Scotland’s Themed Years have been running since 2009 celebrating everything from our young people to our history, architecture, and our food and drink. Themed years give Scottish tourism an edge and galvanise partners to work across boundaries to create a strong collaborative platform to promote Scotland, its people and its places.

These Themed Year Case Studies are practical examples of destinations, individual businesses and organisations who have used the Themed Year opportunity to their advantage in a range of different ways to inspire and attract, and ultimately enhance the visitor experience.

From new campaigns to themed itineraries, use of the dedicated hashtag across social channels to the creation of new content – there’s a range of ways to consider the forthcoming opportunity of Scotland’s Year of Coasts and Waters 2020 and Scotland’s Stories 2022 for your own business.

**BLiSSfully celebrating Themed Years**

Using Scotland’s Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 as a platform for promotion, the Loch Earn Tourism Information group (LETi) pro-actively established an innovative, unique and eye-catching arts trail to encourage more visitors to stop at, spend time in, and enjoy the villages and their spectacular settings by creating a new attraction for people of all ages to enjoy.

The unique BLiSS trail, derived from the capital letters of the four villages it links, Balquhidder, Lochearnhead, Strathyre and St Fillans, deep in the heart of ‘Rob Roy Country’ won the 2016/2017 regional Scottish Thistle Award for “Working Together For Tourism” for setting up BLiSS trail art and architectural installations in the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design. They also won the Scottish Thistle Award for Innovation In Tourism for BLiSS trail 2017 at the national finals in Edinburgh on March 2018. The project also received a range of both online, offline and broadcast coverage. Now a permanent attraction, the trail has provided a significant boost for the villages and the local area.
And the creativity didn’t just take place in 2016, new installations were included as part of Scotland’s Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017. The group also celebrated Scotland’s Year of Young People by helping to show off local talent aged 8 to 26 with its #BLiSSFuture programme. They also worked with GeoTourist, the world travel app enablers to produce an audio tour of the award winning BLiSS trail of art installations including 8-26 year old’s who recorded voice over descriptions that are audible when visiting the sculptures at their GPS locations.

Over 5200 people have discovered BLiSS trail community stories at www.geotourist.com/tours/2040 since launch, encouraging global visitors, social media fans, endless PR opportunities and a network of tourism collaborators.

Kim Proven, LETi Chair and owner of luxury self-catering Briar Cottages at Lochearnhead - “Scotland’s Themed Years have enabled LETi to think about new and innovate ways to raise the profile of our destination, telling new stories and collaborating with a wide group of partners for the greater good of the region, and indeed Scotland.”

“Having celebratory years sets Scotland apart, and provides a great platform to share our product and experiences to a wide audience both domestically and internationally. LETi has certainly reaped the rewards in terms of engagement with the project and the destination.”
Fishers Laundry drives home Themed Years message

During Scotland’s Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 Fishers Laundry opened their new North Lanarkshire super-laundry.

To celebrate the year and the unveiling of their new facility in Coatbridge, the organisation also launched brand new livery for its 80-strong fleet of green and white trucks featuring iconic tourism landmarks to tie in with the themed year message.

The first design featured Glasgow’s Finnieston Crane, the Clyde Auditorium (known locally as the Armadillo) and the Duke of Wellington statue – complete with its famous traffic cone. Other designs included landmarks such as: the Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, Edinburgh Castle and the Forth Rail Bridge to name a few.

Fishers cleans, irons and delivers more than two million items of linen every week, providing linen rental, workwear hire and cleanroom garment services to the hospitality, healthcare, manufacturing and pharmaceuticals sectors.

Scott Inglis, Fishers’ Commercial Director, said: “In 2016, we worked closely with VisitScotland using our motto ‘local Laundry everywhere we go’ to identify and commission new designs of Scotland’s most iconic landmarks using our fleet of trucks to showcase this.

“We are proud of the iconic designs on our trucks as it recognises our role within the tourism industry and our continued commitment to showcase Scotland and what we have to offer as a destination.”

To catch a glimpse of some of the fleet visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maPtyaL2cXQ
Celebrating Perth’s History and Heritage in 2017

From spectacular natural heritage to the world-famous crowning place of the King of Scots at Scone Palace, Perth has a wealth of product and places which aligned closely with Scotland’s Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology 2017.

The destination saw the 2017 Themed Year platform as an opportunity to update their website with refreshed content designed to inspire both visitors and locals, specifically on things to see and do, events to attend and inspirational itineraries aligned to the theme.

Using the official logo for the year, and shining a spotlight on the destination’s hidden gems and well-known icons, the information on the website provided a fantastic resource to link to via social channels, press releases and marketing campaigns.

Leigh Brown, City Development Team, Perth and Kinross Council said:

“Using the toolkit and logos for the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology allowed us to make all the relevant information clear and easy to find for visitors and residents alike. They were clearly able to see events and by using the logo we were able to gain traction through the recognition that this brought from other marketing materials and channels.”

“Having one dedicated page enabled us to provide a clear message to users and provide information on travel and other attractions that they may wish to have attended whilst visiting for a themed year event. We are already planning our page for 2020 and the Year of Coasts and Waters.”

To view the example content visit - https://www.perthcity.co.uk/2017-year-of-history-heritage-and-archaeology/