

Content & Engagement

A report by the
Digital Tourism Think Tank
as part of the

12 Stages of Transformation Series





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Authors: Michela Gusso, Charlotte Daniel

ABOUT THE DIGITAL TOURISM THINK TANK



The Digital Tourism Think Tank is the industry platform that promotes digital leadership in the tourism industry. Comprising a tightly-knit network of highly engaged marketers, thinkdigital.travel is a truly connected market place, where thought leaders share experiences and best practices. We've put together a team of experts in diverse and varied fields of the tourism industry and we've been connecting destinations worldwide, from the Faroe Islands to Cape Town.

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INTRODUCTION

With an increasing demand for tourism and an expected annual growth of 4-5% in the number of international tourist arrivals, as forecast by the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer¹, there is no doubt that tourism is one of the major driving forces of the economy nowadays. The tourism sector is fragmented by definition, because it encompasses many different actors and players which form part of the tourism experience. But the role of the DMO is slowly shifting from a marketing-only perspective to a management perspective. This has fostered change in the sector and today many DMOs have already started their transformation journey to become the primary subject of reference for the coordination of the tourism players at the destination.

In fact, in order to be competitive on the market, destinations need to embrace the digital era and adapt to the ever changing needs of visitors, but starting a transformation journey for a DMO is not necessarily easy.

This is why the **Digital Tourism Think Tank** has developed a framework to help destinations to shift their role from *DMO* to *DxO*, where the “x” stands for the mathematical symbol.



The focus of this type of organisation nowadays is not marketing-only anymore, it can be experience, data, management, innovation, product, partnerships, storytelling, etc.

Transformation is not an exact science. We work with a thoroughly thought-through methodology and adapt it to the unique needs of each destination fostering collaboration, transparency and productivity within the team. The transformation journey in this sense is;



¹ <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2018-01-15/2017-international-tourism-results-highest-seven-years>

The **12 Stages of Transformation Series** is a comprehensive pack of resources created by the #DTTT Team which follows the Transformation Framework, a model built around 12 key topics that form the basis for the Destination Transformation.



Each month we are launching a chapter of the series according to each stage of the model, including:

- Relevant Case Studies and Best Practices.
- Relevant Talks from the #DTTT events.
- A package of Templates with relative explanatory video on how to use them.
- An online learning course to understand and embrace the digital transformation with your team.
- An Asana project plan to integrate into your workspace.

CONTENT & ENGAGEMENT

In a digital world your destination brand hinges on incredible content at every stage of the visitor cycle. From creating top-of-funnel awareness and inspiration to generating word of mouth and repeated visits to the destination, content plays a key role and as a DMO you should act as coordinator for the creation of content.

Great content needs a deep strategic planning method in order to craft, build and nurture the right approach. This includes targeting the right audience through the right channels, which is why selecting the right content according to strategic needs is important to drive action along each phase of the visitor cycle.

In this chapter of the Transformation Series we will cover the topic of content and engagement, one of the most important aspects of destination marketing. We will start from the definition of a few fundamental concepts that you need to know if you are involved in content marketing, such as ‘hero’, ‘hub’, ‘hygiene’, ‘storytelling’ and ‘always-on’ content.

In this chapter, we’ll provide some guidelines on how to carry out a content review, which is necessary to assess existing content and necessary to help you understand where there is space for improvement.

Since the variety of content is broad and every DMO creates content differently, in this report you will also find a selection of more than 50 examples of content in destination marketing divided by category, such as interactive, influencers, Instagram, video, user-generated content, partnerships, and more.

The report also describes and links to 6 case studies and 5 talks published on the Launchpad that particularly focus on the topic of content and engagement.

You will also find an Asana template board that you can import into your Asana workspace, with a list of useful tasks to guide you in the assessment and strategy of your content.

Finally, you will be able to access the 6th chapter of the 12 Part DMO Transformation Online Learning Course, “Content & Engagement”, to learn about the topic in a more active and interactive way, with explanatory video lessons, videos of the selected case studies and talks, templates to download and quizzes to assess your knowledge.

This report helps you to understand the key concepts of:

- Hero-Hub-Hygiene
- Developing a core content framework around key stories
- Always-on and 365 planning and workflow for your team
- Creation of a talent network of creatives and influencers
- Establishing a clear UGC plan

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF CONTENT

What exactly does content mean? Is the creation of content for a DMO a truly relevant topic? When and how does content become a story to tell? Why is it important to plan and schedule content to launch throughout the year? In this chapter, you will find the answers to these and more questions related to content thanks to an essential description of the elements that characterise destination marketing content.

Over the years, the most important question for a DMO became how it is possible to drive content to specific audiences in an effective way, thus depending on the objective of the communication. In fact, the type of content you should choose to share or develop depends on the final goal for your DMO, whether it is to drive conversion and booking or to spread the word about your destination.

Regardless of the final goal of the communication, it is important that the content is able to generate engagement. Engagement means that the audience capturing the message interact with it, like it, share it or simply stop for a fraction of their lifetime to appreciate the content. But the question then is, what drives engagement?

Engagement can be generated in different ways and there is no specific rule for this. What we know for sure though, is that the more the content is personalised and targeted to the correct audience, it's innovative and fresh, visually appealing and it follows the latest content trends, the better it generates engagement. This is why content is so strongly connected to the products and experiences promoted, to the people promoting them, to the identity of the brand, to the moment in which the message is sent to the consumers, depending on the final goal of the communication. Every element is connected and has a purpose. For this reason content is so important, and if it doesn't generate engagement it is not purposeful.

For the majority of destinations, providing easily shareable and likeable content is a good starting point to have high engagement rates, ensuring that consumers are encouraged to engage with content directly on the website or through specific channels. On the DMO website, seamlessly integrated social content streams are a great way of encouraging consumers to take action, whereas linking to external networks might put barriers in place for consumers and stop potential engagement.

Delivering a campaign that has an immediate and straightforward call-to-action is another opportunity for destinations to engage consumers. There are a number of nice examples of thinking creatively about getting consumers to share and post content or pick up the phone to take part in a competition. Destinations that have successfully engaged and built relationships with a large number of consumers have thought about creative and innovative ways of doing so, often being the first to come up with a priceless idea.

Regardless of the ways chosen to reach great engagement, the rule number one of content creation is having a content strategy and DMOs should define their role in the process and set objectives before even thinking of starting to create content. We will talk about engagement in the [next chapter](#).

The role of the DMO

Whether your DMO is directly involved in the creation and distribution of content, or just coordinates external creators, it is fundamental that the role content will play for your DMO's overarching goals and objectives are well defined and part of a clear content strategy for content.

Firstly the DMO should be the authority behind destination's brand story. That is to say, it sets the scene for content created and commissioned directly, but also working to align others to do the same. In presuming this role, the DMO can truly strengthen the combined digital footprint of the brand through content and also strengthen the destination's brand identity with greater alignment, between themes, stories, messaging and channels.

This means that, whilst not always necessary to directly see the DMO's role in content, for example through visuals or logos, there is true consistency in the tone and messaging.

Secondly, the DMO should make sure that every piece of content created has:

1. **A Brand Match:** make sure there's a really good brand match. If the connection with the publisher and the destination isn't super strong, don't waste your time and investment.
2. **An Audience Match:** make sure the content created and distributed is tailored to your audience.
3. **Reach and volume:** Ensure that the media you choose to work with has the right reach and volume in the segments or markets you're trying to reach. Try to work out what a critical mass looks like, and that time and budget invested is worthwhile.
4. **Richness and depth:** Great paid content partnerships are all about delivering something mind-blowing. It is a true rarity to be able to achieve this – newspapers and other 'traditional' media are typically not so great at creativity, but this is changing rapidly, so be sure to only accept something which truly strengthens your brand.

There are so many different examples of creative approach and style in terms of content in various destinations. Ultimately, the creative approach you take comes down to how you want to shape the image of the destination, just remember that establishing tone and consistency is key. Although the content strategy differs in needs and results, a common trend right now is the creation of dedicated Content Teams within DMOs. As we have seen in many cases, people within the DMO know the destination and the brand better than outsourced organisations, guaranteeing better results. For this reason it is good to consider if having an in-house content team might benefit the DMO more than outsourcing the production of content.

A great example is **Visit Denmark**, who decided to invest in a strong content strategy and an in-house, multi-talented content-driven team to increase the demand for Denmark as a destination through a strengthened content approach. This has enabled the DMO to collaborate more closely with tourism and non-tourism partners and to strengthen the digital transformation of the Danish tourism industry by showing

the importance of taking ownership of the brand through content, from the production of content through to its distribution. In the [case study section](#) this will be further explained.

In-house vs Outsourcing

Nowadays, digital creates so many opportunities for us to accomplish incredibly detailed micro-interactions, and this is especially true if branding, strategic development and content creation are kept in-house instead of being outsourced to external agencies. Notwithstanding this, over the years we have collected various examples of DMOs that have successfully built strong partnerships and collaboration between the organisation and external agencies.

San Diego Tourism Authority has developed a very efficient and effective content ecosystem whereby in-house content creators, external agencies, partners and third-party publishers all work together to communicate the San Diego brand worldwide. With a ‘brand first’ strategy, SDTA successfully achieves consistency throughout each global market, whilst still adapting to suit each specific local market’s needs.

But creating an in-house team does not mean that the DMO cannot or should not work with outside agencies. Instead, we suggest a balanced and blended approach. This may require some trial and error to establish what works best for your destination. The table below demonstrates that both directions are able to generate a positive outcome.

Our recommendation is to find a happy medium, developing a strong, multi-disciplined internal creative team alongside an ‘extended team’, comprised of freelancers and experts serving as ‘go-to’s’ for larger scale activities or those requiring a more refined talent pool.

In this sense, the role of the DMO is to recruit the right content creators, whether in-house or externally, to plan the content in advance and most of all manage the creators and the content produced by them. This ensures that the content clearly follows the brand identity and guidelines.

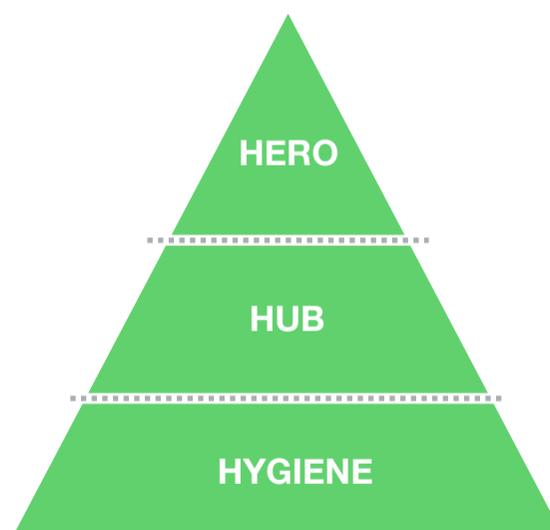
In House	Outsourcing
Deeper connection in the team, higher awareness of mission, values and culture.	A fresh and outside perspective
Passion for fulfilling the company’s mission	Access to a pool of talent with in-depth expertise
Can be cost effective	No need for training



Hero, Hub, Hygiene

Each DMO should have a clear set-out content strategy as a roadmap for the production and distribution of content according to their defined goals. In order to help digital marketers get the best outcomes from their efforts, in 2014 Google and YouTube created the Hero-Hub-Hygiene (H-H-H) strategy that divides the different formats of content into three categories.² Here at the #DTTT, we believe this approach to content still holds strong today and it should be the cornerstone of any content strategy.

It can be explained visually as a pyramid in which Hero is on the top, Hub in the middle and Hygiene at the base.



To explain it metaphorically, let's think of it as a mountain. As we all know, the summit is the most important and recognisable image of the mountain in any postcard. It can be seen from a distance. Then, the closer we get to the mountain, the more we can learn about it until we are close enough to see its basis. If this mountain was the metaphor for a destination's content, the summit would be represented by the most powerful and evocative image of the destination, something truly unique and recognisable and a clear differentiation from other destinations.

² <https://destinationthink.com/hero-hub-hygiene-content-marketing-strategy-dmos/>

The middle part, the hub content would be the stories behind the people, places, and experience providers of the destination who promote the passion and authenticity of the destination to those who are actively interested in it. This is where ambassador content and deep level storytelling works great.

But the closer we get to the mountain the more we can discover the details of the destination through hygiene content, showing strong product information, reviews and strong social and user-generated content which helps validate and confirm the 'promise' set out in the hero and hub messaging.

Let's see them in detail.

Hero

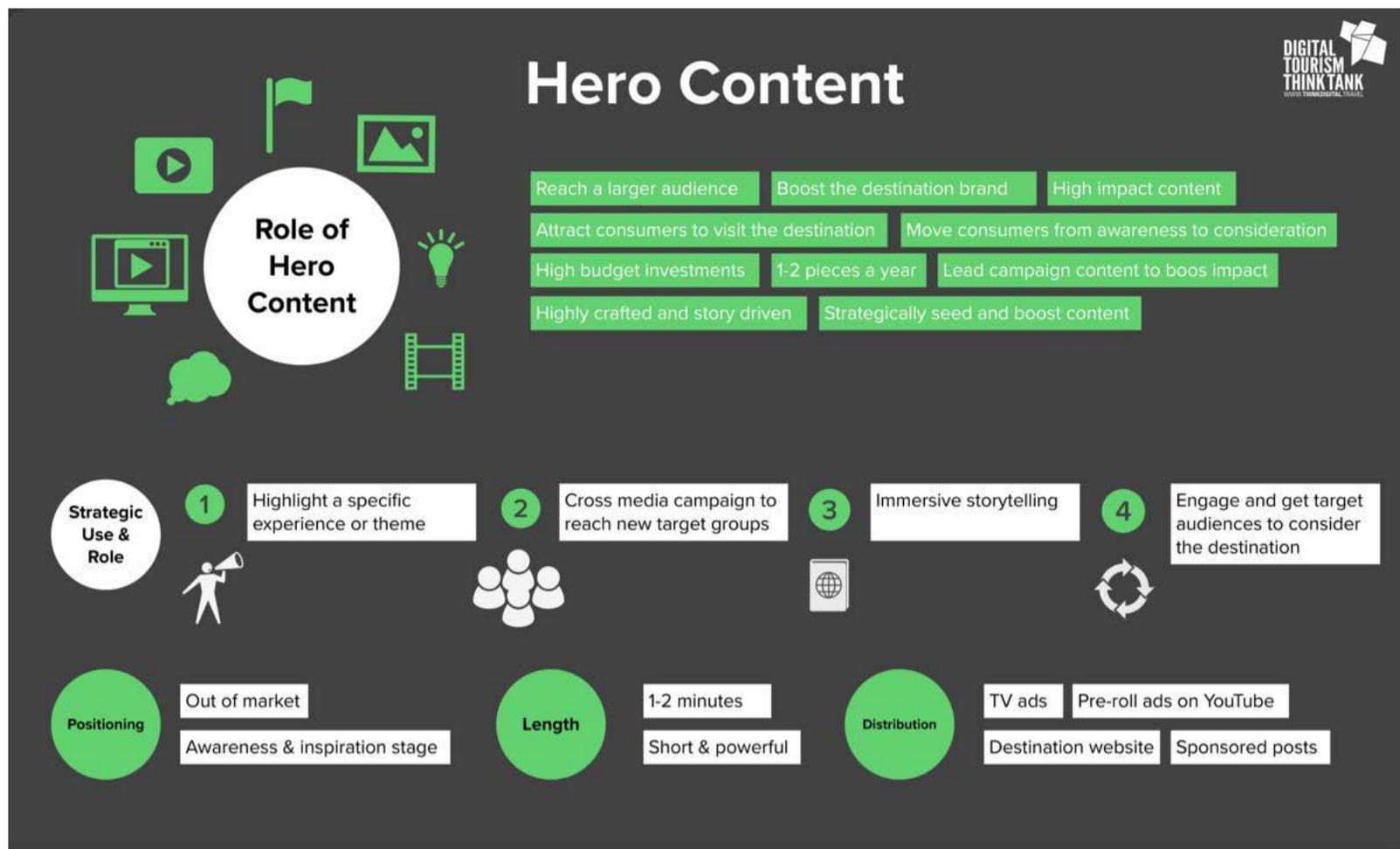
Hero content refers to the type of content that is aimed to provide a game-changer for your destination marketing, aimed to be relevant for a large audience and really craft the image, sparking that initial interest. Destinations are investing a significant amount of their annual marketing budgets into producing hero content, carefully crafting the destination story.

Hero content can help to attract new visitors, boosting the destination's overall brand, image and perception, encouraging consumers to actively consider the destination for their next trip or holiday.

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To produce the right hero content, destinations are strategically planning to ensure they are delivering a piece of content that people want to see, share on their social media and that can lead to a buzz online, reaching a larger audience through just one piece of content. In addition to the hero content, destinations will also release ancillary content to create a pre-buzz in the lead up to the release of the hero content and through smart media investments, potential visitors can be targeted with further content after having watched and engaged with the hero content. For destinations, it is critical to make the launch of the hero content and consumer engagement a success, having invested significant budgets into the production, delivery and distribution.

Although there is no recipe to make a video viral, it is the hero content that has the great potential to achieve a higher impact than other content. Hero content needs significant investment, both time and money, to work on the original idea and strategically craft, produce and seed the content. Destinations tend to produce hero content less frequently than other content, focusing on investing in one or two hero content pieces a year, if not less.



Hub

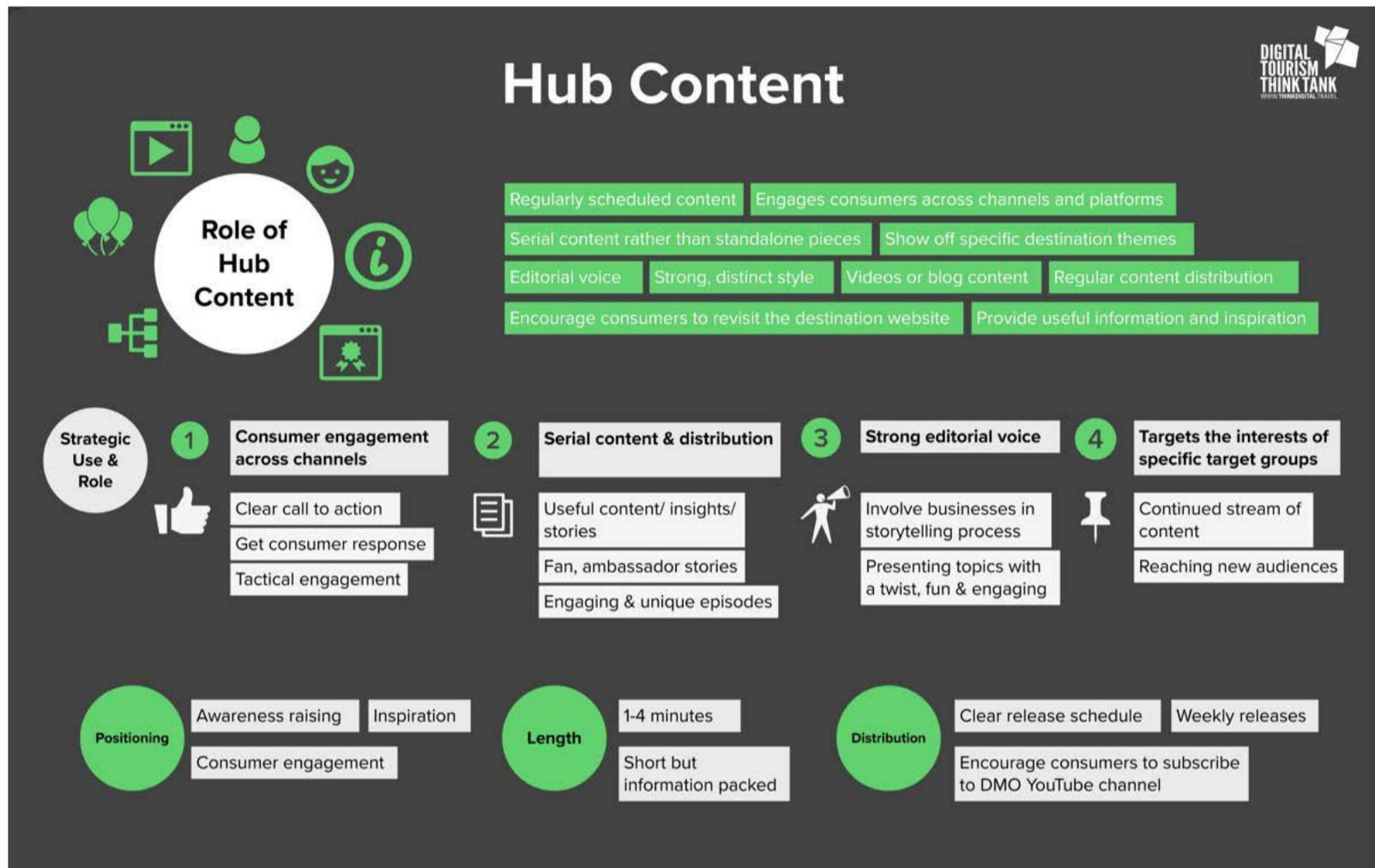
Hub content is regular, scheduled content that engages people across channels and platforms and is often distributed as serialised content rather than a standalone content piece. Destinations are using hub content to create an editorial tone of voice with a strong, distinct style offering depth on specific destination themes and targets the interest of specific target groups. A hub content series can consist of videos or long form content and is designed to encourage further discovery, through sequential content sets which can even exist in different forms in an omni-channel environment.

Hub content is aimed to get consumers to return to the destination website, its platforms or channels, providing useful information and continued inspiration.

Destinations that are using good hub content can involve and engage specific target groups, getting a response to the content posted. This can give marketers and content producers in the destination new ideas on what content to produce next. For destinations looking to keep up the engagement with target groups, it is useful to share a clear release schedule, or encouraging consumers to subscribe to the DMO's YouTube channel to receive automatic notifications about any videos that are released.

The aim here is to encourage consumers to return to the destination website, its platforms or channels and support continued inspiration.

Weekly episodes and releases have proven to be most successful when sharing and distributing content. Each hub content should also include a clear call to action to ensure consumers are sharing, subscribing or following the DMO's channel or platform.

