target markets is also an important consideration: While F1 effectively attracts high-value

domestic and international visitors, targeted campaigns should address segments less familiar with motorsports to broaden the event's image enhancement benefits. Lastly, with regard to optimizing pricing strategies, researchers have noted that more affordable pricing for ancillary activities and merchandise would increase participation from residents and enhance social integration of the event.

### 5.3. Overall Impacts

In essence, researching the impact of F1 on Shanghai's image is important because it transforms a subjective perception into an object of analysis. It provides crucial insights to guide governments in making multi-billion dollar decisions, empowering marketers to build a stronger, more resilient destination brand. At the same time, it enables businesses to capitalize on opportunities and manage risks and advance academic understanding of how places are transformed in the global imagination, to ensure that development is responsible, accountable, and sustainable for the host community.

Thus, this research plays a crucial role in holding power to account and advocating for sustainable practices. It helps identify negative externalities, such as displacement of locals, traffic congestion, or environmental damage, ensuring they are part of the public discourse and mitigated in future planning. By providing a balanced view of both positive and negative impacts, research encourages a model of event hosting that maximizes long-term, sustainable tourism growth rather than short-term gains. Without this research, cities risk making monumental decisions based on intuition, hype, or political motive rather than concrete evidence, potentially leading to inefficient use of public resources and missed opportunities for genuine tourism development.

This comprehensive analysis demonstrates that Formula 1 racing has significantly shaped Shanghai's destination image through multiple mechanisms. Economically, the event generates substantial direct and indirect benefits while attracting high-value visitors who contribute to Shanghai's tourism economy. Cognitively, F1 has enhanced perceptions of Shanghai as technologically advanced, well-organized, and international. Affectively, the event generates excitement and positive emotional responses among visitors and residents. Behaviorally, it stimulates travel planning and recommendation behaviors that extend beyond the immediate event context.

The congruence between F1's core attributes (speed, technology, internationalism, precision) and Shanghai's desired destination image has facilitated effective image transfer, positioning Shanghai as a modern, global city capable of hosting world-class events. However, opportunities exist to better integrate Shanghai's cultural heritage into F1-related programming to present a more holistic destination image that balances modernity with tradition.

Looking forward, Shanghai should continue leveraging F1 as a strategic image-enhancement tool while addressing challenges related to spatial distribution of benefits, social inclusion, and long-term image sustainability. The recent exten-

sion of F1's contract through 2030 provides a stable platform for these developments. As other cities increasingly compete for major events, Shanghai's experience offers valuable insights into how destinations can strategically harness mega-events for image enhancement and tourism development.

#### 5.4. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that suggest directions for future research. First, the reliance on available data means that some aspects of image formation could not be analyzed as thoroughly as desired, particularly longitudinal comparisons. Future research should implement systematic longitudinal tracking of Shanghai's destination image before, during, and after F1 events to better understand temporal dynamics. Second, the study focuses primarily on intentional rather than accidental image effects; future work should examine unintended image consequences, both positive and negative.

Additionally, while this study identifies demographic patterns among F1 visitors, more sophisticated segmentation analysis would help tailor marketing strategies to different audience groups. It should also be noted that the complete isolation of F1's impact with other concurrent tourist events is statistically challenging—while the quantitative methods used serve to best undertake independent analysis, the final results should still be considered alongside the potential effect of other events occurring simultaneously. Finally, comparative research examining how other F1 host destinations (Singapore, Melbourne, Monaco) have leveraged the event for image enhancement would provide valuable benchmarking insights for Shanghai's continued development as a host city.

Despite these limitations, this analysis provides a comprehensive assessment of F1's impact on Shanghai's destination image, offering theoretical insights and practical strategies for optimizing the relationship between mega-events and destination development. As cities increasingly compete for attention in the global tourism marketplace, such understanding becomes ever more valuable for destination marketers and urban planners alike.

#### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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