VisitScotland update

Year of Natural Scotland 2013 funding

Edinburgh and Lothians tourism businesses are being encouraged to ‘keep it natural’, as VisitScotland launches a £150,000 cash fund to boost marketing projects themed around the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

VisitScotland has marked the launch of the next focus year, which will kick off formally on 1 January 2013, by opening up a dedicated Year of Natural Scotland Growth Fund.

The fund is now open and will give industry groups a chance to link their offerings to the Year of Natural Scotland and capitalise on the opportunities it will create.

Research shows that nature-based activities are worth nearly 40% of all tourism spending in Scotland. And with the value of wildlife tourism being estimated at over £270 million, VisitScotland is encouraging the tourism industry to think about ways in which they can make the next focus year work for them.

Open to destination organisations and industry groups, the VisitScotland Natural Growth Fund will support inspiring marketing projects which showcase Scotland’s unique natural environment and support the growth of tourism spend in every corner of the country.

The VisitScotland Natural Growth Fund coincides with the launch of a special industry toolkit which tourism businesses can download from the VisitScotland corporate website www.visitscotland.org. The toolkit includes logos and images, and features a range of marketing tools to help businesses embrace the promotional opportunities of this yearlong focus on Scotland’s natural assets. It provides a one-stop shop to access and download material to help the tourism industry engage with the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

Click here for more information about the VisitScotland Growth Fund.

The “Brave effect”

This month saw the first screenings of VisitScotland's new UK cinema and television advert, which features footage from the movie. It is VisitScotland’s biggest ever cinema and television marketing campaign and aims to convert film fans into visitors to Scotland.

The ad cuts together images of the magical Scotland portrayed in the film with shots of real-life Scottish places that closely resemble them, and is intercut with screen legends reading: ‘Scotland… Where legends come to life.’
The ad concludes with the call-to-action to ‘Win a legendary break in Scotland’, which drives traffic to the campaign website. Already we have seen a huge response, with over 60,000 competition entries to date.

**Campaign website**

The ads are just one element in a campaign that will promote the whole of Scotland on the back of the film’s release. All activity will drive potential visitors online to a website – available in French, Spanish, German and Italian – specially created by VisitScotland in partnership with Disney·Pixar.

The site is designed to unpack the image of Scotland portrayed in the film, effectively translating its magical animated environments and action into real-world experiences available on a trip to Scotland.

For example, visitors to the site can download a series of round-Scotland touring itineraries, each based on one of the Brave themes: myths and legends, wildlife, castles, inspirational landscapes and ‘ancient Scotland’.

Rosslyn Chapel, the Real Mary King’s Close, Edinburgh Castle, the Scottish Seabird Centre and ScotlandsPeople Centre are included and highlighted above.

Also as part of VisitScotland’s unique tie-in with Disney nearly 1,000 “Brave travel experiences” - tailored packages put together by tourism businesses all over Scotland - have been uploaded to the site.

**Brave map**

While the website mapping shows suggested touring itineraries for those considering a Scotland trip, a more detailed, A1-size, fold-out map has also been produced for visitors.

This map is designed for use by visitors on arrival in Scotland. It includes many hundreds of suggestions for things to see and do, including dozens in Edinburgh & Lothians, all of them again expanding on the Brave themes.
The map will be available free to visitors from the network of VisitScotland Information Centres, or from many businesses across the country who have requested supplies.

**Brave business toolkit**

Many businesses across Scotland can now take advantage of the marketing effort surrounding the film by downloading a specially created *Brave* toolkit, including branding and imagery from the film they can use on their own websites and other activity.

As there are some restrictions on the usage of the branding, businesses can find out more and request the toolkit at VisitScotland’s corporate website, where they can also submit offers or prizes for promotional activity.

**Media activity**

A large part of VisitScotland’s activity on *Brave* throughout this year has included Press and PR activity. Edinburgh and Lothians recently featured within a press trip organised by our consumer PR team that brought 16 journalists from leading titles such as OK! Magazine Germany, the Sunday World and the Chicago Sun Times to Scotland.