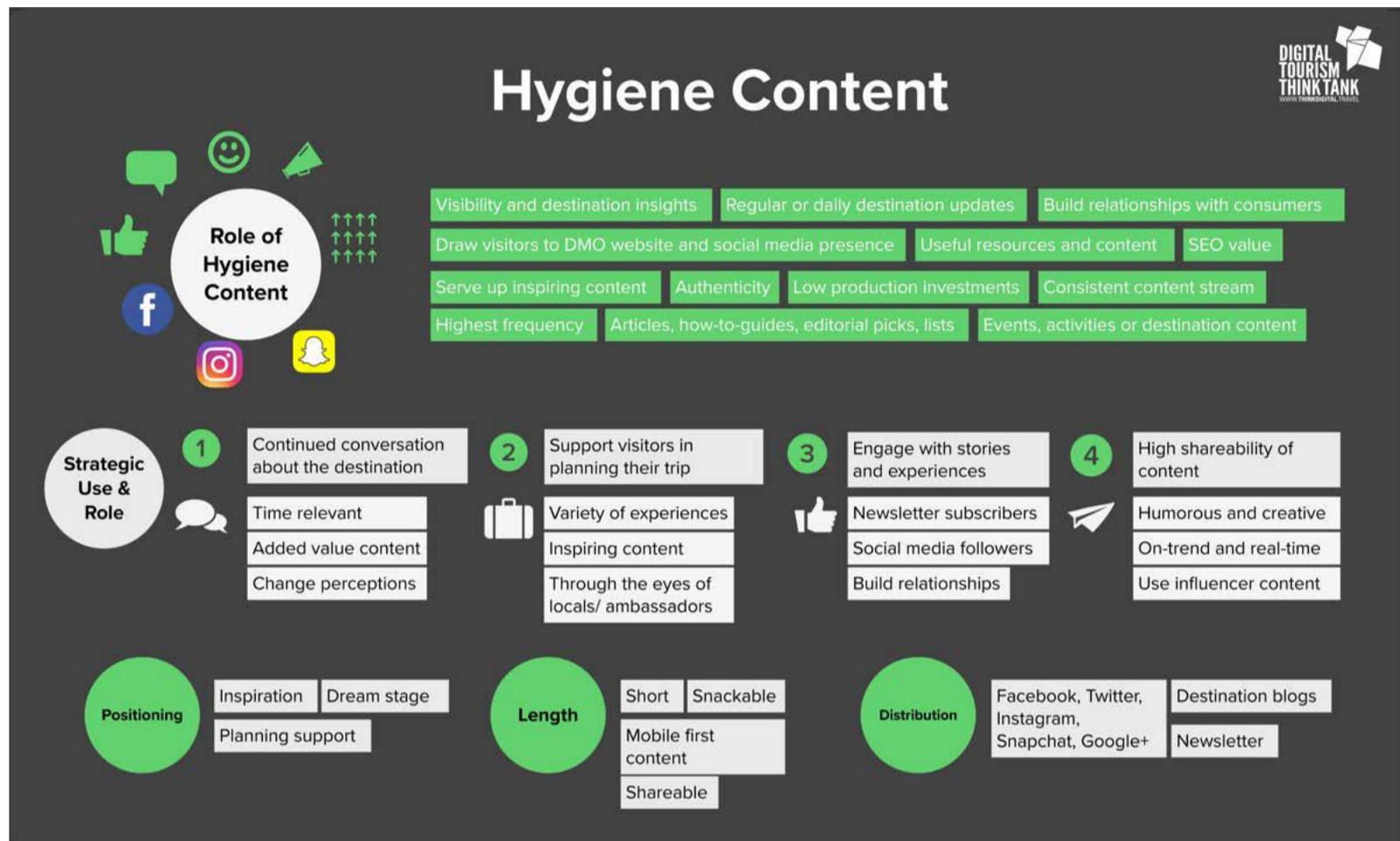


Hygiene

Hygiene content is regular or daily content that destinations are posting and sharing to get picked up as part of searches carried out by the target groups. The key form of hygiene content is social content. Some of the most popular hygiene content examples are articles, how-to guides, editorial picks and lists on anything relating to specific events, activities or the destination itself. By posting hygiene content regularly across social, it is possible for them to draw new visitors to the destination's website and improve SEO. Destinations that are producing and sharing relevant hygiene content can reap the benefits of being part of the continued conversation about their destination and at the same time build a relationship with consumers, being considered as a useful resource for all things relating to the destination.

Hygiene content has the highest frequency, but investments to produce hygiene content are low, only requiring human resources to produce the content pieces as part of editorial work. For destinations, posting good hygiene content is essential, appearing high in search engines and providing a consistent stream of content to draw in more consumers. The goal of hygiene content is to get consumers to subscribe to newsletters or following specific social media channels and platforms. Destinations can achieve this by

providing authentic, captivating, destination-based value content that epitomises the unique character of a destination.



Storytelling

The rapidly-changing media landscape and evolving habits of consumers are driving DMOs to rethink their approach to marketing to focus on content and stories. But how do you determine the right story to tell? How do you set your destination apart from others? The answer is simple: authentic, captivating destination-based content that epitomises the unique character of a destination.

Today’s travellers demand more creative content and in-depth storytelling – moving beyond just listings to tell deeper, more compelling stories. As visitors become inundated with content they don’t want to be sold to. They are instead looking to learn, discover, and immerse themselves in a new narrative.

Storytelling allows destinations to move beyond competing on price, luxury, and other easy-to-mimic factors. Instead it allows destinations to come alive with historical, cultural or other angles that capture people’s imaginations and invite them to become part of that experience.

Although there exist different ways of telling a story, visual storytelling – with images or videos – can help destinations market themselves in authentic and powerful ways that resonate with a generation of visitors who value the real experience and deeper participation in their own travel experiences.



Always-on Content

The challenge of the always-on consumer and increasing social media consumption means brands need to actively keep up with this need to stay competitive, increasingly fighting for feed-space and trying ever-harder to create so-called ‘thumb-stopping’ content. Ultimately, brands need to be constantly creating content and this content needs to really stand-out. This is where the opportunity of ‘Always on’ content comes into play. However, it is not a simple case of creating new content. DMOs should ensure that content is relevant to the target audience and distributed on the right channels at the right time while demonstrating a diversity of interests and experiences.

Becoming an always-on destination will allow you to:

- Take advantage in real-time of trending stories.
- Become a relevant voice in a crowded content space.
- Surfacing the brand continuously as timely, offering interest alignment.

There are many examples of DMOs doing an amazing job of always-on content. There are certainly a few principals that can guide your approach yet each destination must also find the workflow that works for them.

Beyond everything, it's about having a nimble, creative and multi-skilled content team that is ready to identify, select and react to stories as they emerge. Here, speed is of the essence, as a great story can easily pass quickly in a 24-hour timeframe.

This is the reason, you might have heard some destinations and businesses, talking about the shift to being an 'editorial newsroom'. It's the idea that if a story is trending in the news, you need to be able to adapt and react quickly to capitalise on its interest value with your own relevant story before it passes. Do this every week or month and you'll find yourself a dominant voice amongst your key audiences.

Dipping into some of the #DTTT's talks, we thought we would take an extract from 5 key tips shared by San Diego at #DTTT Global:

1. Be Agile

In today's fluid marketplace, it is important to respond quickly to new trends, changes in consumer behaviour and new technology to stay competitive and relevant.

2. Trial and Error

Identify what works through trial and error. Don't be afraid to try new things and think outside the box. Constantly review campaigns and tweak them to achieve the most effective results.

3. Brand first

Identify and stick to your core brand values and align everything else to them. Your brand is the foundation of your messaging and positioning. Strong brand values mean your campaigns are always consistent.

4. Constantly optimise

Always-on content involves constant reviewing, adapting, refining and optimising - even if your content is doing well. Changes in the market may mean changes to your content.

5. Personalise your message

Adapt your content and personalise it to meet market needs – San Diego Tourism developed its presence on platforms like WeChat and Weibo to directly engage with the Chinese market.

365 Planning

Beyond always-on, a 365-day storytelling strategy can help gain support from partners in your activities. Think about creating a calendar, with different topics, and themes and guidelines as to the types of content sets, formats and themes you want to focus on throughout the year. Here, preparation is everything and having perspective on the stories to shoot, produce, compile and publish through the year is key.

Whilst content on social media can often appear as whimsical ‘in-the-moment’, in fact the best and most effective brand content is planned, curated and crafted to reflect the core brand pillars. Communication internally, between teams, markets and industry is key so everyone understands why you’re focusing on certain topics, when they should engage with you and how.

12 Month Plan

The aim of this is to develop a monthly storytelling and content focus that is in line with your brand. You will naturally promote your brand and destination throughout the year. This ensures your content stays relevant, engaging and on point - finding slight shifts in focus throughout the year helps your destination stand out from competitors.

All in all, be aware of changing trends, and adapt your content, strategies and campaigns to reflect them to ensure your brand stays relevant and ahead of the competition.

As later explained in the [case studies](#) section, the digital team of Geneva Tourism Board is responsible for utilising the market knowledge and expertise acquired in the market, digitising this in terms of content and campaigns to create the desired impact, and to reach the right audiences at the right time. The digital team also works alongside external agencies in market, bringing true expertise of the market in the market, as well as other media requirements. The Market Managers operate within leisure and business markets, and are responsible for briefing the digital team with their market knowledge, as well as managing the external agencies. The Team Geneva Tourism recognises the importance of creating a **strong team** as the foundation to a solid strategy. As such, three teams contribute to promoting the destination to make the best impact as possible; Marketing, Digital and Agency. Together with valuable market knowledge and digital expertise, the combination of these three components collaborating and communicating effectively, are fundamental in facilitating a strong, dynamic and transformational digital strategy.

Creators, not Influencers

In recent years, the strategy of working with creators and influencers have become major priorities for brands of nearly all sizes to incorporate into their digital strategies. Brands large and small are increasingly aware of the importance of working with content creators and influencers as a key tactic to strengthen their brand, boost their campaign success and close the loop on their content strategies.

These people have amassed a huge following through some means and possess the ability to influence thousands, if not millions, to buy into brands and communities, and to ultimately purchase products. It's no surprise that brands are now looking to collaborate with these relevant creators and influencers, to help boost their marketing campaigns and strategies. But getting this right, choosing the right people to work with and understanding the difference between a creator and an influencer and a micro-influencer are all important considerations?

Content Creators

Creators and influencers often merge into one another - if a creator's work gains recognition, they usually gain influence, whereas a typical influencer uses their existing followers to promote destinations on behalf of another brand. DMOs should keep in mind what the creator or influencer in question can offer your brand, or how you are expecting the influencer to help build and strengthen awareness around experiences, places, and themes which are pertinent to the brand.

Unlike influencers, whose influence is based solely on their follower count and level of engagement, a content creator may prove very useful and valuable for DMOs, despite having only a small amount of followers or engagement. After all, the reach can be bought, yet incredible content talent can be hard to come by and doesn't always associate itself with influence or reach of the creator³. The skills of a creator may primarily focus on their passion or specific skill - they have the ability to create something great for a brand, but may not necessarily be a brand themselves - DMOs should keep this in mind and manage expectations when working with creators.

Influencers

The relationship DMOs have with influencers has changed significantly, with far greater emphasis placed on the strength of their storytelling style, rather than their reach.

Ideally, we would advise DMOs to work with influencers who have reach amongst a key audience aligned with the DMOs brand but are also humble enough to be a great partner in working with you to build stories. With the right relationship, you can build a set of stories together with influencers or creators and also invite them to take over social channels and really become a voice or even a true ambassador for the brand. Even if their reach is huge, boosting and targeting their content to key audiences is simply going to extend the value of that content further.

Micro-influencers

Micro-influencers typically have less than 100k followers, but are still perceived as passionate authoritative figures, and have an incredible impact upon their audience's purchasing behaviour. Their levels of engagement can be higher than macro-influencers and are more centred around their niche, making them excellent choices for DMOs to collaborate with.

Blogger Hosting

Hosting bloggers regularly can also be a very powerful tactic for the brand, but it's important to choose the right bloggers. For those wanting to focus on year-round brand building, having a programme where bloggers, influencers and content creators can be hosted year-round is a very worthwhile strategic investment to incrementally reinforce the image of the brand. Always check their influence, audience, quality and creativity in posting. Consider paid partnerships, which should be bound by a commercial contract, hosted arrangements, an informal written agreement or as part of a routine programme.

³ <http://resourcemagonline.com/2018/06/the-differences-between-content-creators-and-influencers-explained/90967/>
<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2019/05/how-creators-became-influencers/590725/>
<https://communative.co/content-creators-vs-influencers-c770699c8148>

Residency Programme

Blogger residencies are a great way to offer a hyper-strong branded programme, together with your partners who will come on-board to enhance the experience with goodies, treats and unique experiences.

Gatherings

Gatherings are a great way to organise a sense of excitement in a concentrated way. Here, it's important to design incredible experiences which are truly content-worthy. Treat your most important influencers as VIPs, giving them behind the scenes access to the best sides of your destination. At the same, consider how experiences created for influencers, might one day be made available to visitors. See them as your pilot testers and about the opportunity to co-design new visitor experiences together with influencers. For some ideas, think about going 'behind the scenes' in a restaurant, or offering a unique activity rarely ever experienced.

Overall, be selective in who you choose to collaborate with and represent your brand. Do your research, form meaningful and relevant partnerships and curate exciting and interesting content to tell stories and increase your audience.

Content Audit

Your destination's content strategy needs to help your DMO to deliver relevant and interesting content for your channels and platforms. It's easy to get caught up in being creative or meeting deadlines but ensuring your content strategy is fit for purpose is critical to its success. Performing regular content reviews is a great way to keep your content on point.

Destinations should carefully think about their content strategy, focusing on four areas: content plan, content inventory, content distribution and content performance. This covers the most important areas, from the current plan, looking at what content the destination already has in its content pool. While both of these build the foundation for a destination working with content, thinking about how content is distributed strategically and how content performance is measured is equally important.

Organising your Content Strategy Review

Our approach to reviewing your content strategy focuses on these four areas to simplify the process of being able to review your current strategy. To make your content strategy review a success, ensure that you and the team are focused on critically reviewing what you are doing currently and where there are improvements that could help your destination to succeed in the future.

A content strategy review is useful for your destination and should be something that your content team works on together, ensuring you are critically reviewing all aspects of your existing content strategy in view of making small changes that can help you succeed in the future. Make sure you allocate time in everyone's calendar and go through all four areas of the content strategy review worksheet. While there might be more

areas that are part of your strategy, the worksheet is a good starting point to review the strategy holistically and agree on the most important changes to make your content strategy future ready.

Content Strategy Review					
CONTENT PLAN			CONTENT DISTRIBUTION		
CHANNEL PLAN	PERSONAS / AUDIENCE	MESSAGE	OWNED MEDIA	EARNED MEDIA	PAID MEDIA
Current status	Current personas	Current messages	What works	What works	What works
Improvements	Future personas	Aligned messages	Improvements	Adapted strategy	ROI
CONTENT INVENTORY			CONTENT PERFORMANCE		
CONTENT CALENDAR	CONTENT MIX	PRODUCTION	CHANNELS	FORMATS	ROI & CONTENT SUCCESS
Current content calendar	Content in database	Content produced	Current performance	Performance difference	Reach/engagement
Improvements	Future content mix needs	Production schedule	Targets	Actions needed	Measuring ROI

Content Plan

For your content plan, start with reviewing your current channels. Take into account the demographics and behaviour of the user base of the content platforms and also the format in which content is best presented. Content aims should align with the strengths of each channel. Consider your current audiences for each channel and compare them with your target audiences. It's important to centre your review around the performance of content. Refine your content plan around your target audience, outline what content resonates and tailor future content to the interest you identify.

Content Inventory

Your content inventory is the bank of content you have produced already. Discuss as a team the impact your current inventory is having on your audience. Based on your current content calendar, content mix and production capacity, define how you can develop your inventory and the ways your current inventory could be better utilised. Note down all content that needs to be produced to be able to tell the destination story in a rich and immersive way across channels. Perhaps content you already have could be repackaged to suit new channels or tell different stories.

Content Distribution

Next, consider how the content is being distributed across your channels. Review how the content is performing and discuss how the impact measures against the resources used to produce it. It's worthwhile to understand how your audience is interacting with your content when crafting a distribution plan. Experiment with different structures and formats such as serialised content or quick editorial pieces to define what works best for your audiences.

Performance Measurement

Each of these steps are advised by the performance of the content. Getting a good overview of how your content is performing is crucial, and most platforms offer easily accessible analytic insight tools. There are a

number of factors and features to consider, especially when it comes to video content. From video length to frame ratio to style and substance, learn what performs best for your goals and adapt to the distribution channel. Moreover, take into consideration how you can actively drive content success, both in reach and engagement and how content performance and ROI is measured.

Once you have assessed all of these areas, you are ready to set out your content strategy with your whole team, defining targets, content opportunities for the year, partnerships or collaborations with content creators.

Onboard Distribution

A trend that is growing fast and that can represent a great channel to distribute content about the destination is the onboard entertainment package.

Onboard WiFi and preloaded content on specific train lines and new routes can be the means to broadcast great videos to show what is more exciting across the destination, tell the story of local people and enable discovery from the moment the visitor is travelling.

Examples are railway companies like Eurostar and Southeastern, which provide access to onboard entertainment, like Amazon Prime, but could also be the right partners to provide articles to read or video series about the destination.

Streaming media players

The use of Apple TV, Google ChromeCast, Amazon Fire TV Stick and Roku is growing fast amongst Hospitality, Leisure & Travel Hosting Service Providers.

We see great potential in this. Why? Because partnering with hotels and accommodation providers will create a brand new channel for the DMO to distribute its content and promote the destination.

Selecting the right partners is key in this, yet even more important is the ideation and creation of a series of videos that could constitute an extremely inspirational and mesmerising content package.

One example is **Visit California** and their 365 campaign that we will discuss further, that can teach us a lot about what working with Hollywood looks like. But to keep it simpler, let's think about the great potential of new trends like YouTube series and how your destination brand could take advantage of it.

BEST PRACTICES

After a brief but necessary introduction to the fundamentals of content, in this chapter we are going to point out a series of examples of great content from the best DMOs worldwide divided into 9 categories: engaging content, interactive content, immersive content, experiences with influencers and ambassadors, Instagram masters, video and live content, user-generated content, editorial / magazine / blog and partnerships.

Engagement

The importance of engagement

Your customers spend on average two hours a day scrolling through social media. That's two hours a day where they could be scrolling through your content. It's absolutely vital that every brand now has a strong presence on social media, to keep up with trends and out-perform their competitors. Additionally, brands have a need to build an authentic following, and engage with their audience through interesting and relevant content. In essence, it strengthens the "interaction and affinity between a brand and its consumer".⁴

Social media engagement offers many benefits to brands and DMOs. If your goal as a DMO is to drive brand awareness and build a meaningful relationship with your audience, then engagement is much more important than KPIs⁵. Evidence of engagement offers social proof of the brand - like an endorsement or testimonial. If your destination looks popular on social media, others are more likely to engage with and follow your social media accounts. Engagement expands your marketing reach with the right tools to turn interest into bookings, and what's more, this engagement is more cost effective than traditional advertising, in the sense that social content can generate far more views and levels of engagement for a one-time cost. Just one person sharing your content could allow it to reach hundreds, even thousands of people at virtually no expense.

DMOs who do not include social media engagement in their marketing strategies truly are missing out on these major opportunities. High social engagement boosts brand awareness and impacts your social media ROI, as with each interaction, overall awareness of the brand is increased. A study from Market Path discovered that 83% of global companies perceive brand awareness as the main focus in their social strategy⁶, showing how brands are becoming more aware of the importance of social media engagement and its benefits.

Top tips to drive engagement:

1. Share content and resources
2. Engage in conversations with your target audience

⁴ <https://www.sociallybold.com/social-engagement-important/>

⁵ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joescobedo/2017/06/12/social-media-engagement/#5965e0f92193>

⁶ <https://www.timetrade.com/blog/why-social-media-engagement-is-important-for-your-business/>

3. Develop a personality or 'voice' for the brand
4. Keep your audience entertained by providing them with exciting and relevant content
5. Use current events to curate your content and posts around
6. Drive conversations through controversy and stories - choose a controversial position with care

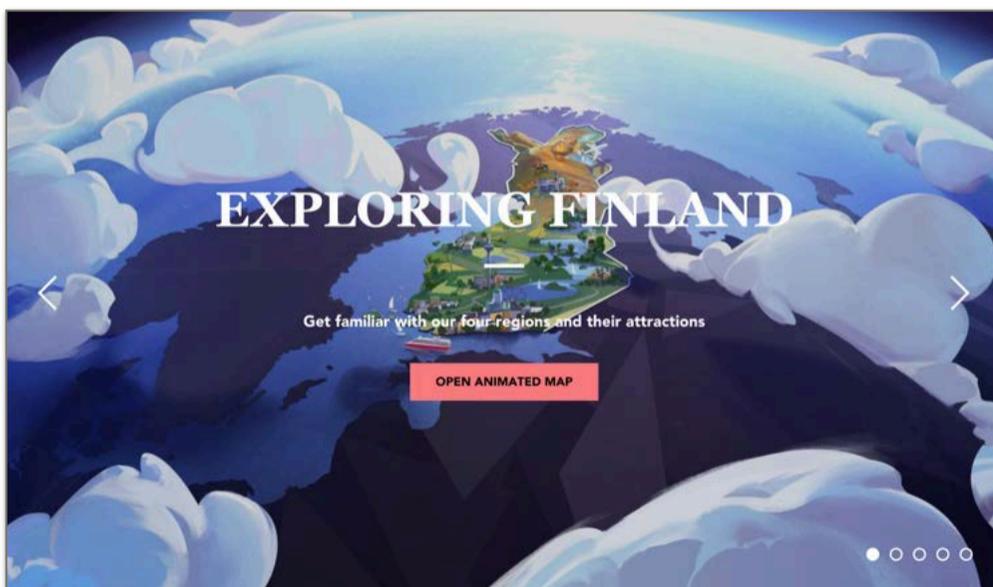
The rise of interactive content and online tools

Interactive content

We've all heard of content, and we all understand why producing high quality, relevant content is important to drive engagement and increase brand awareness. But what about interactive content? In essence, it is content that *requires the participants' active engagement - more than simply reading or watching. In return for that engagement, participants receive real-time, hyper-relevant results they care about*⁷. DMOs can utilise this content to increase rates of engagement, capture more, relevant data and increase brand loyalty. Interactive content can arrive in various forms, such as infographics, interactive videos, polls and surveys, quizzes, calculators, online assessments, interactive e-books, white papers and interactive emails.

Here, we will share with you key examples of how DMOs have utilised interactive content in their marketing efforts.

Visit Finland used interactive content in many forms to increase audience engagement and drive brand awareness. They created a variety of quizzes, such as 'Discover your Finnish name' and 'Find your (F)inner traveller' to engage consumers, and allowed users to share on their own social platforms, increasing



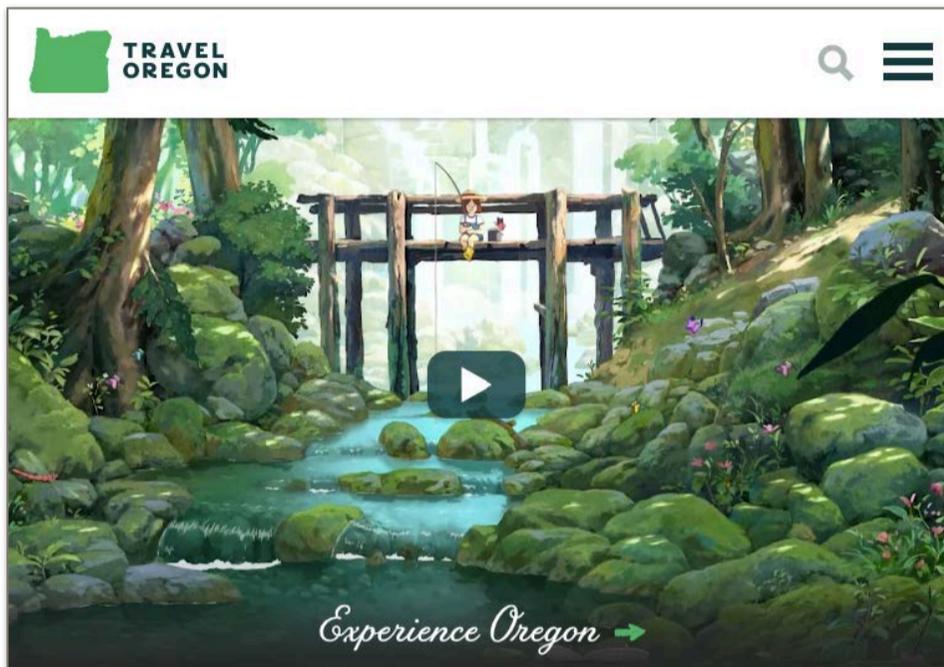
awareness and reach further. Moreover, the DMO launched an interactive and animated map of the country, which is a key element of any destination website. Depending on whether you're an NTO or a CTO, the approach and granularity will vary greatly. The simplification of 'actual detail' is key here for NTOs, with a simple division of regions in a well-developed product.

