

Our collective ambition is be a destination of first choice for a high quality, value for money and memorable customer experience, delivered by skilled and passionate people

The future of our industry is in our hands!

We need to focus on growth despite the tough economic times; and we need to improve the quality of the overall visit to Scotland... we cannot just do what we have always done. We all need to up our game individually as businesses and collectively at the destination level in order to make the difference.

And that means YOU as a leader in your business or local area delivering the essential building blocks:

- Do you thoroughly understand your markets and visitors... both existing and potential - which markets are going to bring you growth and what are they looking for? Are you able to meet their needs?
- Do you recognise and understand the assets in your area and build experiences around them that meet the needs of these markets. What ways can you bring these distinctive strengths to life, how can you adapt existing and develop new products around them, what more can you do to be the highlight of a trip to Scotland that visitors will remember and go home talking about...?
- Do you deliver consistent, quality and authentic experiences with the whole customer journey front of mind - from before they arrive to departure - do you and your staff understand what they will encounter through the whole of their visit and how it can be enhanced? What more can you do to become obsessive about delivering an even better customer service and going the extra mile!
- Do you collaborate with others to actively manage the whole customer experience and deliver quality across the board - can you better identify operators you can trust ... why not only recommend quality experiences that will deliver, and then work together to cross-sell and effectively package with complementary experiences to improve the overall offer and eliminate the weak links in the chain!

Only we the industry can deliver the quality of experience that our visitors expect; only then will we grow our revenues and our bottom lines; and deliver the collective £1 billion growth ambition set out in the strategy.

The Scottish Tourism Alliance can facilitate, co-ordinate and provide the support you need to meet the challenges set out in our strategy. We have the full backing and commitment of the public sector agencies, and will work with them to drive improvements, in areas such as infrastructure, transport, broadband and skills.

How can you up your game...?

Key actions for growth

DESTINATIONS, TOWNS & CITIES

Tourism is all about people and destinations are where it happens... so to have a successful industry we must create a seamless experience for our visitors:

- Every business should **get involved** with their *local destination group* if they aren't already - get together with other like-minded businesses and agree how you could work better together for the benefit of the customer.
- Development of a '**framework for action**' for each and every destination. The framework will also seek to provide groups with a common platform from which area or cross area initiatives that align with our national growth strategy can be developed.
- Re-launch the '**Destination Development**' toolkit, a fantastic resource which will be dusted down and made available to each and every destination group as a self-help tool.
- **Joining up** - destinations can pair up or cluster around themes, such as whisky or golf and bring new products to the market place which revolve around the ultimate experience for the customer and not being parochial.

Also 'the customer journey checker' measuring success, a new deal for effective delivery and the Scottish Destination Conference!

NATURE, HERITAGE & ACTIVITIES

The 'Year of Natural Scotland' in 2013 provides the ideal catalyst to stimulate a series of actions across those sectors which have been identified as having the greatest growth potential, namely:

Golf - exploiting the 'Home of Golf' proposition drawing the full golf experience together under a single global brand aimed at capitalising on the existing and potential demand to play golf in Scotland.

Adventure Tourism - worth 34% of all tourism spend. We need to boost our marketing capabilities - particularly in international markets - alongside further investments in product development, skills and training.

Marine Tourism - significant steps are being taken to help this sector grow through enhanced leadership and collaboration and a focus on product development and actively targeting the valuable European market.

Cycling - working with *Wild Scotland, Cycle Tourism Scotland* and *Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland*, we will be supporting the delivery of the newly created cycle tourism strategy which seeks to position Scotland as a significant cycling destination.

Country Sports - focused on growing participation through international market development and cross-sector collaboration. In particular with the golf and adventure tourism sectors.

We will be pursuing the **House of Tourism Concept** an approach based upon economies of scale and scope, cost savings and efficiencies as well as synergies between like minded tourism groups who are driven by a small band of committed and passionate professionals.

Heritage - Scotland is home to some fascinating *built and cultural heritage* features.