The group spent five days touring Scotland, arriving in Edinburgh to kick start their journey of exploring the land that inspired Disney•Pixars *Brave*.

The itinerary included visits to The Witchery by the Castle, the National Library of Scotland and the National Museum of Scotland before departing the city to travel north.

A detailed blog titled ‘Exploring Brave Scotland, Making New Friends’ was created as a result of the trip by a travel writer and author of NY City Mama. The blog highlights a detailed account of their trip to Edinburgh. (screen grabs below)
The consumer PR teams were among the earliest in planning for the release of the film, pitching stories to press contacts around the world and coordinating familiarisation trips.

The Brave campaign is expected to boost the Scottish economy by around £140m; effectively a return of £20 for every pound invested.

**Autumn’s golden opportunity for tourism**

VisitScotland is hoping to cash in on a last minute surge of people wanting to holiday in Scotland due to delayed holidays because of the Olympics and the poor weather.

VisitScotland has launched its biggest ever £3million marketing push, as part of our ongoing ‘Surprise Yourself’ activity, aimed at UK ‘staycationers’ and encouraging them to make the most of a holiday at home.

The overall campaign aims to deliver £80million in economic impact for Scotland and reach some 20million people UK wide.

The Autumn Surprise Yourself campaign will feature a roll out of activity targeting Scots and UK staycationers to get out and about and explore their country and take an autumn break.

A mix of radio, online, social media and print is being used to promote the wealth of things to see and do in Scotland including the Year of Creative Scotland 2012. The marketing push will focus on themes including arts and culture, gardens, the great outdoors, food and drink, history and heritage and islands.

Partnership working is key to VisitScotland’s approach and the autumn campaign includes collaboration with Scottish National Galleries, Historic Scotland, National Trust for Scotland, Royal Botanics Gardens and Scottish Civic Trust promoting their ‘Doors Open Days’ as well as UK wide partners such as BA, Stenaline, East Coast, SYHA and Thistle Hotels.

The campaign website also contains a dedicated Edinburgh & Lothians section offering ideas for exploring the region and things to see and do. Highlights include, dining across the Lothians, free attractions to explore in Edinburgh, surfing great beaches in East Lothian and exploring the diverse history of the Lothians through the region’s castles, stately homes and chapels to name a few.
Local Marketing - Outreach activity

Midlothian outreach activity

The message that Midlothian, home to some fantastic visitor attractions, all just a short bus ride away from Edinburgh was promoted to thousands of visitors and festival-goers in Edinburgh last month.

Visit Midlothian, supported by VisitScotland and Midlothian Council’s Economic Development team, organised a prominent information stand at the VisitScotland Information Centre at the heart of Princes Street.

On hand were representatives from some of Midlothian’s top visitor attractions, including Rosslyn Chapel and Butterfly & Insect World near Dalkeith. Visitors, many new to Edinburgh, could learn about the stunning centuries-old carvings and beautiful stained glass windows on display at Rosslyn Chapel and the incredible collection of insects, reptiles, butterflies and other creatures located at Butterfly & Insect World.

Loanhead-based MacSween were also on hand, tempting visitors with their famous haggis, as well as information about lots of things to see and do across the region.

VisitScotland’s outreach team provided promotional giveaways and interactive games to help attract attention to the stand and promote Midlothian as a visitor destination. Particularly popular was a giant size board game of Midlothian that identified top visitor attractions across the region.

UK & Ireland Marketing

New guides highlight Edinburgh & Lothians to over one million!

VisitScotland has been working with the Scotsman to maximise awareness in central Scotland of surprising short break and holiday opportunities across the country, including Edinburgh & Lothians.

Three themed guides have been produced around gardens, islands and arts and culture and distributed with the Scotsman newspaper Saturday editions alongside a programme of online and promotional activity.

A further two guides: great outdoors and food and drink are available for download online with an architecture guide available soon.
The front cover image of the ‘Gardens Edition’ features Jupiter Artland, Bonnington House in West Lothian and also highlights the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh.

The arts and culture edition features Catherine the Great: An Enlightened Empress exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland, the Lammermuir Festival, East Lothian, Dovecot Studios and the National Portrait Gallery.