Visit Greenland displayed a great video on the homepage of their destination website, to tell a story and to visually promote the destination. Moreover, the DMO also launched a micro-series with a relevant influencer, and again used video here combined with storytelling and local guides to create authentic and local travel

⁷ <https://www.singlegrain.com/blog-posts/content-marketing/7-types-of-interactive-content-why-and-how-to-use-them/>

guides. 'The Insider's Guide' is a series about travelling in Greenland, which features Ujarneq Fleischer - a known face in in the destination.

Interactive content is immediately delivered straight to the consumer upon arrival to **Travel Oregon's** landing page, which highlights the local time, changes the background image and even greets the visitor



depending on the time of day.

Additionally, the DMO has created an animated story for the visitor to scroll through with clear call-to-actions (CTAs). The story begins by explaining that "Oregon is magic," and then encourages visitors to learn more about the state with choose-your-own-adventure style CTAs such as "Wander into the forest," "Visit the Rose City," and "See the magic Coast." From there, each of these CTAs direct users to more information (and real photos) of their selected region.

Tourism Fiji's website uses interactive content to help its users learn how to get to the country, by providing links to airline carriers from various destinations. The DMO's website also allows its users to curate their own journey planner, by selecting a specific itinerary based on their interests, automatically pinpointing activities on a map and providing quotes for the plan's activities on the dates chosen. This allows the user to fully engage with the interactive content by creating their own visitor experience.



Gamification

Gamification is not only about Pokémon Go, but it is now evolving into a tool that can be integrated within the marketing strategies of DMOs.

There are 4 key aspects of Gamification:

1. It makes consumers play a game, solve a riddle or complete a quiz.
2. It gives the consumer awards or incentives to play and play again, and in the meantime, spend time discovering something about the destination.
3. It boosts the motivation of people already curious about a destination.
4. It makes the most of user engagement. One can build a community, encouraging people to interact with one another and share the experience.

There are some examples of destinations having used gamification to add value to the visitor or in-destination experience, but other technologies such as VR and 360 videos have been much more popular amongst consumers.

The main goal of **LAAX**, Switzerland, is not the mere promotion of the destination, but the creation of a strong, unique and authentic experience. The app is available for all visitors and it can be considered as the main tool that will enhance the visitor experience. It is a great example of gamification being used as a method to engage visitors and increase involvement during the visitor experience. The app collects all the items and aspects that you need in order to perfectly experience LAAX, and contains a dashboard with valuable information, such as mountain conditions, so the visitor can receive real-time updates about the weather, the slopes and lift availability. Moreover, users can see 360° live pictures of the station, and the amount of people on the slopes at the time. Users are also rewarded with merchandise, which can be unlocked and bought using points earned through the use of the app.

Visit Estonia always produce great content, that is fun, interesting and educational, and is included within their campaigns and customer engagement strategies. They are certainly not new to interactive content and gamification, proven by their continual use of quizzes in their strategies. The DMO uses them to promote destinations and to teach something about their culture and traditions. Here are some examples of the simple, yet very effective quizzes we found.



How much do you know about the #EstonianWay of life?

Answer these 10 questions and you might be travelling to Estonia to experience the #EstonianWay very soon!

 Visitestonia



Which Estonian mythological creature are you?

The magical nature of Estonia has been a source of inspiration for many myths and legends. Take the test to find out which mythological creature are you

 Visitestonia

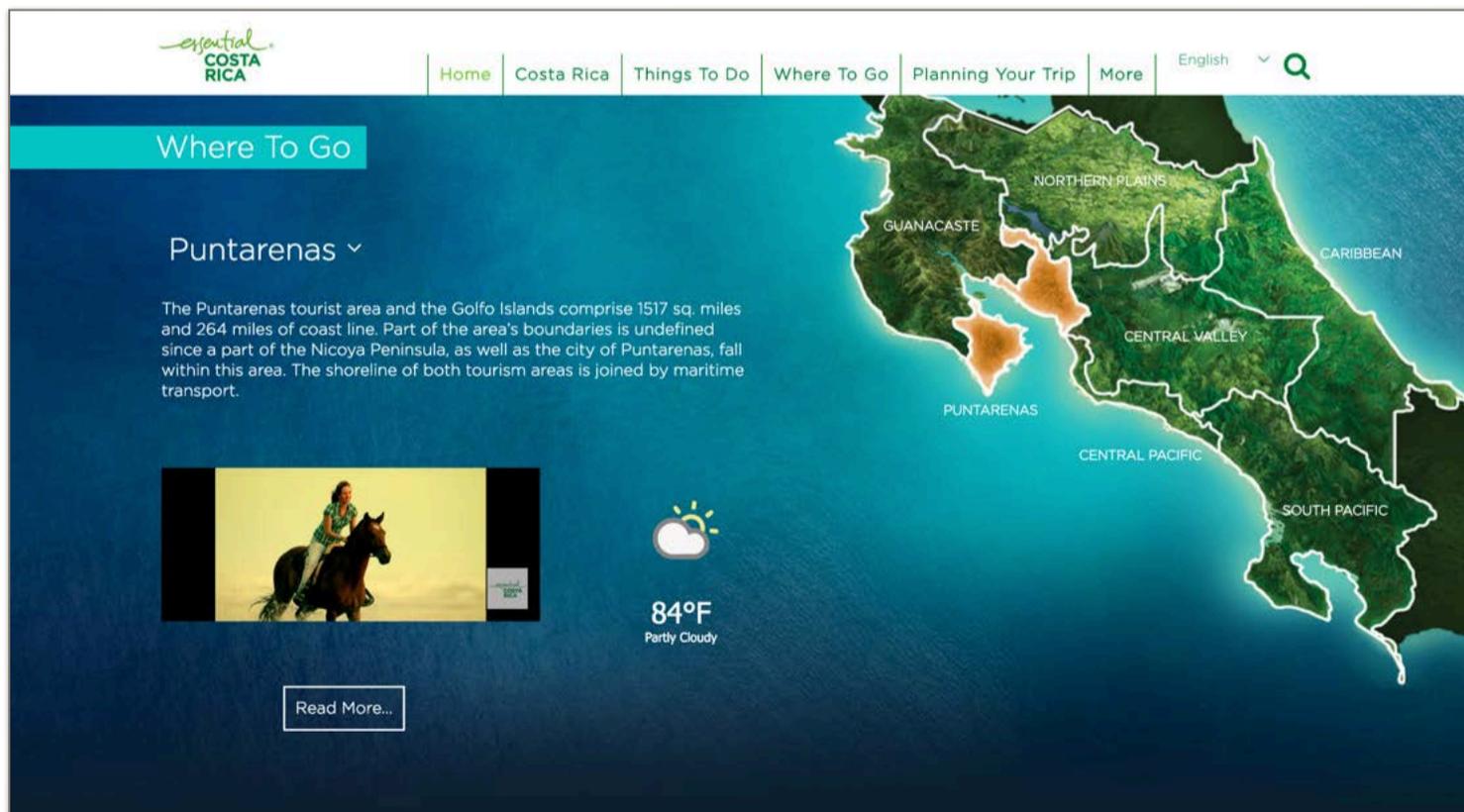
Visit Finland also opted for an interactive way of presenting what the country has to offer to visitors. In order to provide visitors with the best experience picked especially for them, alongside a higher chance of converting, they built a 9-question quiz. In this case, the user receives a selection of recommended experiences according to their preferences and interests.

Maps

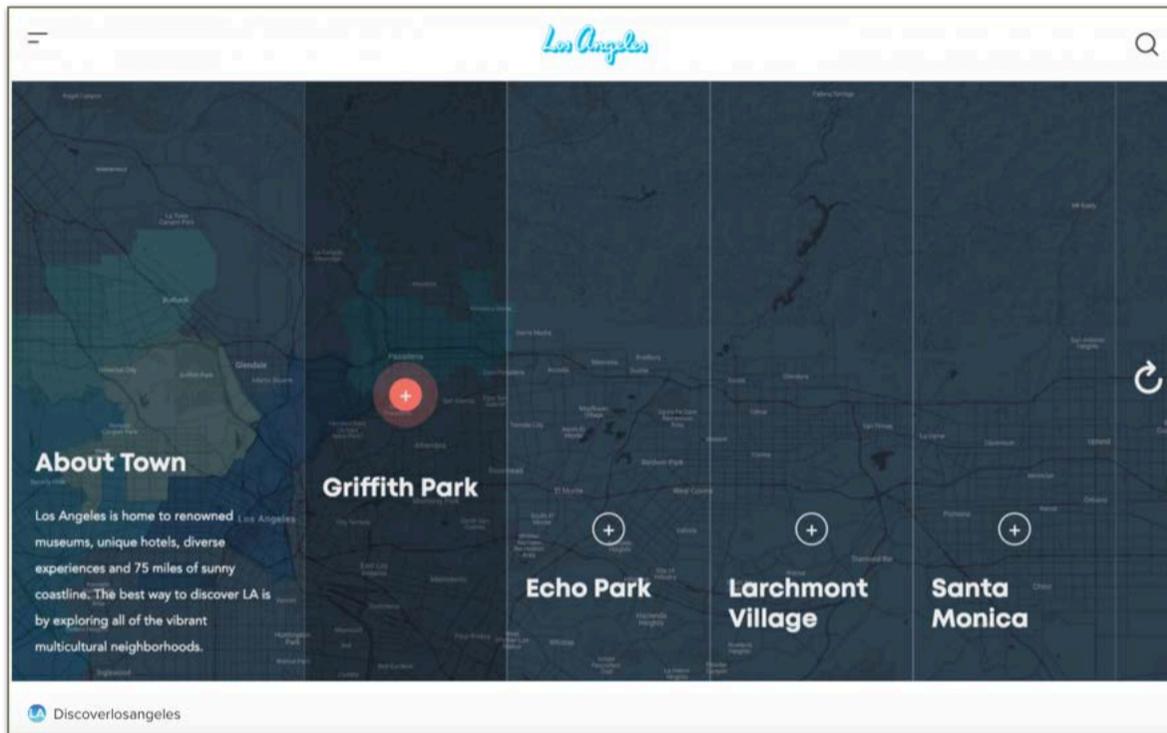
Talking about interactive content, DMOs have started using interactive maps within their strategies. The first rule for DMOs to consider is: do not assume that people know where your destination is. For this reason, a simple and clear map can help your visitors locate your destination. Another additional feature could be a list of directions on how to reach your destination, simplifying the research for the visitor. Maps provide the perfect tool to identify locations, distances, areas of attractions, experiences and itineraries. If it's well designed, it can become a great way of generating curiosity about your destination, and can encourage the online discovery of your offering, while boosting your website traffic.

Maps can link to other content, like blog articles, bucket lists, videos and images - all included in the channels of the DMO. Maps remain an essential part of destination marketing, and interactive maps can be used as fun components to keep discovery playful.

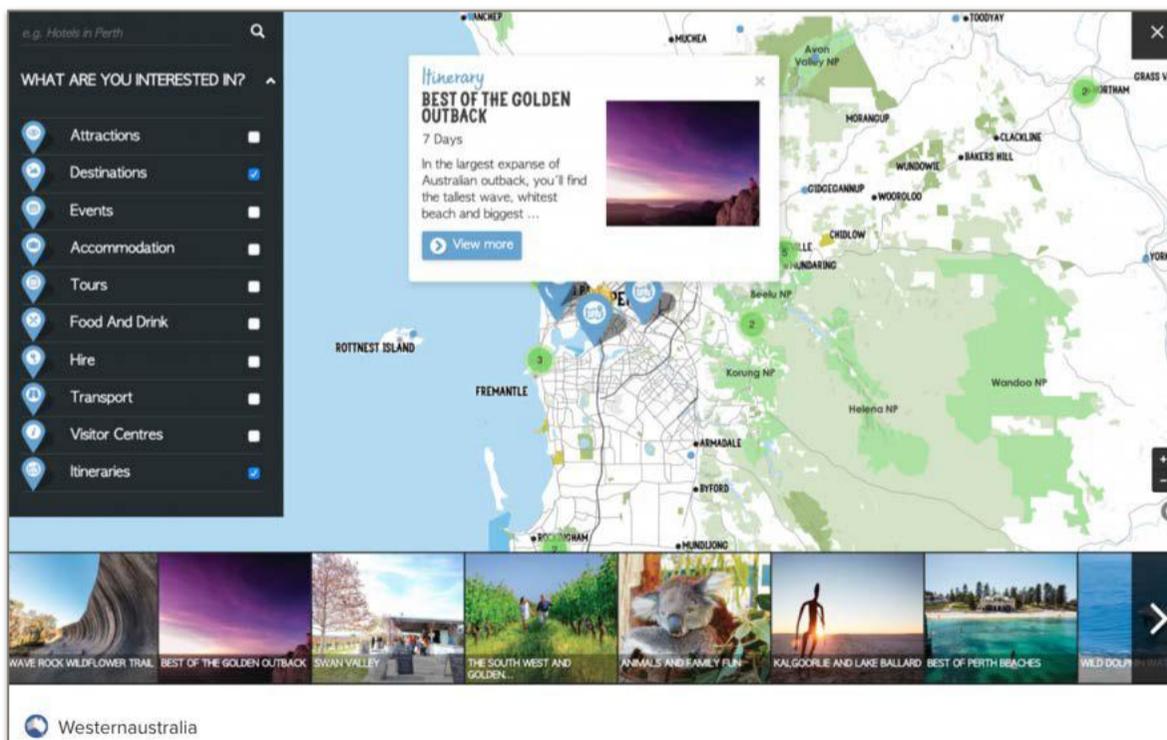
This example from **Costa Rica** shows how maps don't need long descriptive texts, but strong and engaging content that manages to capture attention and encourage people to discover more.



Discover Los Angeles promote a great example of an interactive map being used as a marketing initiative. The format of the map appears unique and sophisticated, while it depicts the destination in a simple yet highly effective way. The text describing the destination follows trend by being short and simple, preventing the website from being overloaded with content.



The approach used here by **Western Australia** and **100% New Zealand** is more traditional, although the map is very rich and complete. Users can decide what they are interested in, and can subsequently receive a preview of what the specified destination can offer. What's more, the user can identify the locations of the selected attractions, amongst other benefits.

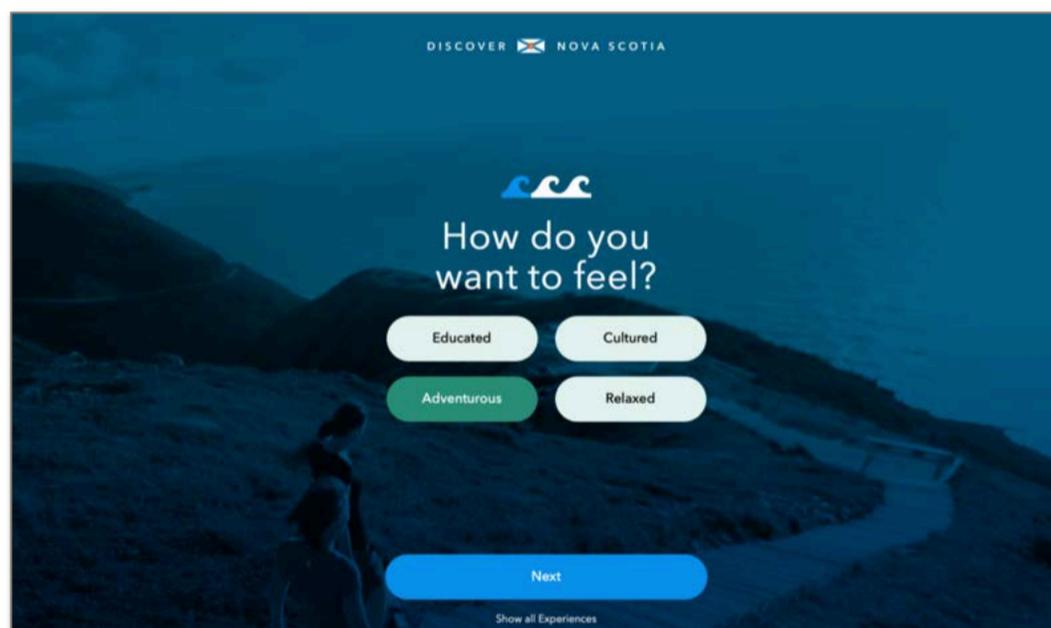


Trips

We believe this tool is especially useful for DMOs that include multiple destinations, such as National and Regional DMOs. By encompassing trips into strategies, DMOs can maximise the visitor experience as much as possible and assist the visitor in discovering more places. For example, trip tools provide information about the best places to visit, alongside the best time to visit an attraction, reviews of previous visitors, transportation options and hidden gems to discover while the visitor is there. It also allows for a community to be created amongst travellers that share their experiences. There are many apps and platforms that DMOs can use to build these itineraries and trips. The best tools allow the page to be customised, in order to integrate the tool into the DMO website without negatively impacting upon the brand consistency.

Discover Nova Scotia in Canada has worked closely with its local industry to develop a strong database of experiences in the region which are organised and curated thematically. At the head of the 'discovery' part of Nova Scotia's product offer, is a discovery tool which is designed to create a personalised, curated selection based on a logic-based personalisation tool.

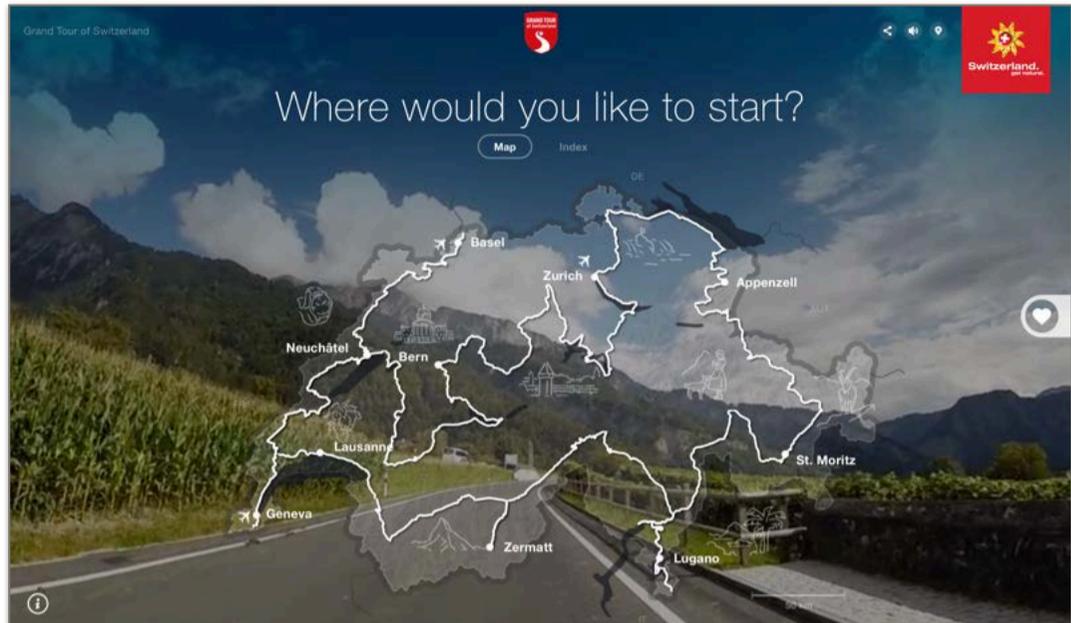
The site itself is highly immersive in its rich use of imagery to convey the sensory element and emotion of the brand. It evokes the user's feelings, what they're looking for and what interests them enough to drive to action, with available selections which really play up to Nova Scotia's brand strengths. This really is a great example of how the DMO curates and matches product and experience pairings.



Visit California has a different approach and has built a planner as part of their website, without using an external tool. In spite of this, the DMO's website contains great road trip pages and is interactive and inspirational.

Switzerland is considered as 'the oldest tourism destination' as they've been promoting touring since travel begun. With this key selling point, **Switzerland Tourism** has developed a full strategy around the 'Grand Tour' which has provided them a product and marketing platform for the brand. The strategy includes building products and experiences around 'The Grand Tour of Switzerland' and challenging visitors from

different markets to experience the Grand Tour for themselves. This concept has been particularly strong amongst visitors who seek touring holidays, but they've also seen a number of adaptations, such as the 'electric grand tour' and 'cycle grand tours'. The Grand Tour site is heavily immersive, focusing on top-of-funnel branding and inviting discovery through interactive maps, while the route itself features 'social furniture' and signage to support the actual product on the ground.



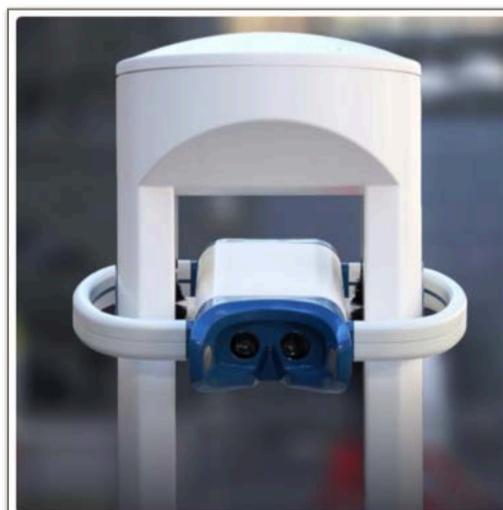
Immersive

XR - Augmented reality and virtual reality

In 2014, there were only 200,000 active virtual reality users in the world. By the end of 2018, there was 171 million active users. And in 2020, it is predicted that VR/AR will be a more than \$162 billion industry. Technology has come a long way towards advancing the tourism industry in recent years, from review sites like TripAdvisor to informative sites like Lonely Planet. VR can enable destinations to drive conversions through an immersive, engaging and three-dimensional experience. AR presents a huge opportunity for travel brands and agents to give potential tourists an even more immersive experience before they even travel.

Imagine taking a virtual "Walkabout" of Australia through AR glasses before booking a ticket to Sydney, or a leisurely stroll around Paris to see what museums or cafes you might like to visit. AR promises to make selling trips, travel, and vacations a whole lot easier in the future.

The company, **Timescope** in Paris, has created technology to enable the visitor to travel back in time. Users can play around with the past and the present, which has proven to be an innovative method of encouraging people to dive into the history of the destination. This can be experienced by showing past views or by experiencing the past firsthand.



Timescope One



Timescope Mini

This a great example of how DMOs can use advances in technology, including AR and VR, to improve and enhance the visitor experience.

Visit Houston has created a VR tool - a virtual tour, which displays locations at a 360 degree angle around the destination, to enable the visitor to see an all-round view and understand what the destination offers.

Augmented reality is also used to help people deal with the most common things related to travel, like **KLM**'s AR hand baggage check...



Experiences - Influencers and Ambassadors

Micro-Influencers and social ambassadors

Commonly defined as someone with 2,000 to 100,000 followers, micro-influencers are becoming more and more popular as partners for destinations and attractions, rather than their massive counterparts. Instagram is expected to overtake Facebook, in terms of users, by the end of 2020, displaying how the importance of Influencer Marketing, in particular the authority of micro-influencers, is more important than ever. Brands and DMOs are hiring Instagrammers with ever-smaller, niche audiences – even as few as 1,000 followers, as word-of-mouth influences purchasing decisions through trusted relationships and personal networks, which don't require a huge audience. Here, we have provided examples of destinations that have embraced micro-influencers in their own campaigns.

SeeTorontoNow created its own Tourism Toronto Social Ambassador program as a way to show off the city of Toronto through the eyes of locals. The programme works with ambassadors, (or micro-influencers), and allows the influencer to participate in or create a variety of features from Instagram takeovers, to writing blog posts for SeeTorontoNow and/or creating videos to share on their own social accounts. The idea is that locals tell the Toronto story and acts as an extension of the Tourism Toronto social team – in essence they passionately share Toronto with the world through their own perspective. In Autumn 2018, well-known ambassador, 'The Curious Creature', gave SeeTorontoNow followers a never-been-seen-before sneak peek at Toronto's, 'We Are Happy Place' Pop-Up experience, which included photos, videos and an interview with founder Jared Paul.

