

AWARDS FOR
EXCELLENCE IN
**PUBLIC
RELATIONS
2020**



Best Consumer Public Relations Campaign

Over €50K



'What's Keeping You?' Neil Delamere promoting 'We've Come a Long Way'.

Campaign

We've Come a Long Way

Description of Campaign

With 2019 a pivotal year for Northern Ireland tourism, including The 148th Open and filming of the final series of Game of Thrones, Jago and Tourism NI delivered a successful destination focused integrated PR campaign in both NI and the Republic of Ireland.



Public Relations Consultant

Jago



Client

Tourism NI

Background to the Campaign

We were tasked with developing a consumer PR strategy to inspire domestic and Republic of Ireland (RoI) visitors to discover Northern Ireland (NI), increasing staycations. The aim was to build tourism momentum for the first 8 months of 2019, a year capturing NI's largest event, The 148th Open golf championship, and the filming in NI of Game of Thrones final series.

Our challenge was to focus on DESTINATION, simple not sport or screen, bolstering civic pride and interest while NI is in global spotlight. We needed to tailor our strategy and messaging for both markets, but still have an overarching concept for the PR strategy. We also focused on developing a strategy and tactics that would be integrated, based on the PESO model. The campaign needed to drive visitors to NI around The Open but also with messages and inspiring content that would leave a legacy and encourage visitors after The Open.

In addition, during the campaign, particularly in March 2019, Northern Ireland was in the media spotlight for another reason – Brexit. The NI border was being discussed, often negatively, in media and we needed to cut through this conversation to position Northern Ireland in a positive light, inspire people to visit and reiterate the 'ease of access' message.

Statement of Objectives

2019 PR Objectives, January – July:

- Inspire more staycations in NI than in 2017/2018.
- Increase visitor numbers from the Republic of Ireland.
- Increase quality and quantity (minimum 400 pieces) of media coverage and digital awareness, with an average.
- PR impact score of 65 (a dedicated Tourism NI measurement we developed based on AMEC Framework).
- Increase broadcast coverage in both markets.
- Ensure over 60% of coverage includes a clear call-to-action.
- 20% of media coverage amplified digitally.
- Specific objectives: attract over 200,000 spectators (in NI/Rol) to The 148th Open, delivering 94,527 bed-nights.

Programme Planning and Strategy

Research & Planning

We undertook intense PR planning identifying key priorities, tailoring themes/messages for 2019 for each market.

In Rol, independent research revealed huge potential from NI's closest export market as over 50% of people had never visited. We interrogated the research to identify knowledge gaps (e.g. geographical awareness, how-to-book, product, value for money), perceived misconceptions (safety) and the three warmest consumer segments, Open to Ideas, Active Maximisers and Open-Minded Explorers.

In NI, we recognised that NI consumers are highly familiar and apathetic to the NI tourism message; therefore, we identified the need for reinvigoration and inspiration around their home turf.

The Idea

With 2019 a pivotal year, celebrating all that is good & amazing international achievements of NI overcoming challenging times of the past, we developed a core concept to drive the PR strategy for both markets – “We’ve Come A Long Way”. This overarching concept would work to reiterate key messages in both NI (driving civic pride) and in Rol (dispelling safety misconceptions, product, and value for money).

Tactics and Creativity

The 2019 strategy incorporated a layered content plan tapping into key motivations for each market. A range of tactics included:

1. Red-Carpet Event

To ensure a legacy, we developed a creative idea to commission a momentous, masterfully edited short film ‘We’ve Come a Long Way’, incorporating destination, international accolades, and new tourism highlights.

Accompanied by a breath-taking score composed by Belfast-born virtuoso pianist, accompanied by the Ulster Youth Orchestra.

Original, spine-tingling, poem by local poet with prose delivered by famous local voices, Ian McElhinney (Game of Thrones), Bronagh Waugh, Saoirse Monica-Jackson, Shaun Blaney.

Premiered at red-carpet style event with live orchestra at Titanic Belfast and shared moments later on social media, with attendees encouraged to share film digitally using #TheOpen #DiscoverNI.

Attended by media and stakeholders in January 2019. Over 50 media, from RTÉ to BBC, UTV with newspaper/magazine. Over 20 live interviews at the event BBC Newsline 6.30pm news live from carpet.