The campaign will generate over one million opportunities for readers to see our message.

Click here to view and download the guides.

Edinburgh & Lothians - the message is loud and clear!

As part of Surprise Yourself, our UK and Ireland marketing team launched a new national radio campaign in April that ran until the end of July on radio stations across England.

The campaign used multiple channels to encourage listeners to experience the wealth of surprising things to see and do in Scotland in spring and summer, as well as highlighting the Year of Creative Scotland 2012.

The campaign consisted of three phases and has delivered 8.8 million opportunities for consumers to hear the campaign messaging.
Phase one launched with a short film featuring Neil Oliver shown on radio websites, whilst phase two gave listeners the opportunity to win their favourite type of break and the chance to star in our next campaign film. One of the four prizes up for grabs was a chance to ‘Win a 5 star luxury break in Edinburgh’

Radio stations ran promotional audio adverts, enewsletters and presenter talk ups, all inviting listeners to go online to win their own surprising Scottish experience. Below, is a copy of the presenter script used to encourage listeners to enter to ‘Win a 5 star luxury break in Edinburgh’

Win one of four unique breaks to Scotland this summer.

Begin your 5-star luxury break to Edinburgh at the opulent Prestonfield House Hotel, former home to the Lord Provost.

You’ll be amazed to discover Edinburgh’s underground streets hidden beneath the Royal Mile

Surprise your tastebuds at the Scotch Whisky Experience, home to the world’s largest collection of whisky

With transport by either East Coast or City Jet, spending money, fine dining and the chance to star in a VisitScotland campaign film, you’ll have a trip to remember in Scotland’s capital city.

Enter online now at magic.co.uk/win with the chance to star in our next campaign film, enter online now at key103.co.uk/surprise

Winners from phase two were filmed on their trip and the footage was made into short video clips titled ‘Don’t just take our word for it’ which the radio stations featured.

Lindsey Burrows and her son Josh won the trip to Edinburgh; the video featured the Preston House Hotel, Salisbury Crags, The Real Mary King’s Close, Tower Restaurant, The Scotch Whisky Experience, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and Rhubarb Restaurant. At the end of the video clip listeners are given the chance to win a holiday to Scotland.

Watch what Lindsey and her son had to say about their trip to Edinburgh.

These videos will later be used across VisitScotland marketing channels.

Summer 2-for-1 promotion
Almond Valley Heritage Park, Edinburgh Butterfly & Insect World, the Scottish Seabird Centre and Auld Reekie Tours are among the attractions featured in VisitScotland’s summer ‘2-for-1 Scottish Days Out’ promotion, which was relaunched in early June to target families looking for things to see and do during the school holidays.

The inaugural 2-for-1 promotion, also part of Surprise Yourself ran in autumn last year, and achieved over 3,000 voucher downloads.

The promotion is designed to grow the day-visits market by capitalising on the established success of the 2-for-1 concept for visitor attractions in other parts of the UK.

VisitScotland is working in partnership with the Daily Record newspaper, regional papers across Scotland, Primary Times magazine, on-pack promotion on 900,000 Bells Food Group products as well as in-store promotion with Tesco.

VisitScotland has also teamed up with Real Radio, providing listeners with the opportunity to win free family giveaways as part of the promotion and VisitScotland Information Centres across Scotland will carry a stock of vouchers available for all visitors. In addition vouchers will also be distributed at outreach events during the summer period.

All activity links to the Surprise Yourself campaign website where visitors can download the offers and browse further things to see and do in the area. All offers can be found at www.visitscotland.com/2for1

UK & Ireland e-newsletters
Edinburgh & Lothians also featured in our programme of consumer ezines (below) supporting the Surprise Yourself campaign to our UK & Ireland markets, which has included promotion of Gardens at Jupiter Artland, Edinburgh’s free attractions, Edinburgh Castle and the National Museum of Flight, East Lothian to name a few.
International e-newsletters

VisitScotland’s suite of international enewsletters reaches almost a million potential visitors around the world. The Doors Open initiative that includes Edinburgh City Chambers and Edinburgh Heritage sites both featured in recent editions.
Press and PR

The strength of achieving positive PR can never be underestimated. Our award-winning corporate and consumer PR teams successfully achieve coverage within fantastic titles in order to reach wide audiences throughout the UK and beyond! Recent Highlights include:

**East Lothian - Olympic press trip**
A group of Chinese journalists who were in London covering the Olympics headed to East Lothian following the Games to sample some of the very best the region has to offer.