Along with some bigger names, **My Helsinki Residence** has also opened its doors to smaller influencers with a following of less than 100k followers. The ambassador/influencer program here offers influencers direct flights to and from Helsinki for 4-7 day residency for; social influencers, key opinion leaders, podcasters, new media journalists and experts without tight schedules or strict itineraries, accommodation, a personalised Helsinki Survival Kit and much more. The program is open all year-round, which allows for a steady stream of influencers to visit the city during all seasons of the year. This translates to year-round content that is produced by a variety of influencers from all over the world with a focus on different niche

audiences. Past influencers include ‘Curb Free with Cory Lee’ (IG: 11.4K followers), an American travel blogger that focuses on accessible travel, and ‘Marko Tadic’ (IG: 93K followers), a fashion blogger from Serbia.

Working in partnership with millennial creatives and storytellers from across the globe, DMOs can use the concept of an influencer-led storytelling platform, centred around various missions which explore the multitude of ways travel can create positive change.

Den Haag Marketing opened the first ‘Blogger’s House’ in The Hague, The Netherlands. The company constructed a purpose-built beach house for travel bloggers and vloggers, overlooking the sea along the coastline of The Hague. The Blogger’s House is only available to those invited personally by Den Haag Marketing, where they can sleep on the beach and network with other like-minded bloggers to create inspirational content and to experience all that The Hague can offer as a tourism destination. These bloggers will have unlimited freedom in the city to discover features while sharing their findings and experiences with their following and with the rest of the world.



Visit Estonia created a ‘Storyteller’s Nest’ in the heart of Tallinn. In essence, it is a social influencer’s home, one of the many perks influencers are provided with upon being invited to stay. These ambassadors/storytellers are also provided a car, fuel, restaurant vouchers and personal tips, and even get to bring a



guest along with them. The aim is for the influencer to experience Tallinn as one of the most beautiful cities in Northern Europe, and to discover it at their own pace. Influencers are encouraged to take road trips around the city and within its region, from its wild beaches to its islands. This is a great example of how a DMO is encouraging the use of influencers to promote its destination.

Over in Austria, the **Saalbach Tourism Board** run an international influencer summit, an influencer programme, if you will. Titled Storybase Summer 2019, the programme is advertised as “1 Mountain Hut, 7 Days, 8 Explorers”, where eight storytellers/creators/influencers/bloggers travel to the region to explore and experience everything it has to offer throughout the summer. The idea is that the influencers will then share

their experiences with the world. They share their stories via blogs, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. The top priorities of the international influencer summit are “fun, individuality and authenticity”⁸ and is seen as a smaller version of an influencer convention, with sufficient opportunities for the exchange of experiences and networking with the other members.

These types of blogger residencies are a great way to offer a hyper-strong branded programme, together with partners who will come on-board to enhance the experience with goodies, treats and unique experiences. Gatherings are a great way to organise a sense of excitement in a concentrated way. Here, it's important to design incredible experiences which are truly content-worthy. DMOs should think about going 'behind the scenes' in a restaurant, or offering a unique activity as a rare experience.

These events also add to authenticity and allows DMOs to use their influencers as a test subject for what activities are attractive and receive the most engagement on Instagram. As a DMO, you should find an influencer to work with who is also a storyteller to captivate the audience and create a visual experience for all. Increasingly, there is a more sustainable approach to influencers, with a growing focus on storytelling rather than follower numbers. DMOs should now look into how they can integrate this into an ongoing marketing process.

Instagram

It cannot be denied that Instagram is indeed a valuable and relevant platform for DMOs to utilise in their marketing efforts. The hashtag **#travel** has been used in 387,399,105 Instagram posts, proving the relevance of Instagram in the travel industry. Almost 70% of travel enthusiasts use Instagram as inspiration for new destinations to travel to, and almost the same number use the platform to share experiences and create engagement about travelling. Gunnar Freyr, @icelandic_explorer, states that IG has “been really inspiring people to go and do interesting things. It brings a big world to a small place.” Iceland is in fact one of those "Instagrammable" places, which has seen tourism increase exponentially in recent years as a result.

DMOs should keep in mind that there are no limits when it comes to the channels available to use in engaging with potential visitors/followers.

Instagram Trends

Instagram Stories	IGTV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vertical-only ● Short-form ● Experiential ● Attention-grabbing ● Visual, captivating & interactive - a journey or backstage look at your destination. ● Short & snappy experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vertical-only - avoid uploading wide videos. ● Long-form (avoid uploading videos less than 1 minute). ● Visual, captivating & interactive - a journey or backstage look at your destination.

⁸ <https://www.saalbach.com/en/events/storybase>

According to research by Block Party, Instagram Stories grew 11 times faster than feed posts last year alone and comprise 47% of all Instagram content by major brands. The creation and consumption of Stories has grown by 842% since 2016, which is a tremendous increase.

Instagram stories

In August 2016, Instagram launched Stories with the idea of making smartphone sharing easier for an increasingly mobile user base. And it's working. Unlike other platforms, Instagram is changing the way people view content, from a feed dominated by square images towards full-screen vertical video. The introduction of IGTV only furthers the platform's commitment to change. IGTV and Stories are drawing even more eyes – and engagement – away from the main feed and toward content at the top of the screen. As visual communication becomes more important on social media, Stories will soon outperform the news feeds of Facebook and Instagram in terms of both engagement and growth. In fact, Instagram is expected to overtake Facebook by the end of 2020 in terms of users. This suggests that marketers need to focus on building a strong strategy around Stories and IGTV in 2019, to leverage 2020 marketing initiatives.

Stories should be short-form, experiential, attention-grabbing, interactive videos that take the audience on a journey or provide an otherwise unseen element of your brand. And the clue is in the title – it should tell a story. So even if your video only lasts for 15 seconds, when done well, it has a strong chance of leaving a lasting impact.

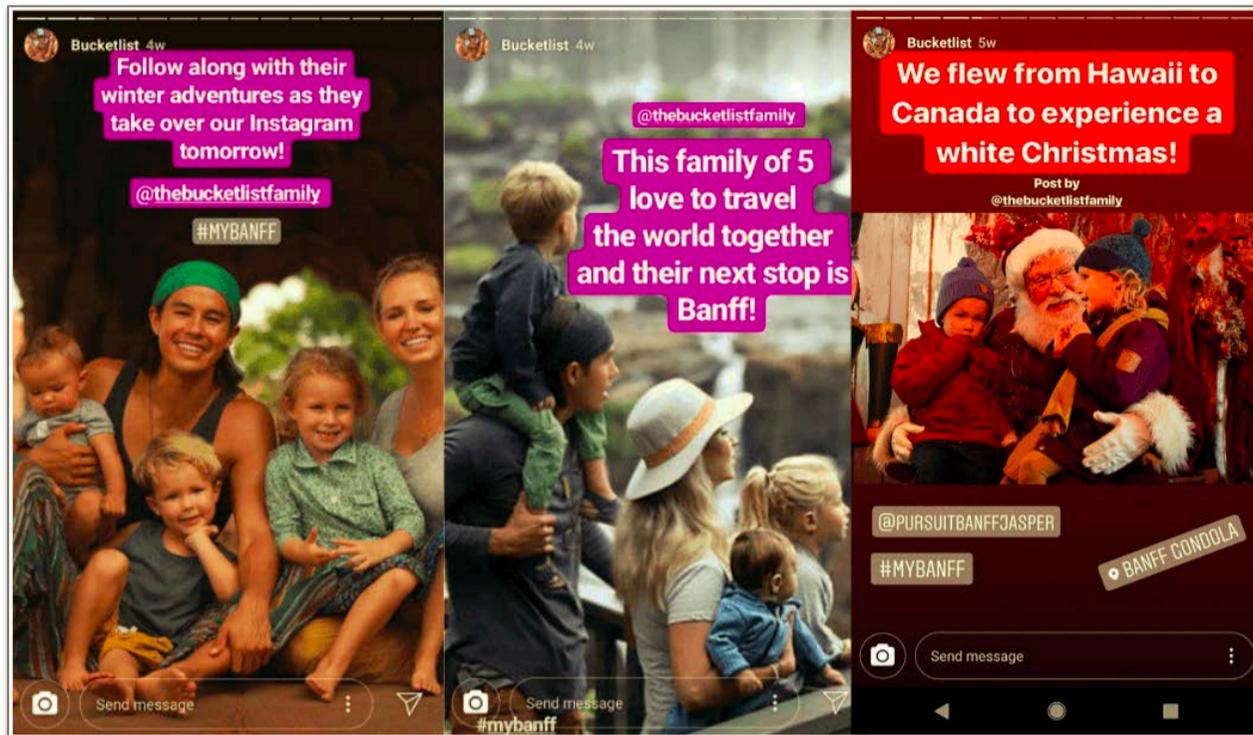
Visit Brazil creates unique stories around various topics. They are really engaging, often include the 'swipe-up' feature to link to other content and aim to be interactive. The 'play' sections are interactive and aim to increase shares and engagement. They have created amazing and branded illustrations, highly customised icons to show all the best Brazil can offer.



Banff and Lake Louise Tourism

For the 2018 holiday season, Banff and Lake Louise partnered with The BucketList Family (@thebucketlistfamily - 1.7 million followers), a family of travel influencers that focus primarily on curated video content for Instagram and Youtube channels. The partnership, which also included Travel Alberta and WestJet, not only consisted of an Instagram Stories takeover posted (and later pinned) to the Banff & Lake Louise Tourism Instagram page but also included two videos posted on the @TheBucketListFamily's page (with over 1 million views combined), one photo posted on their Instagram page at the Fairmont Banff

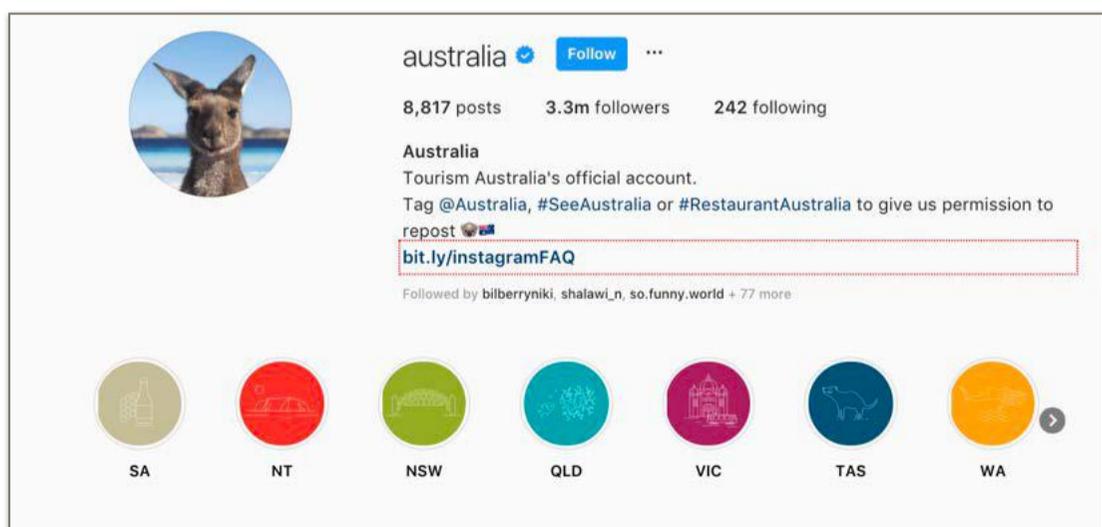
Spring (liked by over 120,00 people) and a video of their experience on their Youtube page which amassed 300,000 views.



The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) was faced with the challenge of coming up with new ways of presenting Germany as an inspiring travel destination to a wide range of people. For the target demographic of under-25s, the GNTB was supported by the insight that this group is mainly interested in cities, either for longer summer trips to Europe (e.g students from the US) or for mini-breaks (e.g from the UK, Scandinavia, Benelux), and that Instagram is their preferred means of finding inspiration.

GNTB decided to use Instagram in an entirely new way – with its first travel show using Instagram Stories. The aim was to showcase a new facet of Germany on each slide, showing users something they had never seen before. Over 16 weeks, Instagram users followed travel influencer Joe Baur on his travels through Germany’s 16 states and their capital cities. Every Sunday, @germanytourism published a new episode from a different location on Instagram Stories. All this was supported by video edits of the stories on Youtube and the GNTB’s international Facebook pages.

Tourism Australia uses Instagram’s Highlighted Stories feature to help visitors plan their trips by offering useful, evergreen content in a similar way to the DMO’s website. Key information about specific regions in Australia make this a valuable resource – as well as information about local tourism

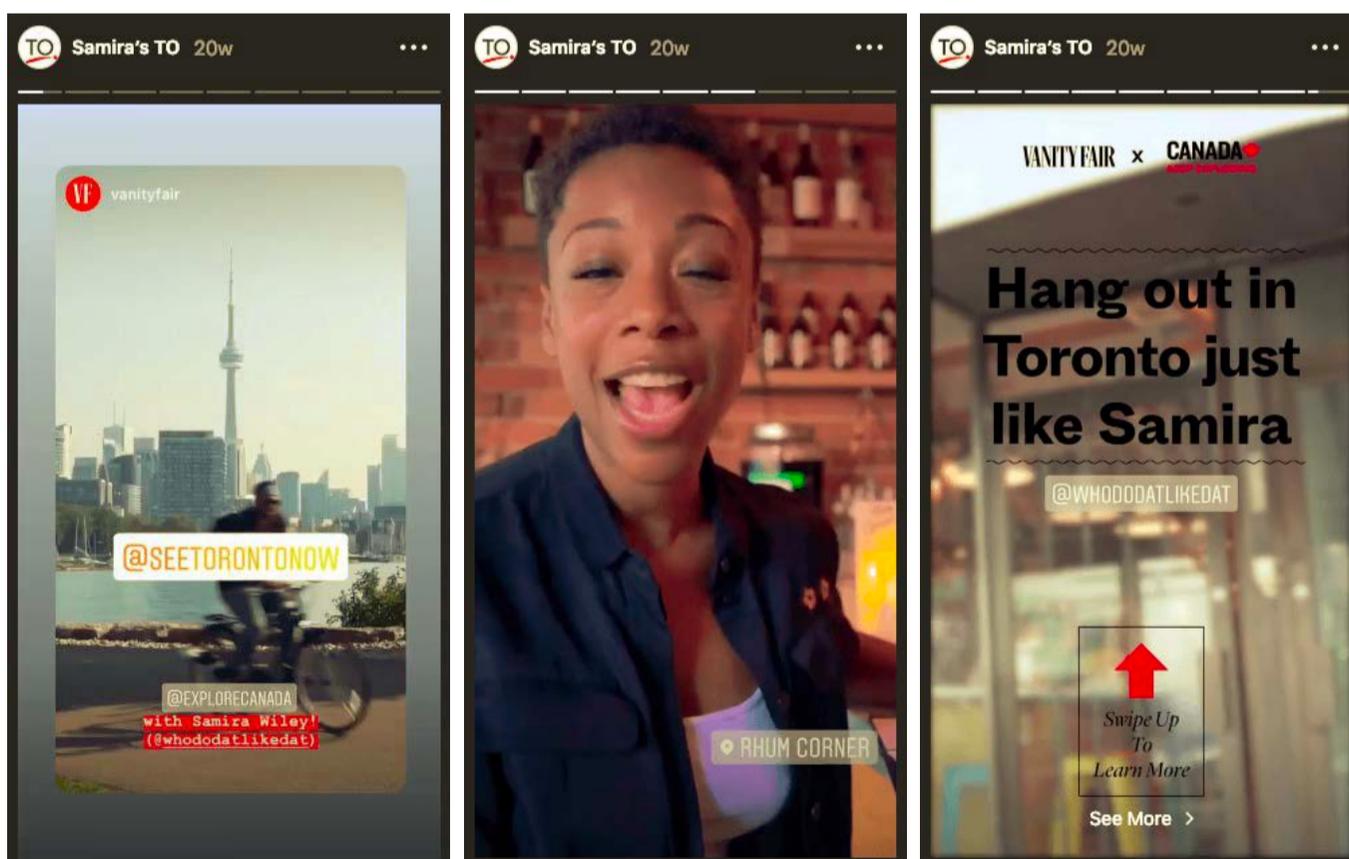


operators and FAQs. Tourism Australia demonstrates that Highlighted Stories do not need to have a higher production value than daily Stories – as long as it is entertaining, informational and creates added value, then go for it!

Tourism Australia's Instagram Stories strategies allow people to choose what they want to see the next day based on interactive choices (polls). People decide what theme/stories they want to see and the next day the content is delivered. Tourism Australia is now handing over its Instagram Stories to its millions of followers to allow the audience to choose what they want to see. The DMO will then go out and build the content, featuring a different region every time!

Toronto Tourism and **Destination Canada** partnered with Samira Wiley, an actor on the popular Netflix show 'Orange is the New Black' and Vanity Fair to produce 8 short clips for Stories, which followed Samira around Toronto as she explored her favourite spots in the city. The intro clip was published as a teaser to Vanity Fair's (4.2million followers) Instagram Stories feed, which then directed fans and followers to watch the full story on the @seeTorontoNow Instagram page. Posting the intro on Vanity Fair's Stories as a teaser meant the campaign reached a much larger audience with a higher click-through rate as they were already invested in the story. The full story with the reposted intro is now permanently pinned to Toronto Tourism's highlighted Stories.

Along with Instagram Stories, Samira Wiley (@whododatlikedat | 3m followers) posted an update about filming the paid partnership on her Instagram page which resulted in 61,483 likes and Vanity Fair published a branded/sponsored article with backlinks to the See Toronto Now website.



SeeTorontoNow also makes use of the Questions feature of Stories, allowing users to post a Question sticker to their Story, which auto-populates with the phrase ‘Ask me a Question’ – this can be changed. Once the Questions sticker is posted, followers can respond. Their responses are catalogued on a separate screen where the destination can click to share each one publicly with their response. This feature is perfect for destinations that want to reach out to their followers to strengthen visitor relationships and nurture a loyal customer base – and SeeTorontoNow did just that. It regularly posts the ‘Ask Us Anything’ sticker and responds to fan questions - at times they also include a link to a relevant blog post on the website. This particular strategy works incredibly well for driving traffic from a social media channel (Instagram Stories) to a destination’s website.



MyHelsinki create great content. You can clearly see that there is a solid strategy in place and everything has been planned in advanced. There is a consistent number of stories that are published over the week, covering many different topics such as local people, neighbourhoods etc. Each topic has its own frame, and colours and graphics are always consistent .

IGTV

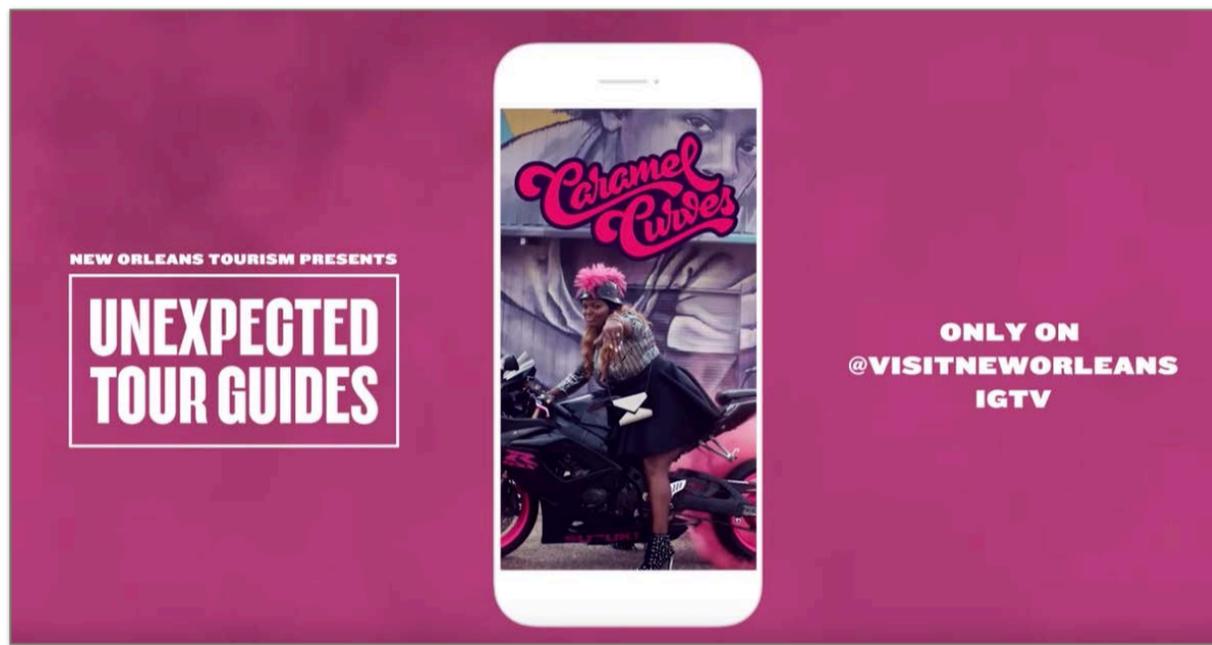
Because they fit the same frame and live on the same platform, a common assumption amongst brands is that Stories and IGTV content is interchangeable. On the one hand, Stories are a short and snappy experience, but IGTV draws more parallels with YouTube; it is a destination for long-form, documentary, vlog or episodic content – only in vertical.

It should be noted that many creators choose to ignore the fact that Instagram is made for vertical-only content – in reality, watching the landscape video on Stories and IGTV is unpleasant. If you cannot create IGTV or Story-specific content, then don’t upload content for the sake of uploading it – skip it!

Discover Hong Kong has created IGTV videos that are really 'Instagrammer-driven'. The first example is a guide on how to pronounce food names, playing on cultural differences and the second one is a guide on how to take the best Instagram pictures. This type of content is really engaging and it is something that can

be used while in the destination. It evokes curiosity and inspiration amongst travellers, before they even set out on their travels.

New Orleans: IGTV Travel Show - **The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation** (NOTMC) wants tourists to go beyond the French Quarter and Bourbon Street – and they're using IGTV, and only IGTV to do it. In 2019, NOTMC premiered 'Unexpected Tour Guides', an IGTV series featuring Caramel Curves, a local black, female biker gang, taking travel influencers away from tourist traps and into the city's hidden gems.



For the series, director Zac Manuel and Director of Photography Justin Zweifach – both locals born and raised in New Orleans – took advantage of IGTV's vertical format with the use of split screens and shots mimicking a film strip that creates an almost 3-D-like quality to the picture. The series follows Tru, Coco and HoodPriss – three members of the Caramel Curves – as they bring influencers on an unpredictable tour of the New Orleans that they know and love. To prove that any traveller can find undiscovered stories in New Orleans, NOTMC invited three Instagram travel influencers: Dan Brian (@mallow610), Alyssa Ramos (@mylifesatravelmovie), and Ashley Renne (@heyashleyrenne) along for the ride. The new series follows the digital marketing trend of moving away from montages of top attractions in favour of content that feels less like ads and more like a TV show. Unexpected Tour Guides is the ideal intersection between longer-form content and Instagram being a repository for travel posts. This is especially important as more and more travellers are turning to Instagram not only to inspire wanderlust, but also to plan their upcoming trips.

Other Best Practices

Visit Faroe Island's strong brand is visible across different platforms. Their IG profile is also amazing, as the main focus is landscape, the colour palette is consistent, alongside the style and the tone of voice. The feed follows the cycle of seasons to stress the strong bond with nature.

Visit Eindhoven's IG profile has a strong focus on people, architecture and lifestyle/street-style. The destination is promoted as a young, dynamic and modern city, where each person has a story to tell. The

colours are bold and bright and there is much use of lights and neon colours to express the vibes of the city.

Visit Stockholm is a great example of a small DMO that creates the content for their IG feed on their own. The images are really evocative and consistent with the brand. The fact that the people of Visit Stockholm take the pictures and post them gives the feed a personal and authentic touch.

