

#ForeverEdinburgh launched today

How do you market a capital city with an economy based on tourism after a months long lockdown in most parts of the world?

The answer appears to be that you get some professional marketing people together and ask them to come up with a plan, which is then funded by local partners.

Forever Edinburgh will remind locals what is best in Edinburgh in an effort to get local people to re-engage with the city. A new website will be launched soon with a range of graphics available for everyone involved in tourism and hospitality to use while delivering the message that Edinburgh is open for business. The digital toolkit with flexible campaign assets designed for easy integration with existing brand and marketing collateral will be available to download at www.etag.org.uk.

**FOREVER
EDINBURGH**

The City of Edinburgh Council agreed to part fund the marketing initiative by setting aside £55,000 for Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) which is leading the campaign to

get local people out and about in the city, and encourage visitors (in a sustainable way) to return to the capital. The council has spent between £1.6 and £1.8 million on mothballing the arms length company [Marketing Edinburgh](#) over the last twelve months. We understand that the balance of funding for the new marketing campaign has come from industry partners listed at the end of this article, and some private investment.

The #ForeverEdinburgh hashtag will no doubt be trending soon with professional marketers using social media channels. The new campaign will support and amplify the council's recently signed off Tourism Strategy to help Edinburgh with its innate civic pride to compete with other cities around the world. The initiative will 'inform and inspire residents and visitors alike communicating the new safety measures in place right across the city, ensuring people feel prepared and reassured'.



Edinburgh residents and visitors will be invited to share what they love most about Edinburgh using #ForeverEdinburgh. From local walks and cycle routes to favourite restaurants or the best place to get a cappuccino, ForeverEdinburgh will inspire people to get into the city again, whether that's to revisit an old gem or discover a new one. Edinburgh held the position of the top UK attraction outside London with 4 million visitors each year and employing 34,000 residents.

Local businesses are encouraged to engage with the ForeverEdinburgh campaign and be part of a united, city-wide movement with increased visibility and social engagement. The relaxation of restrictions means that there are more tourists around in Edinburgh now but major events such as festivals and conferences have been cancelled and none have yet been reorganised.

Edinburgh's economy relies on tourism, with around 20,000 jobs

at stake if there is no revival of its fortunes sometime soon. Some have in the past referred to the onslaught of over-tourism, but it will take some hard work to get even a slice of the economic benefit enjoyed by these businesses in previous years back again.

ETAG is the umbrella organisation for the tourism sector in Edinburgh, with the aim of creating a strong tourism community that works together to deliver growth for businesses, a great experience for the visitor and economic benefits for the city and Scotland as a whole.

Donald Emslie, Chair of ETAG, commented “The impact of Covid-19 and the implications for the tourism sector in Edinburgh are unlike anything we have experienced before. It was clear from the very early days of the crisis that Edinburgh’s tourism sector was going to be particularly hard hit, putting many jobs and businesses at risk. It was also clear that a new approach to promoting the city’s tourism offer would be required, making public health issues the top priority to ensure the safety of residents, visitors and those working in the industry.

“A key challenge is also the rapidly changing situation, so rather than create a traditional tourism marketing campaign, the #foreveredinburgh initiative is designed to ‘inform and inspire’ people and importantly create a platform which tourism businesses of all types and sizes can be part of. ETAG recently surveyed the city’s tourism sector and this demonstrated that their collective social media reach is over 3 million followers, so working together and harnessing this huge resource to promote the city creates a very strong voice for the city.

“ForeverEdinburgh will also encourage residents and visitors themselves to share what they love about the city, creating a genuine ‘Team Edinburgh’ effort to support the many jobs and businesses that rely on visitor income and contribute to the

wider city economy, and so we are hoping as many people as possible will get behind the Forever Edinburgh campaign.”

Adam McVey, Leader of City of Edinburgh Council said “There is no underestimating how important tourism and hospitality is to Edinburgh, whether that’s in terms of our city’s economy, local businesses and jobs or our residents’ wellbeing and enjoyment. We’re lucky to have such an incredibly vibrant and varied offering at our fingertips – in part driven by the high levels of visitors that our beautiful city attracts – and we need to act urgently to provide support to our local businesses and help build the industry back to be as sustainable and resilient as possible. At the same time, we have to carefully balance this support with ensuring that Edinburghers can enjoy these businesses safely and without compromising their own health or that of others.

“Like all of our recovery efforts, we’re taking a Team Edinburgh approach to backing and implementing the campaign and we’re confident that by working together we can encourage Edinburghers to rediscover parts of their city safely and fall in love with it all over again. We’ll not only see the buzz that we’ve missed so much return to our streets, we’ll also see a positive impact on our local high streets across the city to boost local business and help protect jobs.”



The clock on The Balmoral Hotel remained at 6.25 for much of the lockdown until the clock could be fixed. Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

Neil Ellis, Chair Edinburgh Hotels Association, said “The Edinburgh Hotels Association as a #ForeverEdinburgh partner, is grateful to ETAG for spearheading on this very much welcome and needed campaign for our amazing capital city. Our members stand ready, as they always have, to safely welcome guests from near and far for that no doubt, well-earned city break.”

The Lane Agency with clients such as The Edinburgh

International Book Festival, the Rainbows Gallery for key workers, Simon Howie and The Quaich Project under its belt was given the brief to start a campaign today, in the week that the International Festival usually begins. They were also behind the hugely successful This is Edinburgh campaign in a similar bid to run 'a campaign that would engage with residents and provoke reappraisal of all the fantastic things that the city centre has to offer'. They have been teasing with a few posts on social media, like this one outside Bonkers on Hanover Street, taken in the last couple of weeks.

*A sneak peek of a shoot for an exciting campaign that's launching really soon. Watch this space...
pic.twitter.com/SdLsjPbr62*

– The Lane Agency (@thelaneagency) [July 30, 2020](#)

Chris Bruce, Director of The Lane Agency, said "We've worked on City of Edinburgh campaigns in the past, however this one was more poignant and important than ever. We've all experienced eerily silent offices and shops and share a desire to see Edinburgh safely returning to the vibrant, buzzing city we know. It has been a privilege working on a campaign that will reintroduce the city to its residents and visitors."

ForeverEdinburgh partners include:

- ETAG
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Edinburgh Hotels Association
- University of Edinburgh
- Edinburgh Airport
- Essential Edinburgh
- Edinburgh Capital Group
- The List
- City Cabs

- Edinburgh Trams
- Signature Pubs

Already, over the weekend Edinburgh has been a focal point with The Edinburgh International Festival reminding anyone here that there is a vibrant cultural community just itching to get back on a stage, even without a live audience. #MyLightShinesOn has revealed theatres with their foyer lights on, and search lights trained into the sky have danced for us.



Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com