Carefully considered media and digital content plan. The pre-recorded film/score launched with 8pm embargo alongside an international digital content plan, with media materials/digital assets from evening shared across media and digital landscape. Key stakeholders including Tourism Ireland, Visit Britain and The R&A, amplified the campaign, based on PESO model. Features and interviews pitched and secured across Ireland to drive further coverage of the launch event.

After-dinner panel led by BBC presenter, with sports heroes Sir AP McCoy, voice of golf Peter Allis. NI greats including Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell, Darren Clarke featured at event with video links, driving civic pride message.

The Claret Jug trophy & Game of Throne Iron Throne displayed, with selfie opportunities to share across digital.

2. The Epic Journey to The 148th Open

On night, we launched HUGE #TheOpen prop to tour across NI/ROI as part of series of 8 mini-event. Dedicated PR campaign for each stop including broadcast interviews across Ireland, videography, photography, competitions, user-generated content, uniting schools, and communities in central locations. Pre-event and post-event PR for each stop.

3. What's Keeping You?

In March 2019, a tongue-in-cheek mini campaign asking over the 50% of people in ROI that haven't been North, What's Keeping You?!

- Engaged relatable character, Irish comedian Neil Delamere.
- Inspiring videography of 48-hour road trip to show 'We've Come a Long Way'.
- Ultimate Itinerary to NI from Neil: branded itinerary with step-by-step guide to how to follow Neil's footsteps, shared across owned, earned, and shared channels.
- Film premiered at a packed media event in Dublin, driving the social engagement of video on social channels.
- Amplified by Successful Media Strategy: packed broadcast tour in Dublin, feature interviews, newsworthy consumer research on taking a road-trip, media releases, listicles, exclusives, tailored geographic research, landscape photography, PR photography and videography edits.
- Targeted Owned 'What's Keeping You?' Newsletter to ROI market: content maximised in emailer to extensive owned database.

4. Broadcast Strategy

Creative features with inspiring spokespeople. TV/radio including half hour slots on primetime RTE, Virgin, BBC, ITV shows. A hosted visit for highest profile RTE's Ryan Tubridy, as well as week-long OB segment on Newstalk FM highlighting different destinations in NI each day of the week.

5. Screen Locations

As the rise of Derry Girls hit TV screens, we coordinate dedicated Game of Thrones and Derry Girls features, broadcast interviews and premiere events for the TV programmes and exhibitions in NI.

6. Digital Influencer Activity

Targeted non-paid partnerships hosting power middle/micro-influencers in ROI and NI, adhering to Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland & CAP Code guidelines.

7. Hosted impactful media FAM trips on a monthly basis

Delivery

We followed a structured approach to ensure the strategy and tactics were implemented to maximise coverage and drive digital integration. At a high-level this included:

1. Developing central strategic, creative approach.
2. Setting measurable KPIs.
3. Highly targeted media/influencer list, based on core targets/experience/insights.
4. Creative content/tailored messaging to drive results.
5. PR Calendar that incorporates the full mix of integrated communications.
6. On-going tracking, evaluation and strategic review working with Tourism NI to refine the approach.

Measurement

Total Media Outputs across NI and ROI:

- Combined Reach of media coverage amounted to 567,674,293, a 20% increase on previous year Over 1,011 pieces of coverage, over double target & 90% increase in broadcast.

- With 85% of all coverage including key call to action & 87% including inspiring visual content 25% of coverage amplified socially, with PR impact score of 87.

To illustrate digital content performance:

“We’ve Come a Long Way” Film results:

- Following launch, #TheOpen #DiscoverNI, trending No.1 & No.2 Discover NI ‘We’ve Come A Long Way’ video statistics:
 - Facebook: 90,000 views, 494 shares, 543 likes and 75 comments.
 - Twitter: 20,700 views, 305 likes, 155 retweets and 8 comments.
 - Tourism NI Twitter: 14,000 views, 160 likes YouTube: 8,513 views.
 - “What’s Keeping You Campaign”.
 - 141,500 total video views on owned channels.
 - 500,000 social post impressions.
 - 35,000 social post engagements.

Impact

- A RECORD breaking 591,000 trips taken by ROI residents, an 23% increase in previous year ROI visitor expenditure increased 20% to over £108 million.
- Domestic trips contributed £300million to economy, 11% increase on 2017. Domestic was largest segment of the market, 44% of trips.
- The Open 2019 was the quickest selling on record. Sell-out on Championship Days for the first time in history. Beamed live to 600million households, with unprecedented demand for tourism locally.
- The Open delivered £100m economic benefit to Northern Ireland

KANTAR

PARAGON



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