Video / Live

Video Marketing

Videos have become easier and more-cost effective to produce; they've also risen in popularity among consumers. In 2017, 66% of all internet traffic was streaming video. By 2020, 82% of all internet traffic is expected to be video content. Furthermore, companies that use video marketing see 41% more organic traffic than those that don't. More than just bringing in traffic, video helps convert those visitors into customers. Home pages with videos see 20% more conversions, and landing pages see 80% more. So why is video marketing the "New King of Content"?

Video allows the customer to immerse themselves in a destination or attraction, without leaving their chair. This gives destinations unprecedented access to show potential visitors what they can see and do during their trip. It doesn't need to be a large production either - most phones come equipped with near-professional quality cameras and with a large selection of free video editing tools, meaning that producing a video doesn't have to be expensive.

The Importance of Vertical Videos

Today, 96% of online video consumption is on mobile. Despite it breaking almost every single rule of traditional video, the ergonomics of how we hold our phones has meant that vertical is now the more convenient option for the user. In fact, research has shown that people hold their phone vertically 94% of the time. And in today's world, convenience is the only metric that matters.

Vertical videos allow people to focus on what really matters: your brand. As the video is full screen, there is no other content drawing their attention away, no comment section to pique their curiosity, just your video. But more importantly, vertical video matters now more than ever because Stories is currently on track to overtake the News Feed on both Facebook and Instagram in terms of growth and user engagement. Meanwhile, Instagram is preparing to push IGTV's external campaign, whilst also testing a 'tap through' model for its Explore Tab – perhaps the first step in a complete transition towards a tap over scroll feed model.

Below are examples of different types of video marketing campaigns.

24 Hours in the UK

Designed to highlight the round-the-clock appeal of the United Kingdom, 24 Hours in the UK was a dynamic multi-destination campaign involving ten bloggers and social media influencers. Trips were held in

all corners of the UK in Summer/Fall 2017 and the campaign's content was published in January 2018. A team of British and international influencers were selected for their reach in relevant target markets and video capabilities.

The influencers filmed their experiences across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These scenes were then edited to create 32 videos that were released during a 24-hour Facebook campaign. After the 24-hour campaign, fans were asked to vote for their favourite experiences. Voting videos were released asking fans to choose between two experiences at a time. The voting videos performed very well: the five voting videos received more than 150,000 views.

This example is also cited in Best Practices: Influencer Marketing, as it is a great example of a brand working with a group of influencers and an influencer agency (iambassador) to promote a destination.

Iceland Academy

As one of the travel industry's great success stories and now attracting thousands of visitors each year, Visit Iceland developed a video campaign to encourage responsible tourism. The Iceland Academy is a series of videos that teaches visitors about cultural norms and traditions, so tourists can be informed and respectful while enjoying their visit. The videos take place against some amazing scenic backdrops, so they remain inspirational while being educational, and are hosted by humorous and light-hearted locals. Visit Iceland does a great job of using video to effectively influence their audience, even when it comes to more difficult conversations.



Visit San Diego

After conducting research in 2017, Visit San Diego found that they had to revamp their advertising strategy in key markets that were familiar with San Diego, and as they dug into their learnings, what they found out was that they needed to do a whole lot of storytelling. So in 2018, they launched 5 new original branded series – over 40 pieces of video content was published.

The idea was to visually and emotionally share their story and the diversity of their story in a variety of ways, in different formats, through different channels. One of their most popular series is the 'Guide to the Good Stuff', Visit San Diego's local ambassador program. The program itself is around four years old, but the destination decided to downsize it by shortening the length of the videos (long-form into short form), adding subtitles – 85% of Facebook video is watched without the sound – and re-contacting ambassadors to include voice-overs for individuals who want to watch the video with sound on.

Other series include:

- One Bright Idea – a guide to lesser known San Diego attractions
- Bliss Break – “your 15 second bliss break”
- Play San Diego
- Nine Arts Districts – One Vibrant City

#GoToIreland

In 2017, Travelzoo announced a digital partnership with Tourism Ireland to bring the tradition of St. Patrick’s Day directly from Ireland to screens across America. Travelzoo worked to feature dozens of live television segments and a live web broadcast directly from Dublin, giving viewers insider access to the St. Patrick’s Week festivities.

Coupled with the St. Patrick’s Day Facebook Live, Travelzoo and Tourism Ireland led a fully integrated campaign focused on world-wide engagement. The company wanted to bring a long-standing Irish tradition to life through a social experience making the audience feel as if they were onsite. By exposing the land, people, music and travel while showcasing the immersion of cultural findings through the lens of digital and technological innovation, the campaign is intended to increase interest in travelling to Ireland.



With the Travelzoo team on the ground, they not only hosted and produced the segments, but toured Ireland’s well-known destinations to capture compelling and authentic footage that would be shared during live broadcasts. The fun and charismatic style was designed to amplify engagement and create truly enjoyable segments aiming to increase tourism to Ireland.

Flavours of Philly

Through “Flavours of Philly”, Visit Philadelphia wanted to invite the chefs of the city’s restaurants to tell their stories. The food series featured restaurants from all over Philadelphia and the unique, diverse people that work in the industry. For each episode, two Visit Philadelphia hosts are taught how to cook a dish on Facebook Live while interviewing the chef simultaneously. By including two hosts from Visit Philadelphia, there could be constant back and forth as well as multiple perspectives during the interview process.

Through Facebook Live, Visit Philadelphia were able to work in viewer questions that helped drive the narrative. This first part of each episode, averaging between 20 to 30 minutes, was presented as a behind-the-scenes video and acted as a teaser for the edited one-minute video to be released a week later. The

edited videos, which included the best soundbites and visuals from the Facebook Live, were uploaded to Facebook as a series and through a paid campaign that targeted foodies interested in travel.

Results of the campaign included 85,717 total views across both live and edited videos on Facebook (September – December 2017) with a total 245,860 total minutes watched. One of the more impressive stats was that through their annual social media survey of 4,000+ fans, Visit Philadelphia learned that 72% of respondents were inspired to try a new restaurant based on their posts.

User-Generated Content (UGC)

Consumer behaviour is changing quickly and so are content preferences. The destination landscape has seen a huge shift in the importance that user-generated content (UGC) now plays when inspiring and informing consumers about a destination. UGC has quickly become a core aspect of working on social media for any destination. This was brought about by the new desire for experiences when on holiday rather than thinking to select a place to visit based on the destination. Consumers no longer want to feel like a tourist but consider themselves as travellers wanting to explore destinations in an authentic way.

While destinations were long considered the absolute authority on all things relating to the destination, it is now content and information that is shared by peers that are most trusted. In addition to that, consumers are increasingly sharing their experiences in the destination on social media, aggregating a large amount of user content across social channels. This also impacts the way in which information or content is absorbed by consumers and how travel decisions are made. Visual decision-making is becoming the new reality for visitors in making a decision, being inspired and decisions driven by visual stimuli and content from other visitors or locals.

Getting your UGC strategy in order is, therefore, a big priority for any destination wanting to succeed in digital. While UGC is already a big driver in tourism and for decision-making, it is important that destinations adopt a long-term strategy to incorporate, leverage and promote it throughout its channels and platforms. This also includes the destination website that is often still a stronghold of destination content rather than UGC which is preferred and drives more engagement.

According to Adweek⁹, marketing that uses UGC, (UGC marketing), is 50% more trusted among millennials than other forms of traditional media or advertising. Additionally, marketing material that includes UGC has a 4x higher click-through rate¹⁰ and a 50 percent drop in cost-per-click when compared to traditional advertising.

So what is User-Generated Content (UGC)?

⁹ <https://www.adweek.com/digital/sxsw-millennials-trust-user-generated-content-50-traditional-media/>

¹⁰ <https://www.shopify.com/blog/68976197-4-tactics-to-drive-traffic-and-sales-with-user-generated-content>

UGC is defined as content (usually digital) that has been created and posted by consumers or fans. It can refer to videos, testimonials, tweets, pictures, blog posts and everything in between. It is the act of a user promoting a destination instead of the destination promoting itself.

UGC helps convert and build trust more so than any other medium as it acts as social proof to reinforce your brand's message. It comes with the capability to highlight human emotions and relates these to individual's brand experiences. Because UGC is produced by individuals who don't have anything to gain by singing your praises, it is perceived as being more authentic and more trustworthy. In fact, it's been found to be 20% more influential than branded content alone. In short, UGC is authentic, trusted and influential.

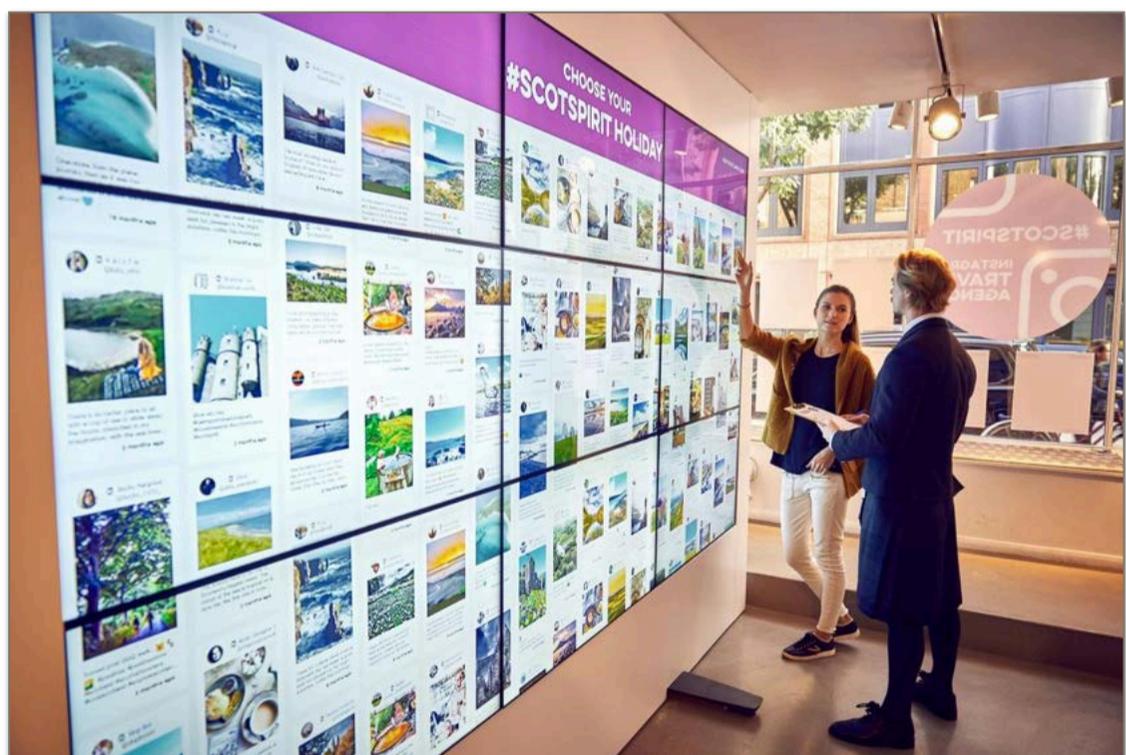
One of the more common uses of UGC by destinations is content reposting, often through the use of a branded hashtag, such as #InLOVEwithSwitzerland. However, there is much more to UGC than reposting content on your own social profiles.

VisitScotland Opens The World's First Instagram Travel Agency

Whether you're hosting an annual event, a pop-up sale, or simply have live screens at your physical locations, UGC can be a great way to shine a spotlight on your customers while creating more relatable experiences.

Knowing that nearly two thirds of Instagram users use the app to help plan their holidays, Visit Scotland launched the world's first Instagram travel agency in London in an effort to increase Scottish holiday bookings by Millennial Londoners. Upon arrival, potential travellers were greeted with floor-to-ceiling digital screens, displaying hundreds of Instagram photos that people were taking across Scotland. Visitors could select their favourite Instagram pictures and use them to curate their ideal Scottish holiday itinerary.

Results of this digital twist on an old school travel agency included a growth of their Instagram followers by 23% month-on-month, and an increase of overnight visits to Scotland by London-based millennials by 34%.



Explore Georgia: #ExploreGeorgiaPup

In 2016, Explore Georgia decided to reach out to millennial pet owners. They launched the #ExploreGeorgiaPup campaign, where they featured photos of dogs from locals and visitors on social media, and encouraged people to share their own pup photos.



Focusing on man's best friend paid off. Throughout this campaign, they saw over 3,000 uses of the hashtag in under a year, which led to over 14,000 visitors to their website. They also reached over 10,000 followers on their pet-friendly travel Pinterest board. The campaign was incredibly successful as it connected a popular trending topic, the right social network and the interests of their target market.

Destination Canada

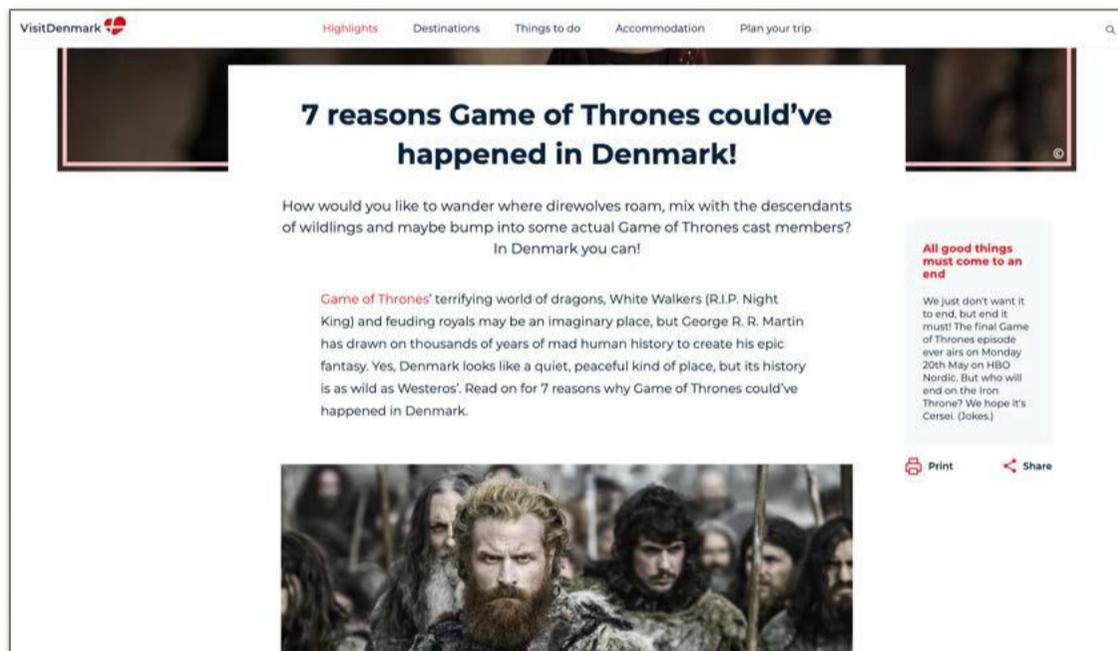
In 2016, Destination Canada launched a video campaign to target the U.S. travel market. But instead of going out and capturing their own footage of their vast country, they tapped into the UGC that already existed on social media. The organisation acquired the rights to over 2,500 photos and videos from social media, and turned them into a series of short, fun, and exciting videos. And what's more, these videos went viral, reaching over 3 million views within a week.

Not only did Destination Canada stretch UGC beyond its original medium, but it featured content from fans of the brand, meaning that individuals who had their photo or video included in the campaign felt a sense of ownership over the product, giving way to an increase of shareability and possibility of a viral hit.

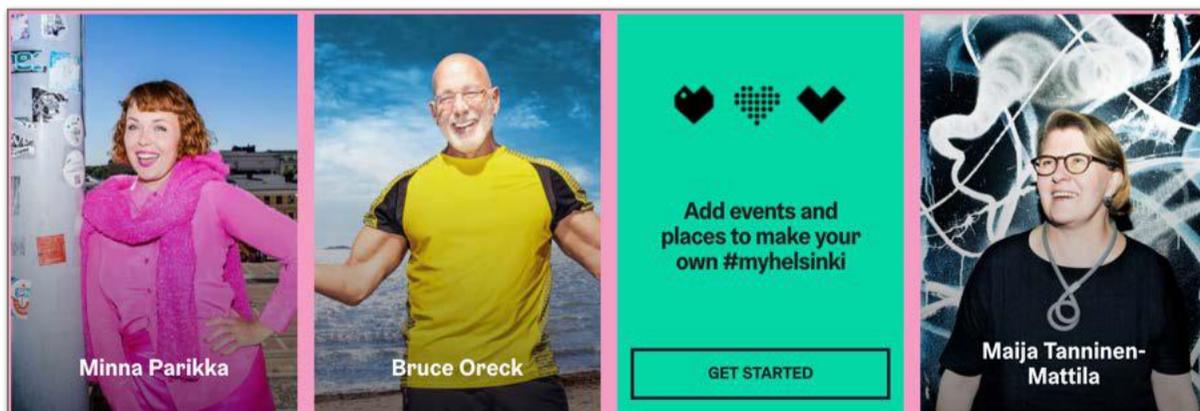
Editorial / Magazine / Blog

An interesting category of content creation is the editorial one. We are talking about creating articles, blog posts and even collaborating with magazines and newspapers to create coverage about the destination with a promotional objective. There are several examples of DMOs who took advantage of this and created editorial content to promote the destination. We provide few of these examples hereby.

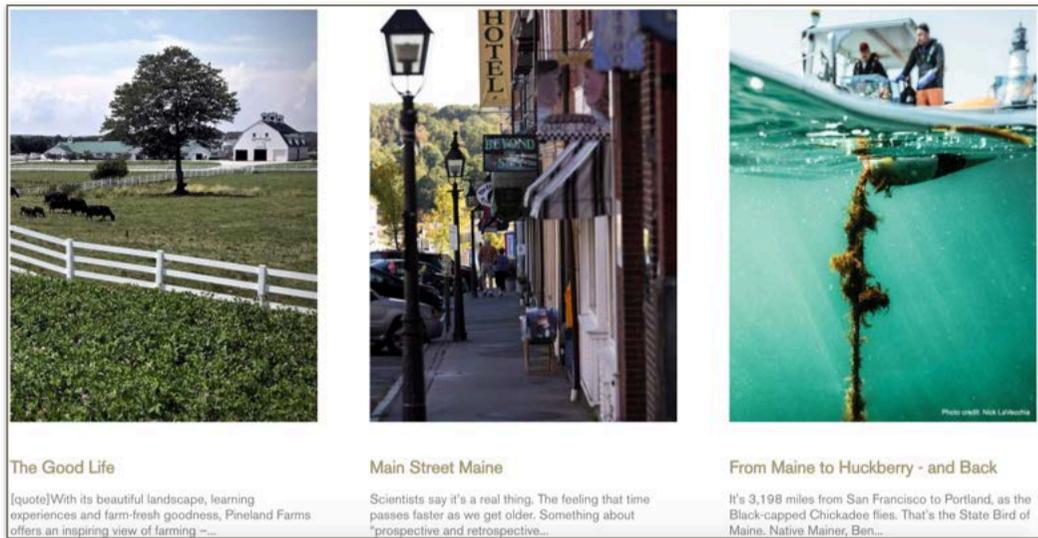
DMOs should look to build their content around current trends. A great example of this can be studied through **Visit Denmark**, and their take on Game Of Thrones. The DMO used a combination of the country's history, landscape and the amount of Danish GoT actors wandering around the country to their advantage, and created content around suggesting GoT could have easily happened in the country.



MyHelsinki sourced a team of local guides, real Helsinki residents, who represented different creative backgrounds. Subsequently, the content on the MyHelsinki website is created entirely by these local guides, who are paid to produce interest-based content which is authentic, has authority and is not doctored by the DMO. This kind of editorial content is unique and the DMO has a very trustworthy relationship with the writers.



Maine Tourism's website is highly visually-led, and presents the destination through a series of content-rich blog posts, via 'The Maine Quarterly'. Within these blog posts, the focus is on depth, curation of stories and inspiration. Content is created by various influencers who are invited to produce 'photo journals', chosen for their creative storytelling approaches over influence.

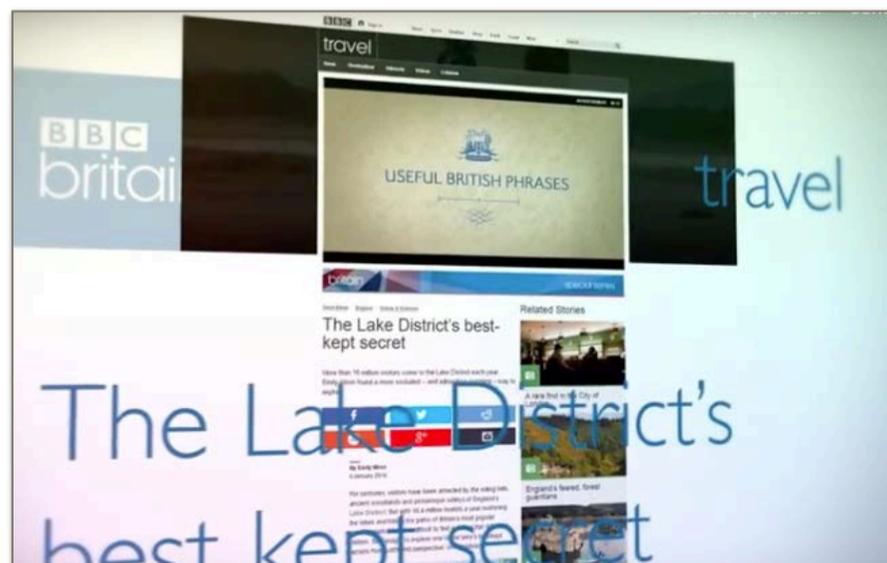


Editorial Partnerships

Establishing editorial partnerships with renowned and reputable media representatives can be a solution for the DMOs that want to add authority to their content. Editorial partnerships are not only meant to create articles, but to establish a long-term collaboration with content creators, that can reach a wider audience through their channels. Partnerships can aim at creating articles or video series, or simply social media coverage, but the final goal is usually to gain access to wider audiences while ensuring good quality of content to promote the destination.

“BBC Britain” – VisitBritain, British Airways and BBC

In 2015, BBC Worldwide, VisitBritain and British Airways partnered to launch a dedicated content portal called BBC Britain that tells a compelling story of modern Britain and brings to life the UK’s global appeal. This content solution combined specially commissioned articles, videos and images with relevant ‘lifestyle’ content drawn from across BBC.com. BBC Worldwide maintains full editorial control while VisitBritain and British Airways have the entire advertising inventory. In its first week, BBC Britain attracted over one million visitors.



“Journey of Manaakitanga” National Geographic + Tourism New Zealand

In partnership with National Geographic, Tourism New Zealand launched a campaign that focuses on connecting visitors to New Zealand’s people as well as its natural beauty. Visitors have shared that one of the best parts of their visit is engaging with local people and the warm sense of welcome they receive makes their visit very memorable. New Zealanders call this feeling manaakitanga, an indigenous Maori concept representing a unique style of hospitality, generosity, and kindness, is something that all travellers talk about upon their return home from the country. The campaign strives to bring this feeling to life through branded content series from National Geographic Travel.



The tourism board also educates travel agents nationwide about manaakitanga and connections between New Zealand’s people, land and culture with the help of six Travel Trade Ambassadors hosted by the tourism organisation. These ambassadors star in a social media campaign and a series of training videos that follow their own journeys of manaakitanga.

“The Urban Wild” – Visit Copenhagen + Vice

Vice partnered with Visit Copenhagen, sending Brandon Jew, Chef at Mr Jiu’s in San Francisco to Copenhagen. In the video, Brandon travels to Copenhagen to spend a weekend with Kristian, a chef at 108 restaurant in Copenhagen, immersing himself in the life of the restaurant, spending time with their farmers and suppliers, and getting to know the life of the chef. From the local wine bar the kitchen crew frequents after hours to the fermentation bunker that 108 has built up together with Noma.

