



Delivering for the **Outer Hebrides**

We promote Scotland with Scotland, working with local industry to grow the visitor economy.

 Visit Scotland | Alba™

Introduction

Throughout 2017 we worked with partners, tourism businesses and event organisers to ensure the region took full advantage of the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology.

From Purvai Festival to Scotland in Six, which celebrated Scotland's six World Heritage Sites including St Kilda, the region celebrated its heritage and culture.

Building on this success, we are collaborating with partners including Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Third Sector Interface, Community Land Trusts and Skills Development Scotland to capitalise on the Year of Young People 2018.

This Themed Year puts young people in the spotlight, celebrating their talents and contributions, with some fantastic opportunities lined up for our young people in the Outer Hebrides.

Scotland's reputation as a quality destination relies on continual investment and innovation to ensure that current provision meets future demand. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the Outer Hebrides maintains its status as a must-see destination.

Outer Hebrides Team
VisitScotland



Key stats for the Outer Hebrides

181 BUSINESSES

PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF
OUR QUALITY ASSURANCE
SCHEMES – 120 OF THOSE HAVE
ACHIEVED FOUR OR FIVE STARS
REPRESENTING A COMMITMENT TO
QUALITY IN THE REGION



96% INCREASE

IN REFERRALS TO BUSINESSES
IN THE OUTER HEBRIDES FROM
VISITSCOTLAND.COM IN 2016/17
COMPARED TO 2015/16

OUTER HEBRIDES POSTS ACROSS
OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS
GENERATED

OVER 1.5 MILLION 
LIKES, SHARES, RETWEETS
AND COMMENTS



MORE THAN 34 MILLION

POTENTIAL CONSUMERS REACHED
WORLDWIDE BY OUR CONSUMER
PR ACTIVITY BETWEEN APRIL AND
OCTOBER 2017

193% INCREASE 
IN TRAFFIC FROM FRANCE

118% INCREASE 
IN TRAFFIC FROM CANADA

111% INCREASE 
IN TRAFFIC FROM GERMANY TO
OUTER HEBRIDES PAGES ON
VISITSCOTLAND.COM

101 BUSINESSES

IN OUR VISITSCOTLAND
INFORMATION PARTNER
(VIP) PROGRAMME



WE INVESTED

£55,545 

IN EVENTS INVOLVING THE OUTER
HEBRIDES IN 2016/17

Developing tourism across the Outer Hebrides

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY

We work with Outer Hebrides Tourism (OHT), Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to deliver *Tourism Outer Hebrides 2020*, the local industry response to the national strategy *Tourism Scotland 2020*.

Throughout 2017, we worked closely with public and private sector partners in planning exciting activity for the Year of Young People 2018. This project is a Community Planning Partnership driver for Quality of Life, providing opportunities for young people to develop, direct and deliver activities across the whole of the Outer Hebrides.

We also continue to work closely with OHT on the future approach to information provision. The way visitors access information has changed significantly and we need to reflect

this by switching investment to new initiatives in order to encourage visitors to stay longer, spend more and grow the visitor economy in the Outer Hebrides.

Our two-year information provision strategy sees a significant increase in the number of channels providing content on places to visit and stay in the Outer Hebrides. These include a mix of industry partners through the VIP programme, Coo Vans, digital products and 26 VisitScotland iCentres in high impact locations, with iCentres currently operating in Stornoway and Tarbert.

Information comes from a wide range of people and places. In the Outer Hebrides, 101 tourism businesses have joined the exclusive network of VIPs, actively promoting their local area and all it offers to see and do.



DELIVERING FOR THE OUTER HEBRIDES

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

We promote Scotland with Scotland. Partnership and collaboration is at the heart of Scottish tourism and VisitScotland works with local industry to develop and deliver innovative initiatives that grow the visitor economy.

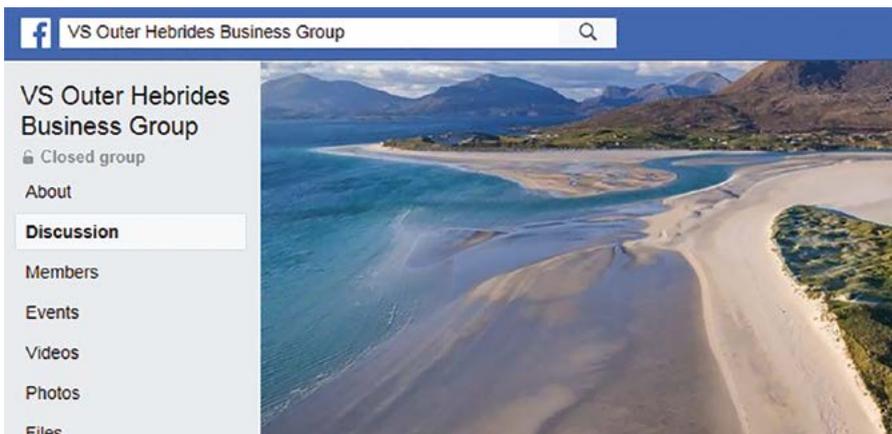
Outstanding customer service is key to ensuring that every visitor to the Outer Hebrides gets a quality experience every time. Our Hebridean Welcome is a joint project between VisitScotland, OHT, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Skills Development Scotland. This free online customer service training programme is available to all tourism businesses.