With 48% of tourists to Scotland visiting historic houses and castles, heritage is a key asset for Scotland's visitor experience. *Historic Scotland* is currently taking the lead in discussion with other heritage tourism organisations to develop an action oriented heritage tourism plan to align with the National Strategy; *Tourism Scotland 2020*.

Of course discovering your ancestors has huge appeal to many and we will shortly be launching the new *TIS Ancestral Tourism guide*. There are staggering figures relating to this market with over 50 million people worldwide having Scottish ancestry - the question is *what can we do to encourage more to make the journey to Scotland?* See the new guide!

EVENTS & FESTIVALS

Events and festivals are a massive draw for visitors to Scotland - the key actions for growth are:

- **Open a communications channel** - develop a simple 'shared area' that draws on existing databases which we can then grow over time. Once the database is sound then it can be adapted to be visitor-facing.
- **Develop core capabilities** - our Action Plan is formed around 10 'lines of development', each corresponding to a programme of improvements in capability. Each capability represents one of the essential building blocks for any successful and sustainable events business.
- **Establish an easy-to-access diary** - we need to develop a flexible, visitor-facing digital calendar for all events and festivals in Scotland.
- Establish a simple mechanism for **measurement & monitoring**.

FOOD & DRINK

Food and drink accounts for 20% of visitor spend, so getting this right can make a significant impact on our £1bn+ visitor spend target. Our natural larder is one of Scotland's distinctive assets providing a range of high quality products such as whisky, salmon, shortbread, jams, Scotch beef and seafood which can all add to our visitor offer.

But our eating out experience needs to meet our visitors' expectations, whether its fine dining, family meals at visitor attractions or 'food on the go' for mountain-bikers, our research shows that we need to do much more to consistently reflect the quality and authenticity of our food and drink experience within tourism.

We will be running six 'demonstrator' projects, working with destination groups to build an enhanced food and drink experience which fits with the rest of their visitor offer.

BUSINESS TOURISM

Our ambition by 2020 is for sector to be recognised throughout Scotland as a confident, innovative and articulate sector, which influences and delivers competitive and ambitious programmes and products and acts as a catalyst for economic growth, investment and international influencers across Scotland's growth sectors such as bio-sciences and energy. It is also our ambition that the sector will be recognised as the UK leader in Business Tourism with an influential voice with the global conference and meetings Industry.

Key actions:

- Communications and Engagement with the Scottish Business Tourism Industry - *setting out our stall*.
- National Bid Fund - helping to maximise the national usage and benefits within Scotland.
- Corporate Champions initiative - working with Scotland's corporate leaders to attract international conferences around Scotland's key sectors.

Maximising the opportunity the UKEIS (UK Economic Impact Study) gives us to underpin growth in this sector.

SKILLS

The consultations with tourism employers, stakeholders and partners have identified our strategic skills priorities for the tourism sector to support the growth ambitions set out in 'Tourism Scotland 2020':

- Improving management, leadership and enterprise in the sector.
- Ensuring staff have the skills to deliver a high quality visitor experience.
- Raising the attractiveness of the sector to new entrants.
- Ensuring appropriate and high quality training is available to the sector.

DIGITAL

Better exploitation of technology can lead to greater business efficiency, improved productivity, access to new markets and an increase in revenues. It is an 'ever-present' component of the customer journey from using internet for research and booking to; using mobile apps during a trip; or writing reviews and sharing photos upon returning home.

The Scottish Tourism Alliance, Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Government and VisitScotland are working on a 'Digital Tourism' initiative to help raise awareness of the digital opportunities for Scottish tourism and establish a programme of support to help industry make the most of these opportunities.

Watch out for further digital developments soon...

SUSTAINABILITY

Sector as a whole should try to:

- Recognise the value in the things we buy. Make the most of them - reduce, reuse, recycle in that order.
- Recognise that waste production is a very costly business, economically and environmentally.
- Work together to reduce waste and maximise profit for the sector.

For guidance and support please contact Zero Waste Scotland - zerowastescotland.org.uk