This partnership perfectly demonstrates a new face of food tourism promotion that emphasises the people who make up the local food scene, and the spirit of culinary collaboration, innovation, and celebration that all visitors can experience, regardless of their budget. In other words, it’s not about the food, it’s about the story behind the food.



Games of Thrones Set and Studio Tour – HBO and Visit Ireland

In 2018, HBO announced the launch of a series of “Legacy Experiences” and a studio tour in Northern Ireland. For the first time ever, fans will be able to visit iconic sets from the series – with plans underway to exhibit standing sets for iconic locations like Winterfell, Castle Black and Kings Landing alongside a formal studio tour at Banbridge’s Linen Mill Studios.

The Game of Thrones series opened up a global stage for marketing Ireland as a tourism destination. The foundation for Tourism Ireland’s venture into using screen tourism as a marketing tool is its partnership with HBO which has evolved and grown over the years.

“Dear Seattle” – Visit Seattle + Sundance TV

Visit Seattle kicked off 2018 by debuting “Dear Seattle,” a series of short films around the theme “A Love Letter to Seattle.” After prominent Directors – all with local ties to Seattle – worked on their projects in the Emerald City to capture what they love most about the destination, Visit Seattle, launched the film series on VISITSEATTLE.tv and SundanceTV throughout 2018. Prominent filmmakers include Dave Grohl, J.J Augustavo, Josh Taft and Megan Griffiths.

“Bring Me” – Australia Tourism + BuzzFeed

The goal of this campaign was to encourage 18-30 year olds to travel to Australia on a working holiday visa. Young consumers represent a massive opportunity for Tourism Australia. They stay longer, spend more and disperse further than any other audience. But they’re a difficult audience to define and engage. They vary in age, life stage, location, media habits and reason for travelling.

BuzzFeed created a two-part campaign featuring both original branded content and editorial content to introduce young consumers to the unique culture and beauty that Australia offers and motivate them to visit. The BuzzFeed audience seeks the life-changing adventure and fun that awaits on a trip to Australia and the content delivered on this desire. The strategic insight was brought to life in a branded campaign that included seven Bring Me travel videos, eight co-branded posts, and twelve Snapchat assets, all distributed across four markets. Tourism Australia also partnered with BuzzFeed to create the BuzzFeed Mateship program, which included a “Mates” Facebook page, recruitment and training of eight ‘Mates’ from the four markets, as well as 102 posts and 150 videos.

The eight ‘Mates’ were chosen from more than 220 applicants, learned the fundamentals of reporting and producing in Australia, and then hit the road with BuzzFeed editors to produce content for over 200 days across the six-month project. While on the road, they reported on their travel experiences, including everything from food and wine to nature and wildlife, communicating across both BuzzFeed and Tourism Australia’s social channels.

Other Bring Me Videos: Find the happiest animal in the world on Rottnest Island; Stay overnight at Taronga Zoo, one of the world’s most beautiful zoos; Have your mind blown by boozy chocolate cheese at Curds & Whey; Swim and play with sea lions at Seal Cove; Take a romantic getaway to Thalia Haven, a private Tasmanian oasis.

“Québec Original” – BBC and Quebec Tourism

The partnership sought to highlight three aspects of Québec cultural that make it unique: its creativity, authenticity and nature.

To showcase these traits, BBC StoryWorks created Boundless Adventures – a branded content series within BBC Travel. It comprised six articles about road trips that visitors to Québec could enjoy: Urban Vacations, Gastronomic Getaways, Living History, Outdoor Adventures, Old World Charm, and Ultimate Escape.

The content was amplified via time-specific rich media ads across BBC.com, BBC Travel, BBC Culture, BBC Earth, News and Business sections and mobile that highlighted things to do in Québec during different parts of the day. Plus

**québec
original**



audience targeting of cultural and luxury travellers, and travel enthusiasts. The campaign delivered over 9 million ad impressions and 8,900 click-throughs.

Sponsored content partnerships

Sponsored content, or branded content, is just one type of native advertising — the brand-sponsored articles and videos that appear on the sites and social platforms of publishers and influencers. Basically, sponsored content is the intersection of native advertising and typical branded content. To be



explicit, branded content is content that does not involve traditional advertising. It can include articles, videos, podcasts, and even live elements that bring relevant value to the consumer.

It is not advertising in the way most people think of advertising (commercials, banner ads, social media ads, etc...). Branded/sponsored content marketing focuses on people's stories. It starts with people – their stories, their lives and their problems, and establishes an authentic connection between people and the brand.

Below are some DMO examples of this type of content being used, through digital publisher partnerships, within a variety of niches.

VisitCopenhagen partnered with VICE, to create a city guide together which aimed to target millennials. The goal was to produce a series around people that have interesting stories to tell, and offer visitors their own unique way to experience the destination through these city guides.

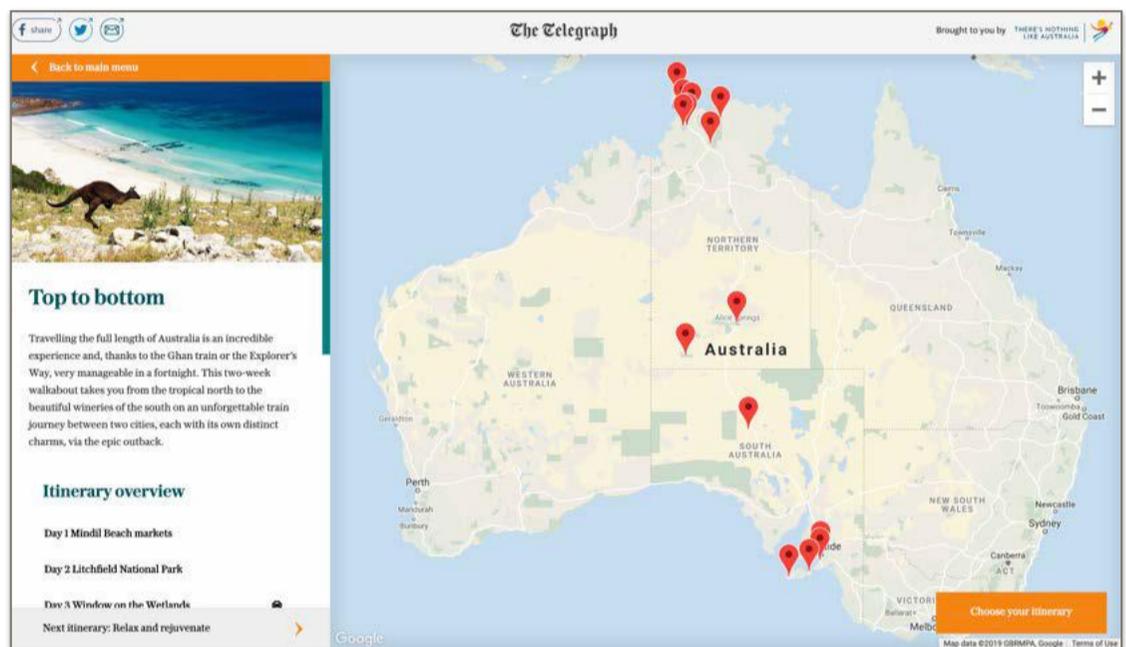
Brand USA, with their consumer brand '**Visit the USA**', partnered with The Telegraph, to create the "History of American Music". Together with their state and commercial partners, the DMO ran a rich, native supplement with the Telegraph, inviting readers to discover American music, through the eras and genres with an interactive timeline.



This collaboration is a seven-genre-wide celebration of music in the United States. Using one aspect of a country’s culture as a jumping-off point for an international travel campaign is a bold choice, but the finished product is undeniably stunning: a digital pop-up book with an intuitive reading feature that reveals more of the article with every scroll. The level of thought and care put into this piece by both The Telegraph and Visit the USA is incredible — they even made playlists for it together with Spotify, that can be played right on the site.

This is an extraordinary example of content, multimedia, interactivity and discovery rich features. Highly unusual for a campaign, with individual curated articles by ambassadors of each genre, Spotify playlists and an interactive map to discover festivals.

Tourism Australia collaborated with The Telegraph and published a guide to Australia including a map, suggested itineraries and other descriptions. Visitors to the site have access to pages about different destinations and are presented with further information and details about all the itineraries included. The discovery process is led via an external publisher and is promoted as sponsored content.



Visit Dubai's #MyDubai campaign ran as a sponsored set of six stories natively integrated to the BBC's worldwide web offering. This is a great example of serialised content living in and out of sponsored mediums, with a focus on depth, discovery and quality. Collectively they built a brand identity for Dubai, with links to further thematic discovery on VisitDubai’s website.

Visit Britain joined forces with VICE to create the #MyMicroGap campaign. The £2.5 million ‘Join the World – #MyMicrogap’ campaign targets young people with experiences and activities typically taken during a gap year that can be condensed into a micro-holiday of one to three nights in the UK. The campaign kicked off in October 2018, with the first in a series of short films that are planned to be rolled out across digital display and social media channels during the coming months.



Visit London, Paris Tourism Board and the Eurostar all partnered to advertise the two destinations side-by-side, in one campaign linking the destinations together via the Eurostar. The aim of the campaign was not to merely advertise the two cities, but to demonstrate the ease in travelling between the two, as the Eurostar takes only 2hr15 to get from one city centre to the other. This multimedia marketing campaign, launched late 2018, was targeted at the US market, with a focus on first-time millennial visitors, and ran for a total of five months.

CASE STUDIES AND TALKS

San Diego Tourism Authority - Shifting to an 'Always-on' Content Strategy

The challenge of the always-on consumer and increasing social media consumption means brands need to actively keep up with this need to stay competitive in the marketplace, which ultimately means constantly creating content. However, it is not a simple case of creating new content. It is ensuring the content is relevant to the specific audience and distributed on the right channels at the right time whilst also demonstrating a diversity of interests and experiences.

San Diego Tourism shifted to an 'always-on' content strategy in order to keep up with the increasing demand for information. Research discovered that visitors want very specific information at different points in the customer journey, for example searching for 'the best taco shop in San Diego'. As such, the strategy ensures that the campaign programme is responding to consumer interests, and it is aligned to the customer journey, 365 days a year, shifting consumption from peak season interest to year-round.



[Watch the case study](#)

Brand USA Consumer Strategy

In 2017, **Brand USA** focus on a new international consumer content strategy completely changing the game for the organisation on how they will move forward and progress with their digital activities. This includes a new brand campaign, consumer websites and content strategy. For us here at the #DTTT, Brand USA's new focus and strategy is interesting, adapting its strategic direction to changes in the digital environment by refocusing on what will really have an impact for them as a destination. Launching the next generation of digital and content strategy in January 2017, it outlines a well thought through direction for the organisation to take when it comes to all editorial content, including a new visual strategy, allowing them to meet consumer needs and expectations. Brand USA are building on the success of their previous website, streamlining a strategic, consumer first content strategy behind all digital marketing activities.

This is a major change in their content approach and focus, being much more strategic and targeted when it comes to all content, visuals and social media. We interviewed Mark Lapidus, Director Digital Development at Brand USA about their new strategic direction, content focus and how to engage with consumers moving forward in 2017 and beyond. He shares his strategic view on Brand USA's content, their activities and their digital mindset to successfully reach consumers in different markets.



[Watch the case study](#)

Geneva: Global Inbound Marketing for City Tourism

After transforming internal processes and establishing a clear organisational structure over the last several years, **Geneva Tourism** is continuing to develop its digital activities, consistently refining the digital strategy into that of a highly sophisticated and targeted approach. The strategy is largely based on a strong data-driven foundation, utilising visitor insight and content engagement to better target and optimise key objectives and performance.

In the case study, Karen McBride talks about the importance of having an always-on content strategy and of identifying key audiences and better understanding the whole customer journey. Karen talks about how Geneva Tourism have segmented the customer journey into four stages: Awareness, Consideration, Purchase and Advocacy. This allows them to adequately address each stage individually with their marketing strategy in order to target the right customers with perfectly crafted, relevant content for each audience.

For example, during the Awareness and Consideration stage, Geneva Tourism utilise an 'always on' approach by way of inbound marketing. Together with continuous market research they have then narrowed this down further, segmenting each market into three primary audiences and identifying a priority persona within each of these markets 'to speak to'. This focuses on gaining a richer, more in-depth level of understanding of the visitor, taking into consideration their values, pain points, what type of experience they are seeking etc. From this they can then formulate an effective inbound marketing strategy, creating personalised content and answering specific markets' needs and wants.



[Watch the case study](#)

Singapore Tourism: A 360 Perspective

Singapore Tourism Board (STB), the Singaporean destination marketing organisation, launched a medium-term marketing strategy (2016-2020) in order to tackle the increasingly complex tourism landscape and to stay ahead of the competition.

Terrence Voon, Director of the Digital and Content division at STB, shares the digital strategies that derive from the organisation's re-branding. His division maintains an online global presence all year round and is divided into two teams. The Digital team is looking after STB's online platforms, the website, social media, and the global digital media investments, also working on data management. The Content team is in charge of all the content that is pushed out across all markets including editorial, videos, images, baseline content and hub content.

From an organisational perspective, two factors have influenced a change towards greater efficiency within STB's Digital and Content team. First of all, technology has changed and has made it possible to speed up the process of content creation and data research. Secondly, marketing has changed and a restructuring of the process has been necessary in order to activate content in a much faster way and to scale effectively. Purposely built, the Destination Newsroom is a new way of working around content, tracking conversations and trends that are happening on the social front, turning them into insights and from insights into creative content within a 24-to-48-hour span. It is both a process and system used to monitor conversations and identify topics that could be suitable or relevant to market Singapore tourism.



[Watch the case study](#)

Montreux Riviera: Local Guides as Central to the Brand Strategy

Montreux is an affluent district in Switzerland and as a DMO, **Montreux Riviera Tourism** benefits from a substantial marketing budget. Over the years, Montreux Riviera has developed a strategy that is dynamic, unique and most significantly, completely free!

The basis of the strategy involves focusing on local people, and their stories and passions for the destination, and delivering this through effective digital strategies to inspire and engage the visitor.

The team explore the destination on a regular basis to curate and share authentic content, continually adapting and optimising the strategy. Not only is the content engaging, but it also translates to live and bookable experiences. We think this is very effective as it allows visitors to plan and book in one easy process.

For example, Facebook is used extensively to coordinate and promote upcoming events, and it is linked directly to the destination website or ticket booking platform.



[Watch the case study](#)

Visit California: Content Programme & Distribution

Visit California has long been a destination that we at the #DTTT consider to be a best practice when it comes to content. Over the years, Visit California as a destination understood the importance of producing high quality, snackable and shareable content that resonates with their target audience. Considerable work and dedication have gone into strategically producing relevant content and distributing it on their website, YouTube and social media channels.

The Team at Visit California has done some consistently great work over the years, understanding how the role of content and storytelling is a complete game changer for them as a destination.

Based on their content success story so far, we interviewed Lynn Carpenter, Vice President Marketing, and Gwynne Spann, Director of Consumer Content, to learn more about their content strategy, from their current content programme to its distribution, current marketing plans and how Visit California measure and report their content success.



[Watch the case study](#)

Tourism Australia: How to Generate all the Content you'll Ever Need

Jesse Desjardins from **Tourism Australia** talks about how his team speak to millions daily via Tourism Australia's digital platforms to become the most followed destination globally on social media. Being in charge of a successful social media team, Jesse shares some of his knowledge and insights gathered over the years on how to become a successful social media team. He shares the learnings and results of Tourism Australia as an organisation with humour and a lot of examples showing you how you can generate all the content you will ever need.

During this talk, Jesse shares 5 tips with the audience to become amazing content creators:

5. Find your “Kevins”: find the best content creators for your destination
6. Create value, not vanity: every piece of content should provide valuable information about the destination, not only portray it for vanity
7. Build something that gets bigger over time: great content should be ongoing and shareable
8. Don't be a storyteller, Give a story to tell: give people the occasions to talk about your destination
9. Earn a ridiculous amount of trust with partners and the industry: collaborate with them, give them visibility.



[Watch the talk](#)

Mastering Instagram & Creating Social First Content for Social Media

Jeremy Jauncey is founder & CEO of **Beautiful Destinations**, the agency behind the largest travel community on Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook boasting a jaw-dropping 11 million followers across their social channels. Jeremy and his team work with the world's leading destinations and travel brands, driving successful growth and engagement thanks to "social-first" content creation and incredible analytics abilities which informs the science behind their strategy. In this talk, Jeremy will be sharing essential know-how on steps to success both social and truly

In this talk, Jeremy shares essential know-how on steps to succeed in social and truly understanding what's important in social media content strategies. Jeremy shares the deep knowledge that he and his team have garnered through their own success and success of building other travel brands.



[Watch the talk](#)

Influencer & Social First Content Marketing

Fabian Reichle from **Switzerland Tourism** shares some key learnings from starting out with influencers years ago to now incorporating influencer marketing through a coherent, company-wide strategy.

Fabian firstly discusses the importance of coordinating internal departments by creating a set of simple guidelines to distribute to the relevant teams, ensuring all teams are clear and working to the same criteria. He also emphasises the importance of aligning influencers with the brand, and how brands should only consider influencers if they can really add value to a specific project.

In terms of content, Fabian discusses the power of user-generated content and how it really goes hand in hand with influencer marketing. Switzerland Tourism's Instagram is 100% UGC, with over 700,000 photos shared using #inlovewithswitzerland. This forms a strong basis for influencing potential visitors and after all, you're likely to trust your friends more than an A list celeb!



[Watch the talk](#)

#theislandbreak – Crafting a Destination with Content & Honesty

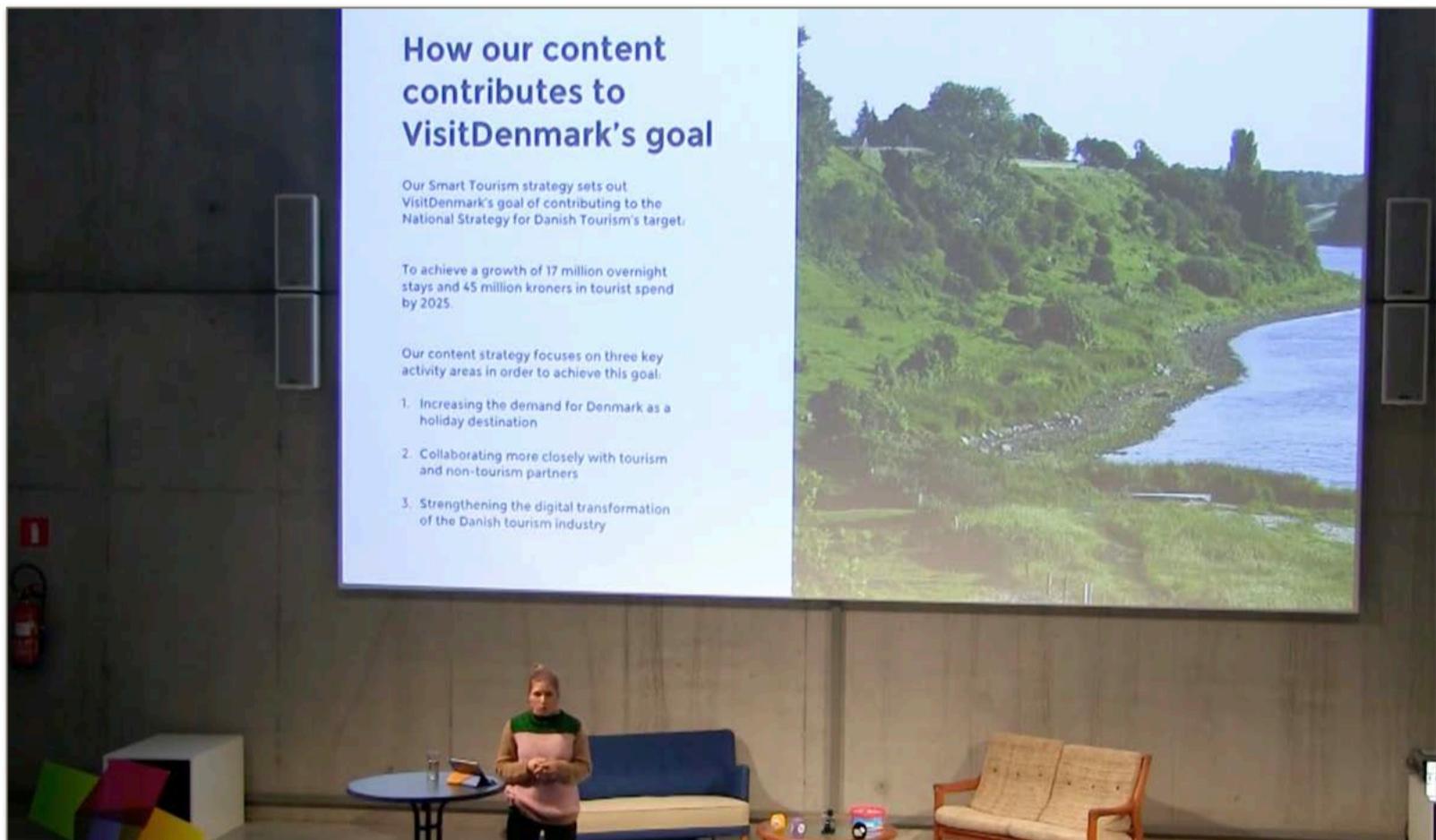
There is one DMO in the last few years that the team here at the #DTTT have been so impressed with. Before 2015 they were totally under the radar but after a radical overhaul of the entire organisation, relaunching a year and a half back with bold ambitions and a very strong brand that is true to the destination as it is to its people, Jersey shares the journey they've been on and why the future looks bright for #TheIslandBreak. Here Adam Caerlewy-Smith, Head of Marketing for Visit Jersey, shares the great work him and his team have been doing to craft an incredibly strong identity through a comprehensive campaign of strong brand initiatives with digital at the core.



[Watch the talk](#)

Building a 365 Content Team

Following the second edition of #DTTTCampus hosted in Copenhagen, we were delighted to showcase the 'Under the Hood' work that **VisitDenmark** created to ensure their team was ready for a content driven marketing approach, where they have to take a lead role in becoming storytellers for the destination. With a new in-house content team, they created their own mini production unit to have the creative skills and talent to adopt an always-on content strategy and take control of their own creative direction as a team. After a year of finding the right talent for this team to work, VisitDenmark are now ready to show some of the first results of this major shift to how they build their digital brand with a content-led approach.



[Watch the talk](#)

TEMPLATES

As we pointed out in the first chapter, having a content strategy is necessary to set and meet goals and objectives and to evaluate all the possibilities to create and distribute content.

With this pack of templates you will be able to brainstorm with your team about all the possibilities to create content for your destination, starting from a Sprint, that involves collaboration of the whole DMO to assess existing and potential content opportunities, to purpose-built templates designed to develop stories, through to plan an always-on content strategy for the whole year and explore new means for content creation, like user-generated content and ambassadors and influencers.

1. Content & Engagement - Sprint

The first step in the creation of a content strategy is a brainstorming Sprint. Gather your whole team and use the Content & Engagement - Sprint template to map out content opportunities, weaknesses, needs and ideas for new content as well as brainstorming new themes and opportunities to create always-on content to increase engagement. Think about how to use user-generated content and how to collaborate with a pool of creatives and influencers to build engaging content around your destination.

Use the sticky notes or write directly on each section of the template to gather data and answer these questions:

Content Opportunities

How can you craft, build and nurture the right content approach around the brand? Which content and formats could be worked with in a better way as an opportunity to promote your destination through the website, social media and videos?

Content Weaknesses

Which content on your current channels should be improved or changed? Which content works well for your current audience, and what content doesn't seem to be working so well to reach your audience.

