

# Northern Ireland Made for Events

Events Marketing Plan Guidance  
2019/20

[tourismni.com/events](http://tourismni.com/events)



tourism  
northernireland

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# Current Situation – Where are you now?

In this section of the plan, clearly outline the current position of the event to enable you to move forward and write a successful marketing plan. Below are areas that you may wish to consider when assessing your current situation. Please note not all items may apply to your event but it is important the reader has a clear understanding of your event.

## How is the event performing?

(Please reference the most recent event e.g. 2018)

- Current situation
- Market Share -How is this made up? NI / ROI / International
- Visitor Numbers, bednights
- Sales
- Return on Investment
- Recent trends
- Reason for developing marketing plan?

## What are the events distinctive and unique competitive (marketing) advantages?

- Why do you win in your event? What are the event benefits?
- Why do you lose in your event? What could you do better?
- What is your distinctive competitive advantage? What is unique about your event? What is the unique element that stands out?
- Is it authentic? Does it have a strong NI brand? Focus?
- Does it encourage Out of State Visitors? How?
- Does it have a strong social media following/presence?

## Your Customers

- Who are your existing customers?
- Who is your current international market?
- What motivates your customers?
- Who is your ideal customer?
- What are their needs and values?
- How do they see you?
- How do you engage with your customer? Please specify – e.g. PR / Social media / other?

## Competition

- Who is your competition?
- What other events are happening at the same time? Could your event move dates or is it set? Could you partner with the competition to offer deals?
- Do other events deliver a similar experience? How does your event differ? What makes it unique?
- How do they compete against you?
- How are they performing?
- Can you work with competitors?
- What added value can your event bring? Monetary / bednights / other?
- Does your event include working with partners, encouraging a regional spread or seasonal dispersal?

## SWOT Analysis

Once the current situation of your event has been analysed you should clearly define where you want to go in the future. Following from the development of your Event Business Plan with Event Mission and Objectives specific marketing objectives are required for the event.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

# Smart Marketing Objectives

## – Where do you want to go?

### What are your Events Marketing Objectives and how do you plan to hit these?

Make sure your objectives are SMART, practical and measurable.

- Specific: Be accurate with numbers you want to achieve
- Measurable: Be sure that your objectives can be monitored in progress and confirm achievements
- Actionable: Is it possible? Can you do it?
- Reasonable: Be sure that it is realistically attainable
- Timed: Incorporate deadlines and timeframes
- Budget: Will it run on time and be on budget

Usually these marketing objectives can be focused on:

- Promotion
- Sales
- Awareness of the event
- Communication to key target audiences
- Attracting new customers
- Profit
- Customer satisfaction
- Increase out of state visitors – target international audience
- Customer retention / Loyalty

This is a guide and your marketing objectives may focus on other areas e.g. social media etc.

# Communication Strategy

## – How do you get there?

This section of the marketing plan begins to get you focused on how you are going to deliver the marketing objectives. Target markets and marketing segmentation is an extremely important consideration and when developing the strategy, you should consider:

**Segmentation** - How do you want to divide up the market? Why? Clearly define your market segment.

**Targeting** - Which segments of the market do we wish to focus upon? Why did you select the target market for 2019/20 event?

The local market is important however think beyond Northern Ireland. As an international event you should demonstrate how you will focus out of state.

**Positioning** - How do we want to be perceived in each different target segment?

### Marketing Mix

When developing your marketing plan, it is important to review the events marketing mix. Which of the below marketing mix will impact and influence your event marketing, attendance and customer experience? Consider the below marketing mix and include details on relevant items to your event:

Marketing Mix	Points to consider
<b>Product</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the quality of event offering?</li> <li>Can this be developed any further?</li> <li>Content of event, can it be enhanced?</li> <li>Venue – can this be adapted or improved?</li> <li>Event Packages in association with accommodation, travel, hospitality etc that could enhance visitor experience?</li> <li>Is it authentic?</li> <li>Does it encourage regional spread? Seasonal Dispersal?</li> <li>Is it motivating our target segments?</li> <li>Does it generate a huge number of bednights?</li> <li>Has it the capacity to grow?</li> </ul>
<b>Price</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of attending for target markets</li> <li>Value for money?</li> <li>Is it similar or cheaper to other events or sufficiently unique enough to warrant the cost?</li> <li>Ticket price / entry options? E.g. concessions, family tickets, weekend ticket/ book early incentives?</li> <li>Additional costs – booking fees please specify?</li> </ul>