In a press trip put together by VisitScotland, journalists from Propeller TV enjoyed a variety of activities which link in with the Year of Natural Scotland 2013.

Staying overnight at Lennoxlove House, Haddington, the group enjoyed a visit to Tantallon Castle and the Scottish Seabird Centre in North Berwick. They were also whisked out to the world-famous Bass Rock on a Seafari boat trip.

**ARTE Metropolis Press trip**
VisitScotland played host to a press trip for ARTE Metropolis, who visited Edinburgh in June to film a piece about Edinburgh, footage included the Poetry Library, Storytelling Centre and an Interview with Ian Rankin following the traces of the mystery sculptures that have appeared all around Edinburgh in the last year.

**ZDF Press trip**
During May and June, ZDF visited Edinburgh and Barra to film footage for their pre-Olympic programme ‘Very British - Mit Schirm, Charme und Eigensinn’. The feature on Scotland is 12 Minutes long and showcases beautiful landscapes, interesting stories and local, resourceful people as well as creative Edinburgh.

**Le Routard press trip**
VisitScotland played host to four journalists from Le Routard, who visited different regions, including Edinburgh to update the best French guide book (Le Routard, edition Hachette). The guide book has a circulation of over two million.

**El Mundo and Europapress Brave press trip**
Following the Brave European premier in Edinburgh, two journalists from El Mundo - a Spanish daily newspaper and Europapress - a news and reports private agency visited Edinburgh and the Lothians.

**Mondo Kids press trip - 14-23rd August**
The chief editor of Kids Magazine, Mondo kids which has a circulation of 70,000 visited Edinburgh during their stay in Scotland to experience wildlife and kids eco-friendly activities

**Washington Post Journalist Investigates his Scottish Roots**
The VisitScotland International PR team assisted with a press trip for a Washington Post and his family. The trip included a meeting in Edinburgh at the ScotlandPeoples Centre. The Washington Post is a leading newspaper in the US reaching an affluent market and focusing on news from the nation's capital, including an impressive travel section; the circulation for the newspaper is over 700,000.
Route development
Brussels Airlines - new route
Brussels Airlines has announced the new route from Brussels to Edinburgh starting from October running six times per week. VisitScotland are working with Brussels Airlines to develop PR and marketing activity.

Partnerships
The partnerships communications team at VisitScotland have been working on some new advice material, events and information for the tourism sector, make sure that you have a look at the highlights below to keep abreast of what’s happening!

AdviceLink - New advice materials for businesses

• AdviceLink ‘Introduction to working with the media’ - This guide offers businesses introductory information on working with journalists, writing and delivering a press release and maximising PR opportunities available through VisitScotland.

• VisitScotland AdviceLink ‘Introduction to online marketing’ This guide will offer businesses advice on how to ensure they are easily found online and how to protect their reputation online.

Keep your ear to the ground!
If you aren’t already a subscriber to VisitScotland’s monthly industry eUpdate, you could be missing out on events, training, news, business advice and other opportunities. Take a few seconds to register now.

Events
Visits the event calendar on visitscotland.org to stay updated with all the latest events taking place in Edinburgh and Lothians - feature event includes:

Save the date! Edinburgh and Lothians tourism industry event
Tourism businesses in Edinburgh and Lothians are invited to attend a VisitScotland tourism industry event, hosted in partnership with Marketing Edinburgh.

VisitScotland has teamed up with Marketing Edinburgh to host a joint tourism industry event on Thursday 1 November from 3.00pm - 7.15pm at the recently refurbished Sheraton Grand Hotel & Spa, Edinburgh and we would be delighted to see you there.