Content Needs

What are the things needed for a content strategy change? Which are the right stories to be told to consumers? What is necessary to create great content for your destination and differentiate it as a destination?

Ideas: Stories, Content, Innovation

Brainstorm and come up with ideas for great and innovative content. What could be the focus of a great destination story? What innovative messages or formats could be used to describe yours as a great tourism destination? How can your destination be more expressive and innovative with its content approach and attract more visitors to the city?

Always-on content planning

How can you plan a long-term communication and content strategy for your channels? Which events and activities could be the starting point for planning an always-on content strategy? How could content related

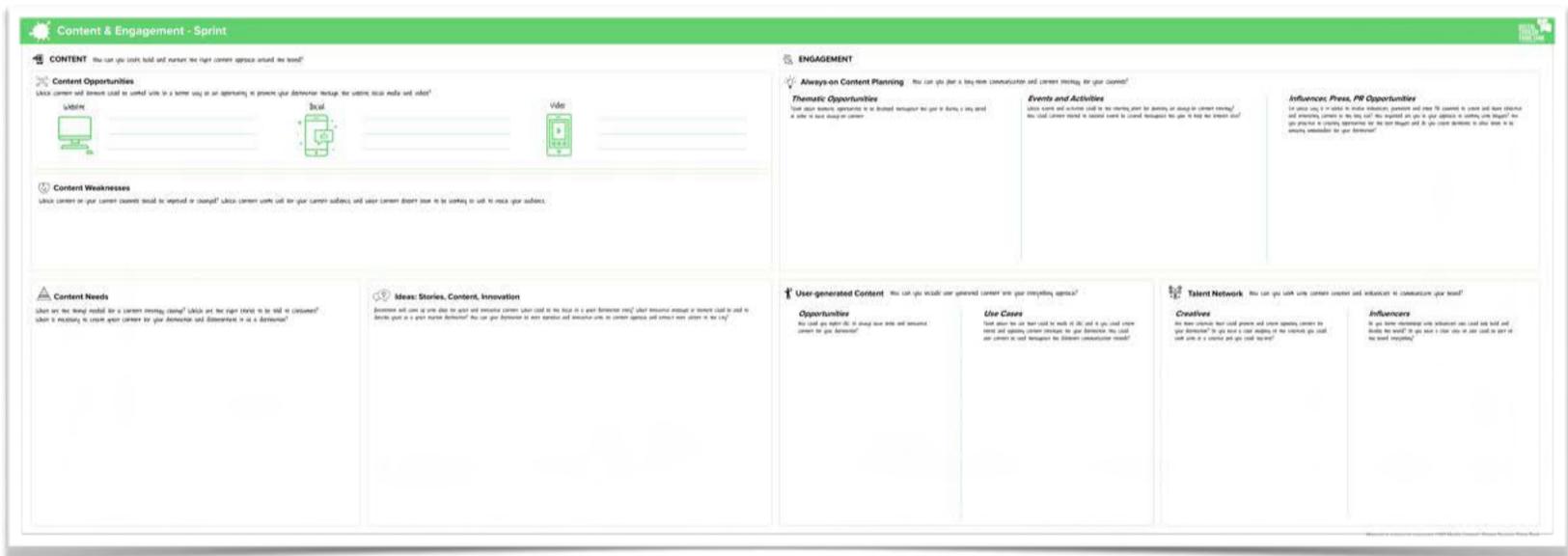
to seasonal events be covered throughout the year to keep the interest alive? In which way is it useful to involve influencers, journalists and other PR channels to create and share effective and interesting content in the long run?

User-generated content

How can you include user-generated content within your storytelling approach? How could you exploit UGC to always have fresh and innovative content for your destination?

Talent Network

How can you work with content creators and influencers to communicate your brand? Are there creatives that could promote and create appealing content for your destination? Do you have a clear mapping of the creatives you could work with or a creative pool you could tap into? Can you foster relationships with influencers who could help build and develop the brand? Do you have a clear view of who could be part of the brand storytelling?



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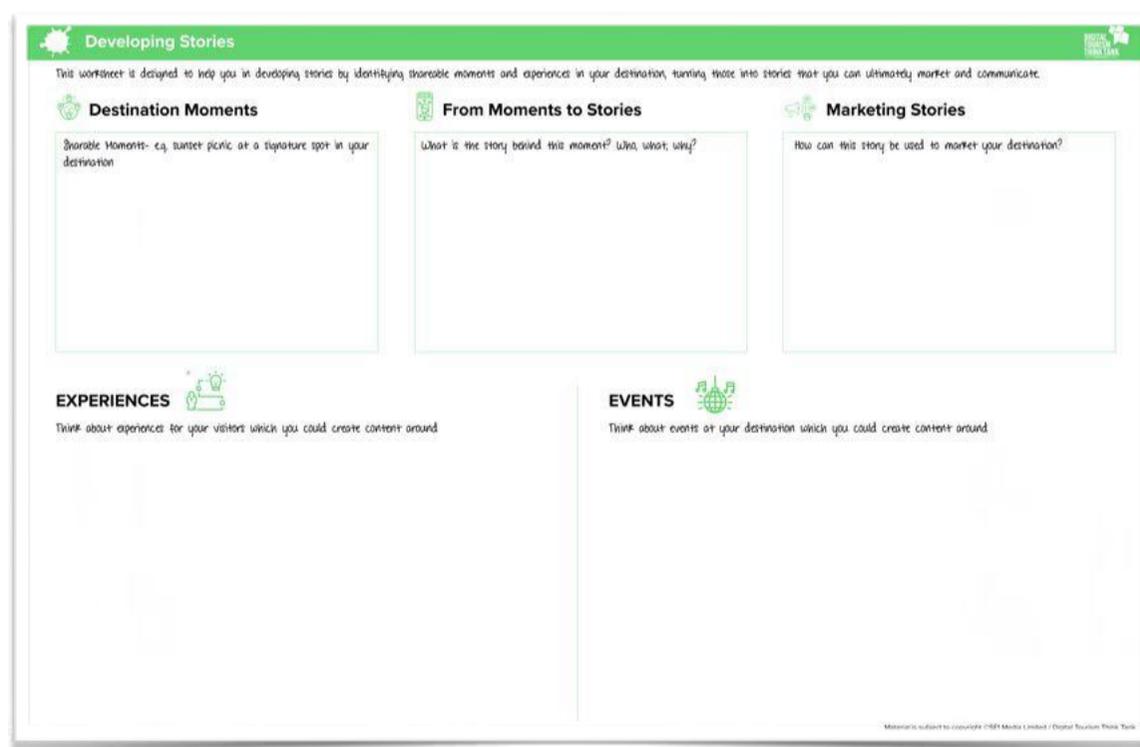
2. Developing Stories

Developing stories is something that many content teams are spending significant time and resources on to produce content for the destination website, blog and social media channels. However, with the wealth of destination information being available online, it is critical for destinations to think in line with what stories consumers are actually interested in, enabling the destination to stand out with its story based content. This is often easier said than done, as destination ambassadors and your competitors are also communicating great stories online. So what is it that makes your destination unique, what are some of the authentic and untold stories that make your destination unique?

Developing Stories that Resonate

Our template is designed to provide a blank canvas for your team when developing stories. Think about how your destination could develop a story hub carefully considering what content and stories need to be developed and produced in the future. It is absolutely critical to interlink stories and think about where the stories will live on your website and social channels. Consider also how these stories can drive engagement and what stories are worth investing in.

The idea is to brainstorm ideas on what shareable moments and experiences have standout value in your destination. It is important to highlight those unique experiences, events or moments that you think are authentic to the destination and also unique when marketing these stories. While it is good to collect a range of story ideas, it is important to focus on quality rather than quantity when developing unique moments into stories. Outline how key moments can be developed into stories and how stories and experiences interlink. Once a story concept is mapped out, consider how you will market the stories and what you should consider when producing the story content. This is an important step, as you are considering all aspects of marketing the story, ensuring the story works for you and delivers results.



Developing Stories

This worksheet is designed to help you in developing stories by identifying shareable moments and experiences in your destination, turning those into stories that you can ultimately market and communicate.

<p>Destination Moments</p> <p>Shareable Moments- e.g. sunset picnic at a signature spot in your destination</p>	<p>From Moments to Stories</p> <p>What is the story behind this moment? Who, what, why?</p>	<p>Marketing Stories</p> <p>How can this story be used to market your destination?</p>
<p>EXPERIENCES</p> <p>Think about experiences for your visitors which you could create content around</p>	<p>EVENTS</p> <p>Think about events at your destination which you could create content around</p>	

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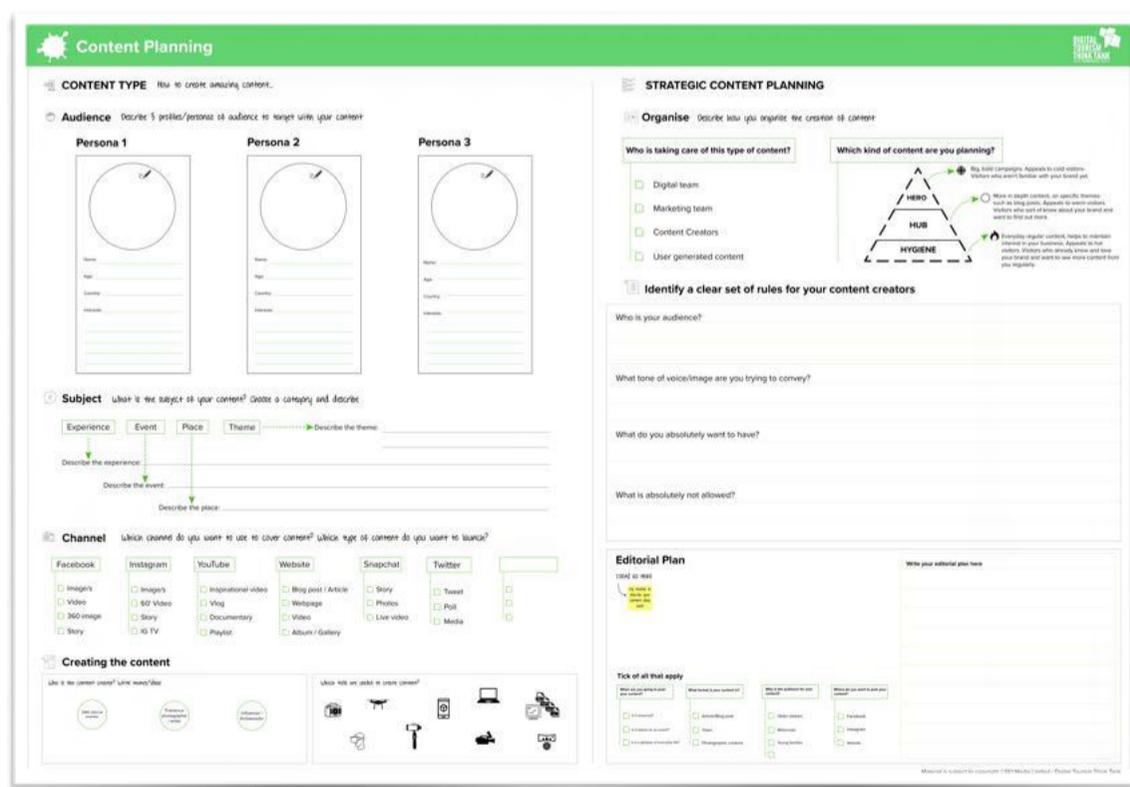
[Mural template](#)

3. Content Planning

Planning content requires a structure to follow because the elements to take into consideration are multiple. It also requires a lot of teamwork and brainstorming. For this reason we created a template that you can use with your team as a board to design and plan your content very specifically, based on the objectives for the promotion of your destination.

This mural will help you plan single or multiple pieces of content strategically, following 7 steps:

1. Define the audience you are creating the content for. Use the personas you already created in your audience strategy or, if you don't have identified personas yet, use the template in the mural to create them.
2. Identify the subject of your content. It can be an experience offered in your destination, an event, a place you want to describe or a theme you want to use to build content around.
3. Identify the channels you want to use to distribute the content. Consider your personas before choosing the channels, remember each market segment has a preference for specific channels.
4. Think about who could be the content creator for this specific piece. Can the content be created in-house? Should you ask content creators such as writers, video makers, influencers? Which technology should they use to create the content? Which costs does the technology imply for your DMO?
5. Think about who will manage the production and distribution of content and if it should be a hero/hub/hygiene type of content.
6. Set clear rules for the content creators. Tell them who they should speak to, what tone of voice they should use in line with the destination identity, what is or is not allowed.
7. Finally draft an editorial plan for the content to create, deciding timings to distribute it and once more confirming the format, the audience and the channels you want to use.



The image shows a digital mural template for content planning, titled "Content Planning" at the top. It is divided into several sections:

- CONTENT TYPE:** A header section with the instruction "How to create amazing content...".
- Audience:** A section titled "Describe 3 profiles/personas of audience to target with your content". It contains three columns for "Persona 1", "Persona 2", and "Persona 3", each with a circular profile picture placeholder and a form for Name, Age, Gender, Location, and Interests.
- Subject:** A section titled "What is the subject of your content? Create a category and describe". It offers options for Experience, Event, Place, and Theme, with corresponding text boxes for description.
- Channel:** A section titled "Which channel do you want to use to cover content? Which type of content do you want to launch?". It lists various platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Website, Snapchat, Twitter) and content types (Images, Video, 360 image, Story, etc.) with checkboxes.
- Creating the content:** A section titled "Who is taking care of this type of content?". It includes a checklist for "Who is taking care of this type of content?" (Digital team, Marketing team, Content Creators, User generated content) and a diagram of the Hero-Hub-Hygiene content model. Below this is a section for "Identify a clear set of rules for your content creators" with text boxes for audience, tone, and absolute requirements.
- Editorial Plan:** A section titled "Write your editorial plan here" with a table for planning content over time.
- Tick of all that apply:** A final checklist for content attributes like "Is it a story?", "Is it a video?", "Is it a 360 image?", etc.

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4. User-Generated Content Strategy

Consumer behaviour is changing quickly and so are content preferences. The destination landscape has seen a huge shift in the importance that user-generated content now plays when inspiring and informing consumers about a destination. User-generated content has quickly become a core aspect of working on social media for any destination. This was brought about by the new desire for experiences when on holiday rather than thinking to select a place to visit based on the destination. Consumers no longer want to feel like a tourist but consider themselves as travellers wanting to explore destinations in an authentic way.

While destinations were long considered the absolute authority on all things relating to the destination, it is now content and information that is shared by peers that are most trusted. In addition to that, consumers are increasingly sharing their experiences in the destination on social media, aggregating a large amount of user content across social channels. This also impacts on the way in which information or content is consumed by consumers and how travel decisions are made. Visual decision making is becoming the new reality for visitors in a decision, being inspired and decisions driven by visual stimuli and content from other visitors or locals.

Getting your user-generated content strategy in order is, therefore, a big priority for any destination wanting to succeed in digital. While user-generated content is already a big driver in tourism and for decision-making, it is important that destinations adopt a long-term strategy to incorporate, leverage and promote user-generated content throughout its channels and platforms. This also includes the destination website that is often still a stronghold of destination content rather than user-generated content which is preferred and drives more engagement.

Our latest template aims to help in making key decisions on how to leverage user-generated content as a destination.

Your User-generated Content Strategy

We have divided the user-generated content strategy into three areas to cover, discuss and focus on, which are purpose, integration and testing. For each of those areas, it is important to think about the actual purpose and underlying strategy to work with user-generated content. In addition to that, consider what type and how user content could be integrated into your website and social media channels. To ensure user-generated content is performing as it should, it is important to test these and analyse their performance.

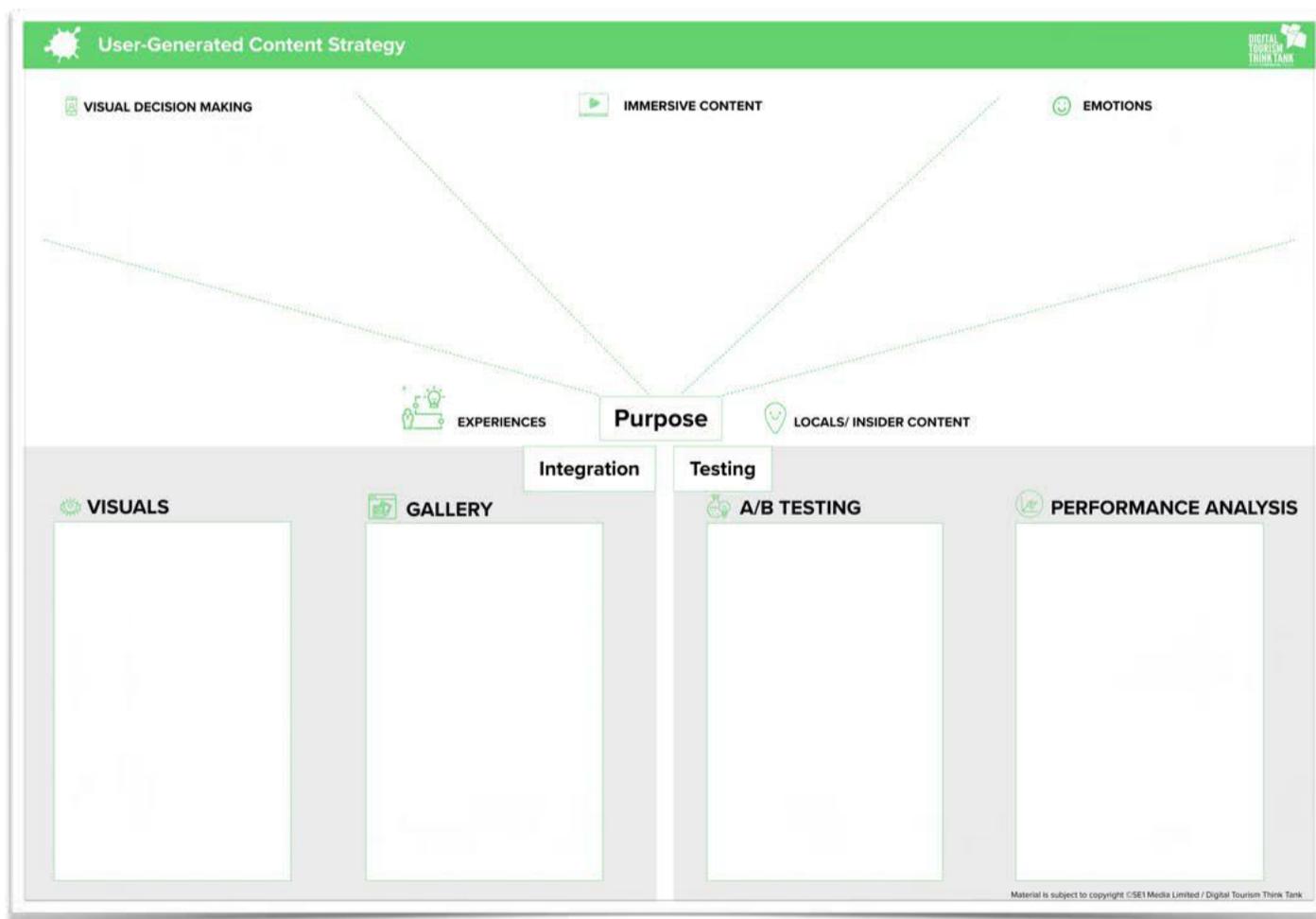
Use each of the dedicated spaces to outline your approach and decide on a strategic direction for working with user-generated content. It is important to consider the use of user-generated content to provide real-time information on what is happening in the destination. At the same time, it is also a great opportunity to cover niche interests in your marketing and communications and drive action.

Starting from the top left, think about you could use UGC to help your audience take decisions visually based on the experiences of your actual visitors shared on social media. Think about using immersive rather than static content and most of all which emotions should emerge from the content.

Which experiences should UGC portray? Which local or insider content might better inspire your audience?

Think about the visuals and style you want to give to your channels and website with UGC. Nowadays many DMOs incorporate galleries of UGC. Would it fit your website as well?

The next step is to try and measure the performance of user-generated content. On social media you could use advertisement to make an A/B test and see what type of content performs best. Analyse the performance and keep it into consideration when selecting the UGC you want to use.



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5. Storytelling Strategies

Storytelling is an integral part of digital marketing, crafting unique stories that match a destination's DNA and help to convey key messages and stories. Destinations around the world have to become masters of multimedia storytelling, developing stories and messages that work using a range of formats available to inspire, engage and evoke emotions in consumers. While this sounds quite straightforward, it is actually easier said than done.

With the wealth of information and stories already out there about competing destinations but also your own, DMOs often find themselves having to find new and innovative ways to cut through the noise. One way of achieving this is to employ a strategic approach to storytelling. Once an approach and direction to take is set, it is much easier to develop quality stories and implement storytelling methods to help destination content perform better and drive success.

This template provides you with a framework to follow to create a story around your content.

Storytelling Strategies		
Multimedia Storytelling Message:	"Packaging" Story bundle:	Delivery Headline message:
Format:	Universality:	Narrative:
Personal touch:	Multi-channel:	Enticing visuals:
Internal Structures		
Structures to source ideas/ stories	Storytelling workflow & processes	Production & Distribution

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10. 365 Days of Storytelling

Your DMO should focus on year-round storytelling, empowering the destination to engage key audiences year-round, contributing to a constant growth of the destination's content and social media performance. Good content that is shared and distributed year round across channels can make a massive difference to your overall digital performance. Those destinations that are strategically planning content, taking into consideration brand aspects, shareability, working with influencers and partners can see it all coming together. For destinations, it is no longer a luxury to do storytelling, it is a must and has to be done right or it won't deliver the results your organisation is looking for.

While this sounds like something you might already be doing, it is really the detail of a 12-month plan that we will be tackling with this template. A 365-day storytelling strategy is easier said than done, but once done right, it can help to get all partners to support you in your activities, as everyone understands and knows why you are focusing on certain topics and when they should engage with you and how.

To get started with filling in the framework, we have listed 5 components on the left-hand side that need to be worked through and space for 12 columns, representing 12 months. As we are halfway through the year already, we thought it is best not to box you in by naming each month. Feel free to get started planning your 12-month calendar or start planning for January 2020.

To help you with the planning we even developed an Asana template that you can import into your workspace, if you are already an Asana user. Each task will help you outline a 365-days content plan.

COMPONENTS	BRAND RESSANCE & STORYTELLING												
12 Month Plan Develop a monthly content calendar to ensure you are publishing content consistently.													
Shareable Moments Create your content to be shared on various platforms. Consider the best time to publish your content and engage with your audience.													
Storytelling Develop your content to be shared on various platforms. Consider the best time to publish your content and engage with your audience.													
Ambassadors & Influencers Identify who to work with and how to engage them. Consider the best time to publish your content and engage with your audience.													
Conversations & Engagement Identify who to work with and how to engage them. Consider the best time to publish your content and engage with your audience.													

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11. Video Content Plan

As already mentioned in the second chapter, video content is powerful and drives noticeable engagement on your website and social media channels.