The quality of the visitor journey is increasingly dependent on the availability of digital information. Alongside our partners we launched a

new Digital Tourism Scotland website in November 2017. This is a useful resource for all businesses looking to use digital marketing and technology to grow their business. Find out more at digitaltourismScotland.com

We offer business surgeries providing digital support including free web listings on visitscotland.com and advice on online bookability, social media and managing your online reputation. These are offered on both a one-to-one and group basis by Alan MacKenzie.

Our VisitScotland Outer Hebrides Industry Facebook page now has over 350 members, providing a platform for information sharing amongst local tourism businesses. You can join the group by going to facebook.com/groups/visitscotlandoh



Marketing the Outer Hebrides

VisitScotland's marketing provides a shop window for Scotland — stimulating investment, jobs, and millions of visitors.

GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS

Our global campaign - the *Spirit of Scotland* - showcased our country, and encouraged the industry and visitors to share their #ScotSpirit to grow the visitor economy.

Building on this, we have identified that now is the time for a collaborative approach, to accelerate international growth and build a strong Brand Scotland. Our new global campaign, *Scotland is Now*, represents a confident, consistent and bold approach to brand marketing.

Working in partnership with Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Development International and Universities Scotland we will position Scotland as a bold and positive country, rich in history and heritage but forging forward in a progressive and pioneering way, across four pillars of activity – Visit, Live & Work, Study and Invest.

At the heart of this campaign is the message that Scotland is a country with the warmest of welcomes, which challenges new thinking, creates new opportunities for study and jobs, supports new industry and drives technology that embraces humanity across the world.

REGIONAL ACTIVITY

Regional marketing campaigns for autumn/winter 2016 and spring 2017 were delivered in partnership with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and OHT, encouraging visitors to experience the whole of the Outer Hebrides.

Spring 2017 activity focused on key themes of heritage and culture, with video 'Weave Your Own Story' created and viewed over 10,000 times on YouTube. This campaign drove traffic (43,000 visits) to the dedicated landing page on the OHT website.

In autumn 2017 we created '11 quirky experiences in the Outer Hebrides' blog post in partnership with OHT, and the Isle of Harris distillery featured in our 'Meet the Maker' series of online films.

DELIVERING FOR THE OUTER HEBRIDES

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL CONTENT

We provide inspiration and information to millions of potential visitors across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Our #ScotSpirit campaign has encouraged visitors and locals to upload inspirational images of the Outer Hebrides that are shared globally.

During 2017 Outer Hebrides posts across our social media channels led to over 1.5 million likes, shares, retweets and comments. This engagement created organic reach (people shown posts through unpaid distribution) of 17.4 million on Facebook alone.

In February 2017 we launched ground-breaking travel app ScotlandVR, developed through collaboration between the Scottish academic, technology and tourism sectors.

The app enables users to virtually visit 26 attractions including the Calanais Standing Stones. Visiting the historic site virtually can inspire prospective visitors to enjoy a first-hand experience of the Outer Hebrides.

Between February and September 2017, 43,000 users installed ScotlandVR. The app won 'App Design' at the Scottish Design Awards and 'Best Mobile Application' at The Herald Scottish Digital Business Awards. Virtual reality is revolutionising the way people choose where they visit and ScotlandVR allows users to discover Scotland in a unique and interactive way.





Sign up to our monthly industry newsletter at visitscotland.org/eUpdate



Follow our corporate Twitter feed @VisitScotNews



Connect with us on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/visitscotland



Join our VisitScotland Outer Hebrides Facebook page facebook.com/groups/visitscotlandoh

CONTACT US

Chris Taylor
Regional Leadership Director

07795 060 817
chris.taylor@visitscotland.com

Alan A. Mackenzie
Industry Relationship Manager

07770 736 643
alan.mackenzie2@visitscotland.com

Rachel Thomson
Industry Communications Executive

01224 269 193
rachel.thomson@visitscotland.com

visitscotland.com | visitscotland.org

All other photographs ©VisitScotland unless otherwise stated. VisitScotland has published this report in good faith to update stakeholders on its activity. VisitScotland has taken all reasonable steps to confirm the information contained in the publication is correct. However, VisitScotland does not warrant or assume any legal liability for the accuracy of any information disclosed and accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