<b>Promotion</b>	<p>Are you particularly good at promoting your event?</p> <p>Do you have a strong or weak brand?</p> <p>Have you integrated your promotion across the marketing mix?</p> <p>Have you a strong social media presence?</p> <p>What advertising do you undertake and in what market- please specify – NI / ROI or international?</p> <p>Who is the promotion aimed at? Is it your target audience?</p> <p>Do you use the right marketing tools to promote your event?</p> <p>Does it encourage regional spread?</p> <p>Does it appeal to ROI / international visitors?</p> <p>Can you link up with tourist partners in the area to maximise the opportunity? Details</p> <p>Can you partner with local hotels/ accommodation sector to increase bednights? Details</p> <p>Can you include special offers/ package format? Details</p>
<b>Place</b>	<p>Where is your event located?</p> <p>Is it the best location to link with your brand identity?</p> <p>Can it move? Does it integrate key destinations in NI?</p> <p>Is it located with easy access? Transport links?</p> <p>Do you provide information for event attendees?</p> <p>Can you link up with tourist partners in the area to maximise the opportunity?</p> <p>Can you partner with local hotels/ accommodation sector to increase bednights?</p>
<b>Service</b>	<p>Does your event deliver a quality service to your visitor?</p> <p>On your customer journey from promotion of the event, online, booking, attendance at event, evaluation – the various touch points, do the attendees receive a quality visitor experience?</p> <p>What do you do well?</p> <p>What could you do better?</p> <p>Do you undertake a full evaluation and ‘lessons learned’ process?</p>
<b>People</b>	<p>Do you have the right people with the right skills to deliver your event?</p> <p>Are customer facing staff/volunteers friendly, World Host trained, informed about the event? Do they know your customer base and what the quality visitor experience looks like?</p> <p>Are they experienced to sell the local/ wider NI destination and encourage onward travel in NI?</p> <p>Do they know what there is to see and do in the area and are well informed beyond the event itself?</p>
<b>Processes</b>	<p>Are the systems and processes in place efficient to deliver a quality visitor experience?</p> <p>E.g. Dealing with queries? Dealing with complaints?</p> <p>Do the systems project a ‘we value our customers’ approach?</p> <p>How are problems dealt with/ is there an information desk on site?</p> <p>Are there emergency numbers of personnel on site who can quickly deal with any issues?</p> <p>Is there a spokesperson on site for media / security / other issues?</p>
<b>Physicals</b>	<p>Do the physical elements of the event reflect your event brand and identity?</p> <p>E.g. event location, uniforms, branding, logos, marketing materials?</p> <p>How could this help further?</p>



# Marketing Channels

## – How will you implement the plan?

### What are the key strategic aims and the initiatives/tools employed to achieve those aims?

Which communications channels are you going to use to reach your intended target audience(s) and why? (By segment and by market)

There are many activities that can be employed (please note the below list is not a definitive listing):

- Print: posters, leaflets, postcards, programmes, inserts in national newspapers etc.
- Direct mail, print distribution and frequency
- Advertising: print, radio and TV, outdoor, digital advertising, Google adwords, Pay per click
- Websites/e-bulletins –building a website for your event, upgrading your current site to ensure content in timely and engaging
- Social and Digital Media – Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, content, blogs and vlogs
- Ezine – database of customers who you can legally email ref your event
- Direct selling – are you going to directly sell your event?
- Outdoor advertising: billboards, bus sides, poster sites, street dressing, etc.
- Friends/ambassadors' programmes/clubs
- Media releases, promotions and activity
- Media sponsorship
- Private sponsorship and the marketing opportunities
- Partnership marketing
- Fam Trips
- Tourism Ireland partnership approach
- PR – issuing press to local/ ROI press/ bloggers/radio stations/ TV etc.