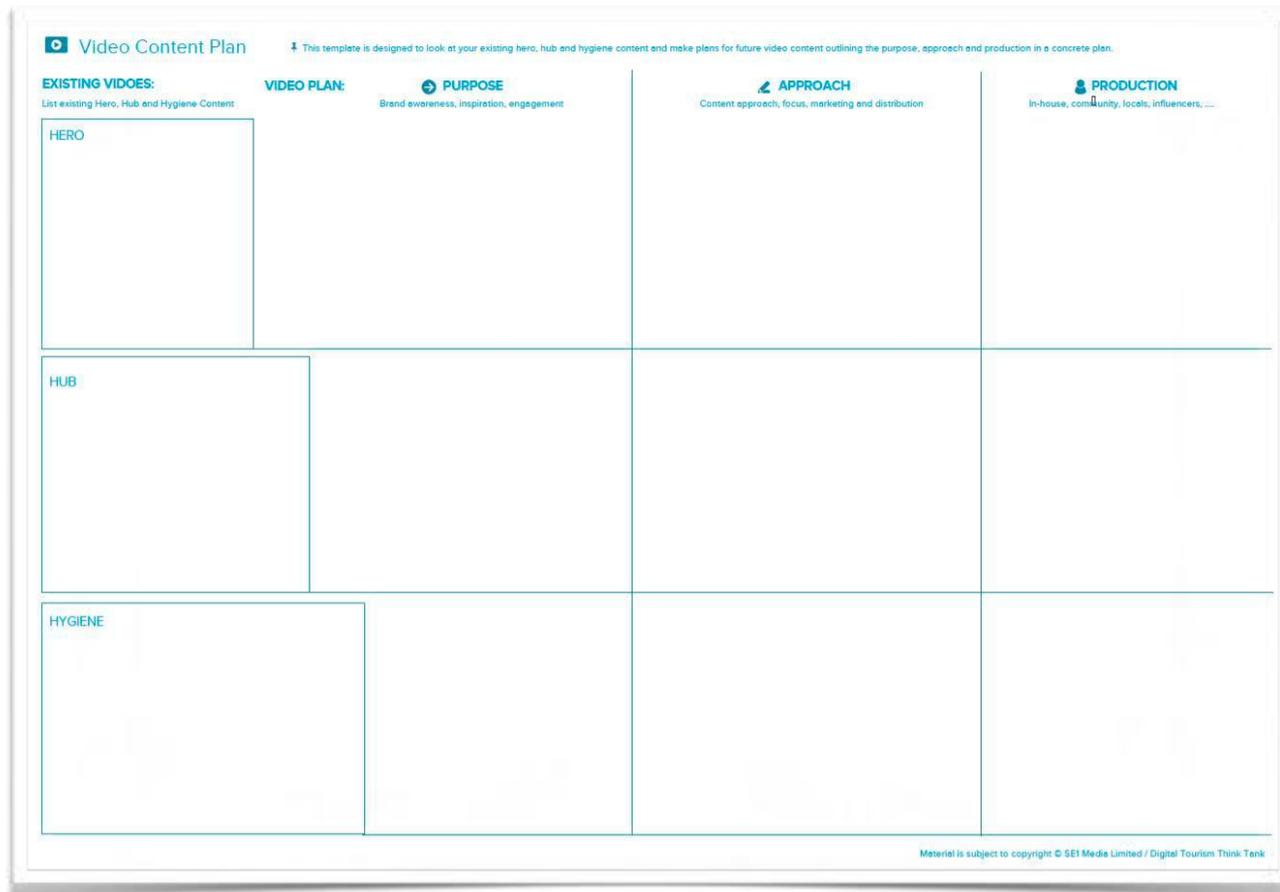
Our video content plan is a great way for teams to get started owning video content, making plans on what should be prioritised and how you can produce these. If you have an in-house content creator or videographer or work with an agency, this template might be interesting to use as part of a video content meeting, to brainstorm, present and make plans for future productions. The aim is to enable your team to effectively look at existing video content and identify where there are gaps by identifying a video plan for future content outlining the purpose, approach and production approach.

To get started, fill in a list of existing hero, hub and hygiene video content focusing either on a list of all video content if you are at a starting point with video content or focusing on a specific theme of video content. Big destination headline and campaign videos are described as hero video content, longer video content focusing on guides or providing destination information or insights is described as hub content. Hygiene video content is mainly distributed on social media and hence shorter and more focused to drive engagement and grab viewer's attention.

When filling in the list of existing videos, you will quickly come across gaps that should be included in your video plan of videos to either commission or produce yourself. The more detailed you can be in planning the video content the better. Outline the purpose of each of the videos, such as brand awareness, inspiration or engagement, taking also into consideration which channels you will post the videos on. Does your video need a call to action? What tone of voice or branding if any should be used?

Once you are clear on the purpose of the video, think about the content approach and overall focus of the video. Take into consideration again how you want to market and distribute the video in order to ensure it has the correct length and can capture consumer's attention within the first couple of seconds. Everyone's attention span is getting shorter so ensure your video will perform, considering all the tricks of the trade to make a lasting impression.

The last step in planning your video content is deciding on how the content will be produced. Will your team integrate the production of video content into their daily workflow? Are you planning on organising a campaign to involve your communities and locals into the process to gather lots of user-generated video content or will you outsource? Each of these options has a number of benefits and downsides, making it an important area to discuss and decide on.



Video Content Plan This template is designed to look at your existing hero, hub and hygiene content and make plans for future video content outlining the purpose, approach and production in a concrete plan.

EXISTING VIDEOS: List existing Hero, Hub and Hygiene Content	VIDEO PLAN:	PURPOSE Brand awareness, inspiration, engagement	APPROACH Content approach, focus, marketing and distribution	PRODUCTION In-house, community, locals, influencers, ...
HERO				
HUB				
HYGIENE				

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12. Content Campaigns & Brand Collaborations

There are different ways to approach content campaigns and brand collaborations successfully. If your DMO is considering to take a stronger focus on commercial partnerships, we have designed two templates to get you thinking about the key factors to consider when working with and engaging partners. With any collaboration, it is important to see how all partners are able to drive their individual objectives and see both creative, brand and commercial results at the end. This requires careful planning, strong strategic vision and commitment to plan thoroughly and see-through ideas.

Long before content took centre stage, campaigning had been the norm for most destinations and travel brands primarily for lead generation and acquisition. Brands such as Contiki as an example have successfully built a content team within their organisation and are actively seeking collaborative partnerships which form a central part of their strategy. Destinations such as Tourism Ireland or Visit Denmark as two examples have a strong focus on commercial partnerships, having worked extensively with screen and film tourism partners on content campaigns.

If your destination is thinking about taking content campaigns and brand collaborations to the next level or starting to focus on these more, then our templates can help you to look at different perspectives about how to approach content campaigns and brand collaborations successfully.

Idea & Concept Development Stage

The idea and concept development stage focuses on conceptualising a product in a group environment, working out concrete ideas around product, content, experiences and events. It is good to start the idea and concept development stage with a specific problem or challenge in mind. This could be the launch of a new film or series, a new attraction, event or festival in your destination. Before embarking on content campaigns and brand collaborations, it is important to put together a strong idea and concept in view of being a strong partner and driver of growth not only for your destination but also for partners involved.

Use the template to work out ideas for content campaigns working with partners around product, content, experiences and events. Spend 15 minutes per area, writing your ideas and thoughts on sticky notes and place them on the template. Working as a team, gather as many ideas as possible, selecting the most interesting ideas and concepts into an idea shortlist. The more ideas you can think of the better.

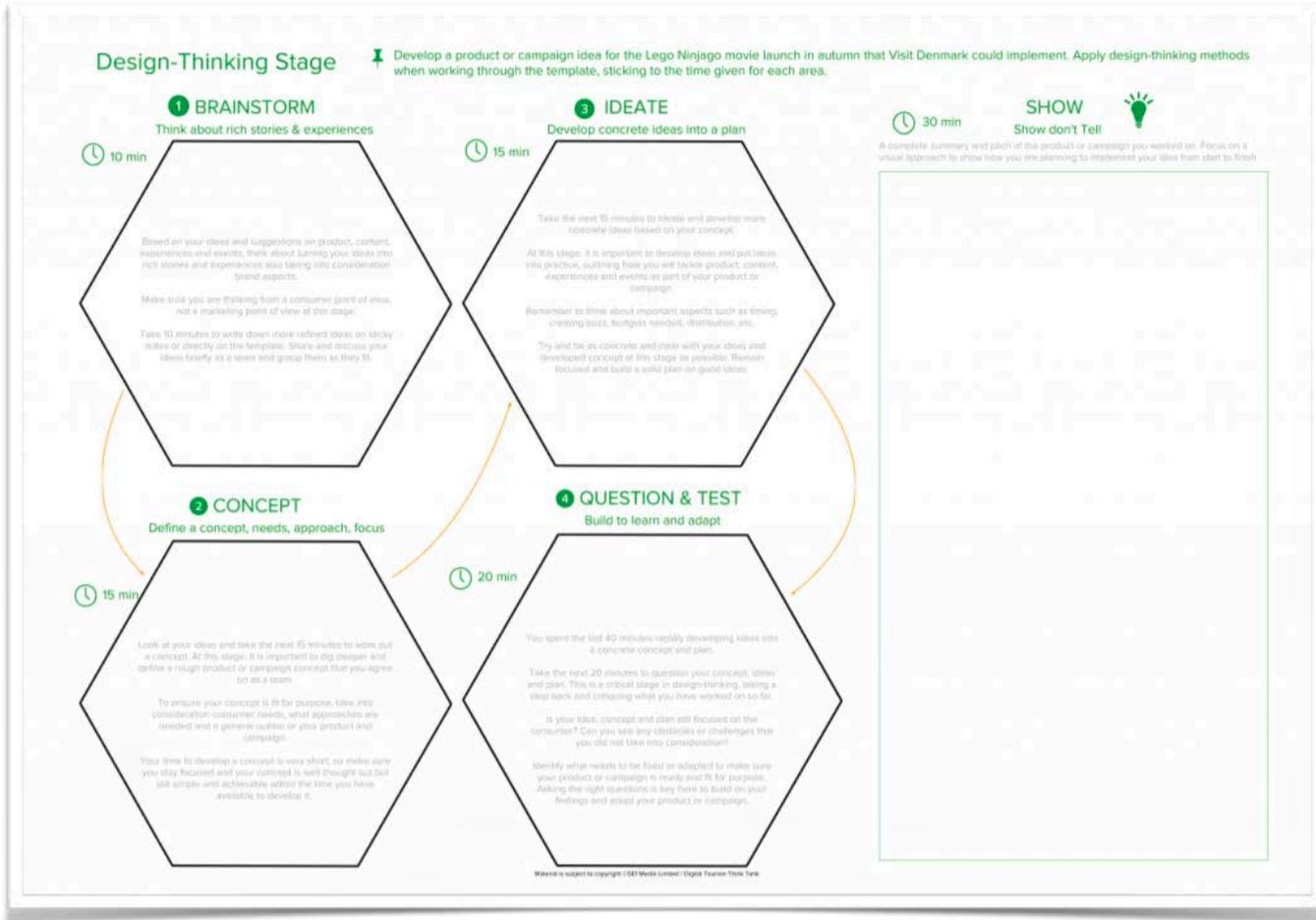
Design Thinking Stage

The Design Thinking Stage is building on the idea and concept development stage, using design thinking methodologies to work out what is needed to build a strong brand partnership. Put yourself into the perspective of your potential partner identifying what they would want. It is critical to think about how your idea and campaign concept could help the partner organisation to overcome some challenges that they are facing. Establishing a concept that is mutually beneficial is key here.

We suggest you work through the four stages outlined in the template and then prepare a summary or pitch of your project or campaign idea.

- **Brainstorm:** Based on your ideas and suggestions, think about how you can turn these into rich stories and experiences. Make sure you are thinking from a consumer perspective, refining your ideas on sticky notes
- **Concept:** Define a concept based on your initial ideas, outlining a rough product or campaign concept that you agree on as a team
- **Ideate:** Develop your ideas into a concrete plan of action based on your concept, taking into consideration timing, creating buzz, budget needed and distribution
- **Question & Test:** The fourth stage in the process focuses on rapidly developing ideas into a concrete concept and plan, taking a step back and critiquing or challenging your concept to improve it

The last stage in the process ask you to Show don't Tell which is core to design thinking. It is important to develop a product or campaign as far as possible developing concrete ideas on what campaigns, websites, and content should look like. Of course, this is not easy, so dedicate 30 minutes to focus creating a visual approach to show off what you are planning to implement. You can be creative here, outlining or drawing stories, wireframes or structures that can help to illustrate your concept. The main goal is to be as concrete as possible, moving away from simply talking about ideas to be able to show a fully fledged concept for content campaigns and brand collaborations.



Idea & Concept Development Stage

In the idea and concept development stage, write down ideas on sticky notes in the indicated colours around developing a product or campaign for the launch of the Lego Ninjago movie in autumn. Write down ideas individually first and then discuss them as a group.

■ PRODUCT 15 min <small>Consider tangible products & experiences, short, medium & long-term development</small>	■ CONTENT 15 min <small>Consider hero, hubs, hygiene content, content production, content distribution & media</small>	■ EXPERIENCES 15 min <small>Consider rich, immersive experience online and in the destination, installations, routes, etc.</small>	■ EVENTS 15 min <small>Consider events around a product, creating buzz & excitement</small>

IDEA SHORTLIST <small>Why did you choose the idea? Risks, Thoughts, Notes</small>	IDEA SHORTLIST <small>Why did you choose the idea? Risks, Thoughts, Notes</small>	IDEA SHORTLIST <small>Why did you choose the idea? Risks, Thoughts, Notes</small>	IDEA SHORTLIST <small>Why did you choose the idea? Risks, Thoughts, Notes</small>
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4

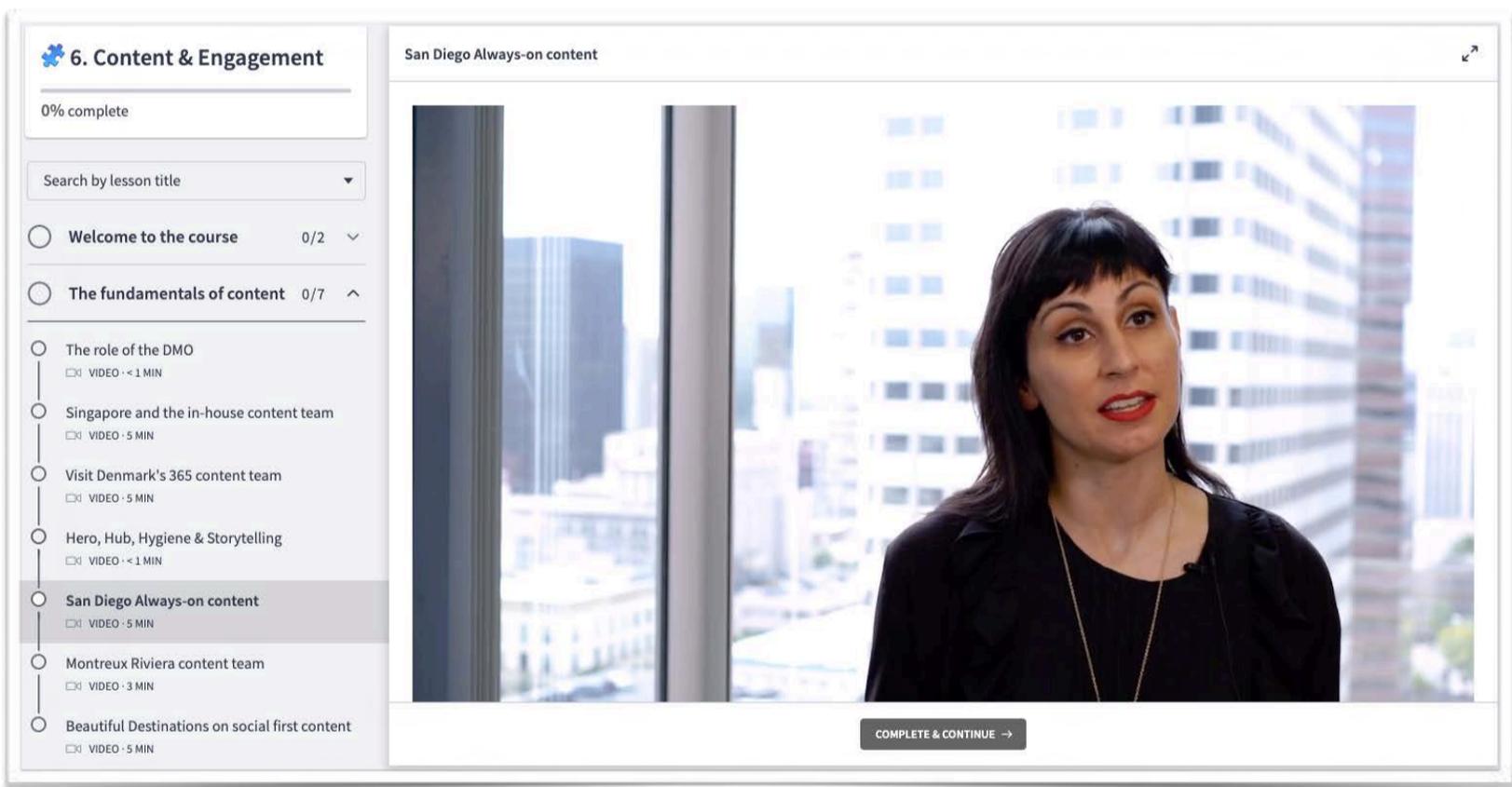
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ONLINE LEARNING

The resource pack of the 12 Stages of Transformation Series related to this topic includes the access to the sixth module of the 12 Part DMO Transformation Online Course, Content & Engagement, that gives you an overview of the topics covered in this report in form of video lessons with additional extracts from the selected case studies and talks mentioning the topic of content and engagement. The online course is meant to guide you in a more interactive way into the topic and assess your knowledge.

Once completed, you'll get a certificate which shows you are equipped to start changing your organisation with the #DTTT's seal of approval.

Click on the link below to join the course. If you are a #DTTT Member, ask the Launchpad Resource Manager of your DMO how to access the course, or contact the #DTTT Team through the chat on the Launchpad or by email at michela@thinkdigital.travel.

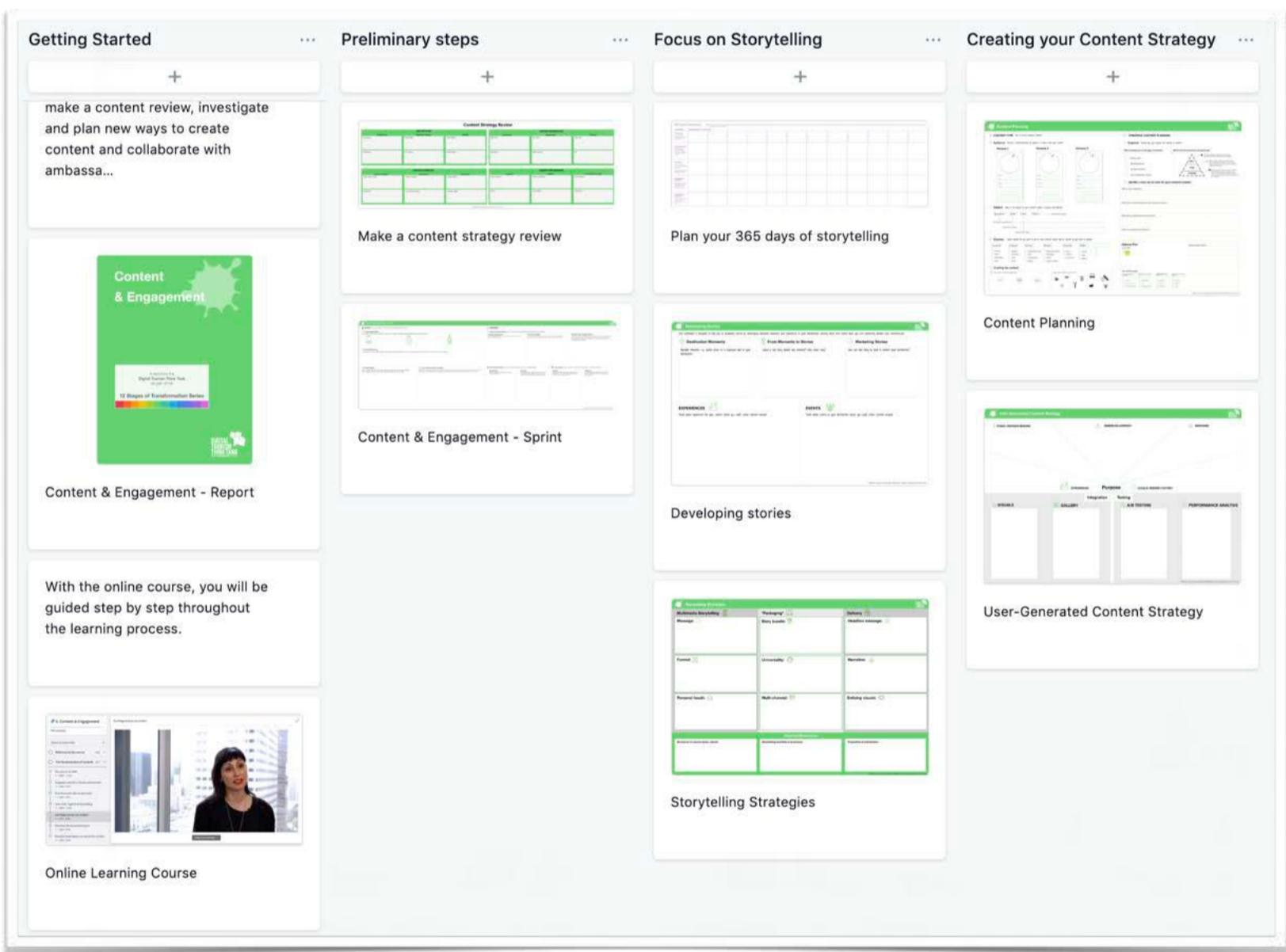


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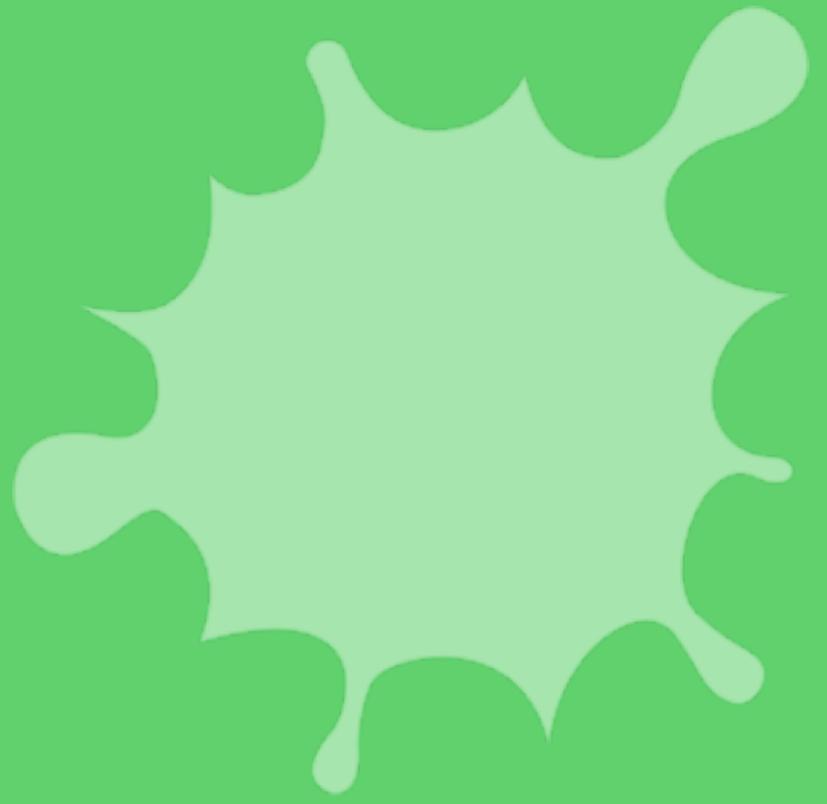
ASANA PROJECT TEMPLATE

Along with this report, templates and the online course about Content & Engagement, we created an Asana Project Template that you can import into your [Asana](#) workspace to start working on your content strategies and plan content and collaborations with content creators.

With this, you'll have a project with multiple tasks to plug-in and play, including the actions you need to take to review your existing content and make a plan for new content using storytelling, planning tools and evaluating possible partnerships with ambassadors and influencers.



[Go to the Asana board!](#)



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