An inspiring selection of speakers are lined up to present at the event including VisitScotland Chairman, Mike Cantlay and Lucy Bird, Chief Executive of Marketing Edinburgh, with more to be confirmed.

Aimed at all tourism businesses - this is a great opportunity to bring plenty of business cards and network with other like-minded representatives from the tourism sector.

If you are interested in attending, email laura.brown@visitscotland.com and pencil the date into your diary!

Accessible Tourism - unlocking the potential
An industry conference will take place in March as part of Scottish Tourism Week, to explore the opportunities around accessible tourism.

If you would like to be notified when registration opens please email your contact details to
accessible.tourism@visitscotland.com and include, ‘Accessible Tourism Conference’ in the subject line.

Click here for more information about Accessible Tourism.

National Thistles announced!
VisitScotland has announced that Glasgow will host the national final of the Scottish Thistle Awards on 9 November this year.

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is a fitting setting in this, the Year of Creative Scotland 2012 and further offers the chance to spotlight, promote and above all celebrate the country’s tourism strengths in what is the showpiece event on the tourism event calendar.

In January this year, VisitScotland announced major changes to the Scottish Thistle Awards that included a new regional format. Winners for the Central South East, Central South West and North East & Tayside regions have now been announced. Click here for further information.

Hotel Missoni, Edinburgh’s Hogmanay 2011/12, Rabbie’s Small Group Tours, Our Dynamic Earth, Crosswoodhill Farm Holiday Cottages, the Scottish Seabird Centre and Romanes & Paterson - part of the Edinburgh Woollen Mill, all from Edinburgh & Lothians will go head-to-head with winners from all the region awards at the national final in November. For successful tourism businesses, it’s about much more than simply winning a trophy on the night - benefits of being awarded national winner status include receiving VisitScotland products to the value of £500.

Be there - tickets are available for the Scottish Thistle Awards final ceremony; you can book by logging in to the ticket page on www.scottishthistleawards.co.uk.

Homecoming Scotland 2014
As part Homecoming Scotland 2014, the Funded Events Programme is now open for applications!

The fund aims to support a large number of mid-scale events that directly respond to the themes of Homecoming Scotland 2014 or provide additionality.

Read more about this exciting programme and register your interest by completing a simple pre-application form.

Please note - the deadline for final applications is 30 September this year.

Click here for more information and to access the pre-application form

Stats and Trends
Edinburgh Pass
Year to date sales to 10 August 2012: 3,829 cards were sold generating revenue of £141,518.47. This is up from the same period last year by seven percent. This has been helped with the recent advertising and promotions with various partners, including the new VisitScotland Information Centre wall
graphic and working with the team at Informed Edinburgh to promote the Pass through a micro site.

Lothian Buses has also teamed up with VisitScotland to promote the Pass within their fleet of buses over the month of August.

In brief
Tourism Intelligence Scotland publications
Two new Tourism Intelligence Scotland publications were recently released, one which looks at ways businesses can tap into the growing wildlife tourism market in Scotland ahead of ‘The Year of Natural Scotland’ in 2013, while the other released to coincide with the launch of the new ‘Tourism Strategy 2020’ from the Scottish Tourism Alliance, provides up to date market information to help operators grow and develop.

The new *Wildlife Tourism in Scotland* guide has been produced in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland and Wild Scotland.

The new guide provides key intelligence on the sector and offers advice on how businesses can ensure that wildlife enthusiasts – ranging from dedicated wildlife watchers to those enjoying wildlife as part of a mix of activities and attractions – have the best experience possible.

The refreshed *Knowing our Markets ... Scotland’s Visitors 2012*, highlights what’s changed in the global tourism environment since the guide was first produced in 2008 and how businesses need to react. It provides a better understanding of where the future might be heading.

The guide aims to help operators understand who their visitors are, what they’re looking for and how to keep them coming back. It also provides tips on how to target new markets; helps them come up with ideas on how to develop products and services with the ‘wow’ factor; gives advice on the best ways of reaching potential visitors; and shows examples of what other businesses have done.

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