

Visit Scotland Partnership Meeting - Monday 9th May

Strategy

- Improve geographic spread (NC500, events ,festivals, product & experience list for all sub regions, then cross promote by interest, any world class (Golf, Whisky tasting?)
- Extend season October - April (need to be good deals - can't sell at same price as summer, stargazing/dark skies, winter wildlife, events. Scandinavian golfers come from March, runners)
- Traveller types
 - Adventure Seekers - cycling (16-24 age group travel in January/February/March)
 - Natural Advocats - unspoilt beaches, unique experiences - wildlife watching Autumn & Spring
 - Curious Travellers - culture, history, community markets, myths (Witch's stone) - perception that travel is difficult (Spirit of Scotland Travel Pass)
 - Signpost to less well known areas of the Highlands with similar features
- Britain Tourism Survey (Highlands)
 - 24% 25-34, 21% 35-44, 20% 45-54
 - 36% visitors plan 3-6 months in advance
 - English spend per head higher than Scottish (stay an extra night)
- 30% of holidaymakers centre visit around their pet BUILD DOG FRIENDLY references - pubs, walks, pet supplies, accomm. (49% for self-catering - good for off season - Ambassador) - now top level search in VS along with Disabled Access (same as VD!)
- 75% come by car (promote cheaper fuel?)
- Perception around quality of accommodation - we have clear advantage here - press home, using #ScotSpirit
- Weather perception - more weather stations & regular reports (RDGC)
- Content planning - to allow 3-6 month lead-in
- Core - History, Landscapes, Wildlife, Outdoor activities
- Product strengths - Food & drink, Creative, Events
- 2017 is Year of History, Heritage & Archaeology
- 68% visitors start their journey on-line, 50% on mobiles, decline in traditional channels
- 64% Growth in "real time assistance"
- Search engines drive 60% of VS traffic
- Move from Paid promotion & branding to Earned Experience = less advertising more bloggers/user generated & partner generated content. (Social Summit Inverness 40 bloggers 19-22 Sept)
- Collaboration & joint marketing (shared content plan)
- VS Community - visitors & partners provide material. Aim for 20 sec videos
- VS Blog - expert guest bloggers (eg local wildlife, craft ,golf, cycling experts)
- "Must visit- must return"
- Instagram (doubled in last year) /Pinterest important
- Check Facebook Instant Articles
- 100 things to do on holiday "Scottish Passport"
- Build on cycling - cyclists welcome, family, road & mountain types. Bike hire, bike shops, bike events.

- To come back with stories, photos, videos of
 - Top 5 hidden gems
 - Top 5 Myths & Legends
 - Any “quirky” events
 - Family cycling photos

(Make most of Scottish Open at Castle Stuart 7-10 July - come to Dornoch before or after.
New BBC Highlands documentary. Venture North video 100k hits - food event Taste North at
Burghfield 5th October. Cairngorm drone coverage)

Check out Scottish Travel Group on Facebook
Dark Skies photos (Andy Kriby)