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

Delivering for the Scottish Borders
Partnership and collaboration is at the heart of all that we do, supporting the industry to make the Scottish Borders a fantastic place to visit, work, study and invest in.

Our work is delivered through strong partnerships. Working closely with the Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership, which now has more than 500 members, is enabling us to be at the forefront of product support and development and to contribute the local tourism strategy.

I am delighted to see our tourism offering growing in diversity with continued investment and innovation. This was recognised at the Scottish Thistle Awards 2017 where we had 15 regional finalists and took home seven accolades putting the Scottish Borders firmly on the map.

And now with more than 1,600 businesses in our VisitScotland Information Partner Programme (VIP) which provides high quality information to visitors where they want it, when they want it and how they want it, we can continue to enhance the quality of the visitors experience to the region.

We couldn’t do it alone and I’d like to thank you for helping make the Scottish Borders a must return visitor destination.

Paula Ward,
Regional Director
VisitScotland
Key stats for the Scottish Borders

- **63,332** business referrals from pages on VisitScotland.com containing Borders content.
- **124,442 views** of ‘Step into the Scottish Borders’ film on our YouTube channel.
- **116% increase** in traffic from Germany to Scottish Borders pages on VisitScotland.com.
- **£22,000** awarded to Scottish Borders events by our EventScotland team.
- **228** businesses in our QA scheme.
- **85 businesses** in our VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme.
- **34.9 million** people reached by our Borders railway marketing in 16/17.

COO vans attended 51 events and directly engaged with 15,000 people.
Developing tourism across The Scottish Borders

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY
In November 2017, The Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership reached the milestone of 500 members and we continue to be a key partner in delivering a range of exciting projects and opportunities that will bring significant economic benefit whilst contributing to the local tourism strategy and increasing the economic value meeting the needs of our tourism businesses.

Other industry activity in the Scottish Borders includes support of the Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group (MBTAG) with business engagement events, familiarisation trips and travel trade workshops. Over 137 businesses have attended their engagement events and we continue to work in partnership into year three of the project.

With an annual capacity of 1.6 million journeys, the Borders Railway is a fundamental part of delivering on the industry’s Tourism Scotland 2020 Strategy and we are an integral part of the blue print group. We are closely aligned with the South of Scotland Economic Partnership which has been put into place to address the level of investment in economic growth, enterprise, skills and innovation and will be operational by 2020.
DELIVERING FOR THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

INDUSTRY SUPPORT
We deliver economic success by showcasing the Scottish Borders on a global stage as a place to visit and invest in, and by supporting the wide-ranging programme of events that the region is recognised for.

Events and festivals continue to draw visitors and our EventScotland team has contributed £33,000 in funding across the region including the Alchemy Film Festival, Melrose Sevens and the Borders Book Festival.

The signature event ‘Lighting up the Borders’ kicked off the Borders Heritage Festival which held 204 events attracting 32,919 visitors and is estimated to have an economic impact of £1.45 million.

Developed in partnership with the tourism industry, our Quality Assurance scheme is world-leading and we have 228 businesses receiving tailored advice from a highly experienced advisor to give visitors an experience they won’t forget.

Our research shows us that visitors are switching to seek information at the breakfast table, in the local pub and at the local visitor attraction and we have 227 businesses engaging with VisitScotland Information Partner (VIP) programme in the Scottish Borders designed for this purpose.

One of our most powerful assets is our people, our Industry Relationship Manager Hélène Sinclair is our main business contact for the Scottish Borders providing tailored support and advice. We also provide regional information for businesses through our monthly online newsletter – the Tourism Insider via social media and industry events.

You can contact Hélène Sinclair at Helene.Sinclair@visitscotland.com
BORDERS RAILWAY
The Borders Railways international marketing campaign in which we invested £367,000 is now in year three and included activity such as direct mail packs, social media campaigns, themed films and targeted emails and e-newsletters with a total reach of more than 39 million.

In August 2017, we supported the Scottish Railway Preservation Society to run a series of steam train trips every Sunday of the month. Running at 97% capacity, 1,545 railway enthusiasts visited the region generating more than £130,000 revenue.

REGIONAL MARKETING
Viewed more than 124,000 times on YouTube, our film ‘Step into the Scottish Borders’ was the winner of the Animation/Illustration category at the Scottish Creative Awards 2017. Working closely with Whitespace and Scottish Borders Council the film promotes the authentic experiences available in the Scottish Borders challenging the perception of the region.
CREATIVE CAMPAIGNS
We embarked on an interactive creative partnership with E4 which saw six millennials (age 18-35) travel through Scotland over a week. This ‘campaign first’ challenged the young people to try exciting and unique experiences, including Glentress 7stanes, encouraging viewers to visit Scotland and try for themselves.

The campaign generated more than 500 votes across social media, more than 5,000 prize draw entries, 4,000 video views and almost 13 million reached via social media.

OUR DIGITAL APPROACH
Technology has been a game changer over the past ten years. The first thing visitors do when they arrive in Scotland is switch on their mobile phone and we are responding to this through ongoing investment of around £10 million in digital and innovative information channels.

visitscotland.com sees more than 20 million sessions per year and 2.7 million referrals to industry via web listings worth a potential £560 million. With more than 30,000 downloads in the first month, our mobile VR app was launched in February 2017 and went on to win the ‘Best mobile application’ award at the Herald Scottish Digital Business Awards.

Also our three day social media takeover dedicated to the region reached more than 1 million Facebook users, and 432,619 Instagram followers.

We designed a press trip for Sally Shalam for the online Hertz blog which has a potential reach of 20,000 readers that included visits to Johnston's of Elgin, Abbotsford House and Dawyck Botanic Gardens.

#SCOTLANDISNOW
Building on the success of Spirit of Scotland, now is the time for a collaborative approach to grow and build a strong brand for Scotland. #ScotlandisNow is an opportunity to extend an invitation to live, work, study and invest in Scotland.

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.
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