### Key Items for Consideration

How will you target international visitors and what communication tools are you using and why?

- How are you going to use the Communication Tools?
- What message do you wish to communicate?
- Are you being consistent across different tools and messages?
- Do you have the necessary resources/budgets?
- Do you have in-house PR / marketing / digital staff?
- Do you use or have access to a PR / marketing agency?
- Are you working with Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland? Consider the other businesses, organisations and events that you can work with to promote i.e. Tourism NI (in both NI and in the ROI markets), Tourism Ireland, local councils, RTP's, local clusters, local businesses etc?



Is the information that you handle GDPR compliant? It may be helpful to familiarise yourself with the GDPR guidelines to ensure your event complies with the legislation. The Information Commissioner's Office has produced a GDPR guide for organisations which is available on the ICO website (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>)

**Do not forget to consider...**

- What is the time frame of this marketing plan?
- Who is going to deliver this plan? What resource in terms of staffing etc. is required to deliver this plan?
- Is there a specific marketing budget set aside to deliver this plan? What is the breakdown of the budget?

## 5.0

# Action Plan – When and how to do it?

This is an extremely important section of the marketing plan. It is vital that the information contained in this section links with all other areas of the plan and you outline in one cohesive action plan table what exactly what you are going to do regarding:

- **Marketing**
- **PR**
- **Social, digital and online**



The Action Plan can be an Annex within the Marketing Plan in an excel spreadsheet or alternatively a separate upload.

### Areas included in the plan

1. Specific details of marketing channels to be employed and frequency (include specific details of the publication etc.)
2. Dates: please highlight the specific timings for each marketing tool/channels to be employed in all markets e.g. dates when adverts will be placed in press, dates posters will be distributed, dates of TV coverage
3. Reach of the chosen marketing channel – please highlight the coverage the marketing tool will give the event, such as newspaper readership on allocated day, TV coverage audience reach in all markets. What region / country this will target
4. Key target market – please highlight the target market the marketing tool will impact
5. Who is going to deliver the various areas of the plan?
6. Costs: Please detail the costs for each channel identified.

Please include how you intend to capitalise on PR opportunities and how you plan to gain positive PR for NI through both online and traditional media channels.

It is vital that all details are included with specifics to ensure the plan will deliver on the objectives. As an international event, there must be evidence of how you will target all visitors including out of state.

## Budget

### – What budget resources do you need to achieve your plan?

A complete budget breakdown of the marketing plan budget is required. Please detail within the section the overall marketing budget and a breakdown in detail of how this budget will be spent. This should include marketing channels to be employed, specifics on publications, costs and associated dates. This information should link with all other areas of the plan.

Detail Expenditure Item	Budget	Date

**Note to Applicant:**

Please check the overall budget within the marketing section aligns with the Budget Expenditure forecast within the Business Plan in Annex A of the application.

# Measurement and Evaluation

## How will you measure success?

As a marketing plan is an open system it will constantly evolve and develop. It is important to track progress of how the marketing plan is delivering against event objectives on a regular basis. This enables the action plan to be altered accordingly to ensure results.

- How are you going to measure the success of the plan?
- How often will you review the plan?
- If targets not being met, will you relook and re-evaluate to get on track?
- How will you evaluate if you've met your KPIs?
- Post event evaluation – it is important to evaluate post event to ensure the Marketing Plan has delivered on the objectives outlined.
- How will you plan to evaluate the Marketing Plan and help improve the marketing for the future?
- Do you have an independent review of Marketing, PR and Digital achieved for your event?
- Please provide figures generated and source for last event held.

# Appendices

Please include any relevant appropriate documents:

- Previous research and economic impact information if not commissioned by Tourism NI.

**Tourism NI Events Unit**

Tourism NI

Floors 10-12

Linum Chambers, Bedford Square, Bedford Street,  
Belfast, BT2 7ES

T: 028 9044 1656

F: 028 9024 0960

E: [eventsunit@tourismni.com](mailto:eventsunit@tourismni.com)

W: [tourismni.com/events](http://tourismni.com/events)

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