

## **MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS NOW – VISITSCOTLAND MARKETING TEAM | Q&A**

**Question: How do we handle negative comments on social media posts such as “Don’t come to Scotland”?**

**Answer:** If someone was to post a negative comment on a post you own, it is useful to try to understand the reason for this before responding.

Have they misunderstood your post? Are they raising a genuine concern? Who is it that’s posting this? Someone from the local community? Another business in the area?

If there is a genuine question or concern, it may be worthwhile to signpost to the relevant and up-to-date guidance, from the Scottish Government, on travel to Scotland.

Let them know that just now might not be the right time but we absolutely want people to visit when the time is right. If you think that it does not relate to a genuine concern, then it may be advisable to ignore and delete it.

We’d always recommend not getting involved in negative comments on social media where possible as they can quite often escalate. If you do respond, make sure the answer is factual, linking to further information where relevant.

**Question: Do you have a press release template you can share?**

**Answer:** We don’t have a generic press release template that we can share as they can vary greatly depending on subject matter. The most important questions to think about when writing a press release are: What is the story? What is the angle? Why should media be interested in this story? We would recommend looking at the VisitScotland [Media Centre](#) to see some VisitScotland press release examples and indeed the media centres of other relevant businesses. A release should include the key points of the story, contact details if the journalist wants more information and a high res image they can use if they decide to run the story.

**Question: Kitemarks. Will there be one for cleanliness?**

**Question: To support tourism businesses to re-open and reassure visitors, will VisitScotland be creating a kitemark to highlight businesses adhering to physical distancing?**

**Question: Will you be creating standard safety and hygiene templates so that there is a consistent system of messaging around these areas?**

**Question: Will businesses have to pay for the kitemark?**

**Answer:** Currently there is no agreed plan in place, however we are in regular contact with the Scottish Government and Tourist Boards across the UK. These organisations are all actively looking to develop a UK wide scheme that is science based, has the support of health officials and is endorsed by politicians. In practical terms whatever is agreed must be easy to follow and implement by businesses and reflect the unique needs of different industry sectors. If this is something that will be put into practice, we will advise the industry at the earliest opportunity. For up to date tourism industry advice and information relating to Covid-19, please visit our dedicated section of our website [here](#).

**Question: Due to the potential international quarantine regulations is VisitScotland allocating more budget and focus to target the UK audience to encourage Staycations?**

**Answer:** Yes, the UK market will be the first market to recover as we build together our recovery roadmap. The domestic market has always been our biggest; 81% of all overnight visits to Scotland from Jan – Sep 2019 were made by GB residents.

VisitScotland's marketing campaigns will firstly be focused on day trips and domestic travel but we will let the intelligence and the science inform us of when that happens. We look forward to helping encourage Scots to rediscover their own country and build national pride.

To dig more granular; markets will be Scots, Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR), Day Visits - starting very slowly and gradually, which will reinforce a 'stay local' message and what people can do that is closer to home. We will then move into a phase where it will be more about travel across the UK. We will only do that when we know that you, the industry is ready. More information on UK segments is available here: <https://www.visitscotland.org/binaries/content/assets/dot-org/pdf/research-papers/external-segmentation-paper-full-document2.pdf>

**Question: Are market insights and data available on visitscotland.com or visitscotland.org?**

**Answer:** You can find insights and data on all markets on [VisitScotland.org](https://www.visitscotland.org). Covid-19 related insights, ongoing trackers and research which our Insight team is sharing are included in our [weekly market intelligence updates](#). We will then overlay these insights to our 'traditional' visitor profiles to monitor differences.

**Question: Copyright wise, is it OK to take assets like an image or video from one social media channel and use it on another social media channel?**

**Answer:** Copyright on social media can be a tricky area. Take a look at this blog by Hootsuite who explains the ins & outs - <https://blog.hootsuite.com/understanding-image-copyright/>

**Question: Any suggestions for the thousands of tour guides in Scotland on how to work with the domestic market? Traditionally, not known for using guides?**

**Answer:** Private tours and Tour Guides are a niche segment within the UK market, but not unknown. However, we are anticipating that visitors will be eager for COVID-safe options to visit Scotland and this will be a key part of our communications. We will certainly look to promote private tours and guides more widely, making the UK audience aware of the options and opportunities.

**Question: We hope to attract visitors into Autumn and Winter – Traditionally our 'off season'. Will VisitScotland be allocating or targeting at that time, many businesses here close at that time so it's important our industry is motivated to be open and available for visitors we might attract, strong and visible VisitScotland campaign will help with that.**

**Answer:** We will continue to promote visits through autumn and winter to Scots and the UK market, the form these campaigns will take is currently in the planning phase. We will liaise closely with Scottish tourism businesses to ensure we can share information about which areas and attractions remain open for the winter season. We are also hopeful that the autumn and winter season will play a vital role in the sector's recovery and this will be reflected in our marketing as we encourage potential visitors to enjoy all Scotland has to offer later in the year.

**Question: Tapping into emotions and values; what kind of language should we be using on our website to highlight this? ie. 'love', 'feeling etc. Is there a rulebook for this?**

**Answer:** There is no rule book as such, we would advise you to adapt the tone and language depending on your customer. It is important to think about who you are talking to and what type of language will resonate.

Emotional drivers play a large part in VisitScotland campaign messaging as this can lead to an emotional connection to the destination and potentially a visit. It's not hard to guess why people are so attracted to our country, but there's definitely value to be gained from delving into the facts surrounding this decision. We've produced a variety of reports that'll give you a clear idea of the perceptions of Scotland and why people choose to visit us.

<https://www.visitscotland.org/binaries/content/assets/dot-org/pdf/research-papers/unique-scotland-promoting-the-benefit-of-holidays-in-scotland-oct-2019-final.pdf>

**Question: How do I get VS to share my social posts?**

**Answer:** Make sure you use #VisitScotland or #ScotlandIsNow for the social media team to see it. However, thousands of people use these hashtags every week so there's no guarantee the team will be able to share your post but it does mean lots of other people will be able to see it via these hashtags.

If your post is aimed more at the tourism industry, media and business audience, please tag @VisitScotnews, our corporate twitter channel.

**Question: How do I know whether a travel writer will feature my property?**

**Answer:** Editorial content is always at the discretion of the writer and this is important in order to maintain the authenticity and integrity (and therefore the value) of the coverage. In this respect, coverage can never be guaranteed. However, working closely with the PR team to ensure a positive experience for the journalist and following up afterwards to offer any additional info or images will put you in a really strong position.

**Question: What is an influencer?**

**Answer:** Influencers are individuals that can be used by organisations and brands to influence the behaviour of a target group. By posting specific content that is aligned with a brand's content strategy they can "influence" their followers. These followers are likely to be highly engaged in a particular topic which would be that influencers specialism. Working with influencers and bloggers is a core part of our media and social media strategy and we'll look to continue to do this as we move into the recovery stage. Before working with any influencers, assessments are carried out on their engagement rates, the quality of their content, the sentiment from their audience and their overall suitability for the campaign.

**Question: How can I share my stories with VisitScotland?**

**Answer:** We are always looking for new stories and ideas to pitch to media contacts and would be delighted if you would share these with us, whether it's ideas for great characters and ambassadors, examples of community focus or local gems that we may not be familiar with then please send to [travelpr@visitscotland.com](mailto:travelpr@visitscotland.com).

**Question: What will happen to Year of Coasts & Waters?**

**Answer:** Following input and feedback from our Year of Coasts and Waters (YCW2020) External Steering & Working Group partners and members of the wider tourism and events industry, VisitScotland submitted a paper to the Scottish Government outlining a case to extend YCW2020

into 2021 as part of the Scotland's Tourism & Events COVID-19 recovery plan. Scottish Ministers have agreed to this approach on the basis that further feasibility work, which will be undertaken by VisitScotland's Themed Years team supports this move

**Question: You didn't mention cities - I am a small B&B in Edinburgh, what should I do to help attract customers?**

**Answer:** We will be liaising closely with all communities – both cities and rural – so we can share information about how people can visit Scotland safely, adhering to the Scottish Government guidance. Getting information from industry about measures they're putting in place, and when they are open, will be critical to us being able to inform and inspire potential visitors for all areas of Scotland. As an individual business we recommend that you continue to maintain your product listing on [visitscotland.com](https://visitscotland.com) with any new and updated information about your business. Also monitor [VisitScotland.org](https://visitscotland.org) where you will find the most up-to-date information on any changes in specific industry guidelines and how to communicate them to consumers.

As part of our recovery strategy, teams within VisitScotland will be working with businesses and organisations across the country, both rurally and in more urban areas to ensure we support them as much as possible as we look to rebuild this vital part of Scotland's economy.

**Question: I am a visitor attraction based in rural Perthshire - how can I convince customers to drive to where I am? Will they come? Is it worth me opening?**

**Answer:** We know Scotland is high on many people's lists to visit when we're able to resume travel, so it's vital that we all maintain communications with our potential visitors through our own channels with Dream now, Travel later. We recommend you keep in touch with your Industry Relationship Manager who can give advice on our recovery marketing strategy and help with enquiries in terms of timings and steps you can take to make sure customers are aware of your visitor attraction.

VisitScotland's marketing campaigns will firstly be focused on day trips and domestic travel but we will follow Scottish Government guidelines, and input from communities, as to when this happens, and proceed cautiously in the early days so we can quickly dial up or down any activity.

We look forward to helping encourage Scots to rediscover their own country, supporting businesses as they prepare for the inevitable operational changes and ensure that communities feel comfortable and capable of welcoming visitors in a safe way. It won't be one size fits all however, we need to move at a pace that will be right for each part of Scotland depending on the demographic of each region and how they've been affected by the pandemic.

It may be that the 'dream now, travel later' message continues for some of our more remote islands and communities for longer, however this allows us to maintain a positive sentiment so that when the situation changes, visitors receive the warm Scottish welcome we are so famous for.