

# Marketing Plan 2010-11

January 2010

## Introduction

Throughout 2009, the recession had a significant impact on people's travel plans both in the UK, Europe and across the world.

On the positive side, much was said in the media about the rise of the "staycation" and "barbecue summer", and the £/Euro exchange rate favoured visitors coming to the UK from the Eurozone region. These factors, and more, helped to maintain a healthy number of leisure visitors to Brighton & Hove throughout 2009; particularly during the middle half of the year. However, this positivism had to be balanced against a very difficult trading backdrop which saw a national drop in room rates and significant declines in business travel.

The economic situation will of course continue to have an impact on tourism in 2010 and beyond and VisitBrighton Marketing plans for the coming year will look to capitalise on short to medium term opportunities whilst delivering activity that will continue to benefit the city in the longer term.

VisitBrighton will continue to maintain marketing of the city in line with our established brand guidelines which champion Brighton & Hove as a "free-thinking city" which is 'lively', 'European (cosmopolitan)', 'Free' and with 'Energy'. It is interesting to note that both media are increasingly using our brand values directly in articles and features, and visitors have recognised these attributes to the city in their responses to the Visitor Survey 2009.

Throughout 2010/11 we will also look to ensure a focus on our marketing activities celebrates the city as a truly 'fun' and 'friendly' place to be – again, both media and visitors have identified these values as being key to the city's attractiveness as a destination to visit.

The remainder of this plan gives an overview of the activities we will undertake covering nine main areas. Whilst these areas have been separated out here for clarity, it is important to note that in reality they are all symbiotic. It is also true that whilst this plan offers a platform to work from, it is flexible and specific activities may be increased, decreased, introduced or removed to fit market conditions.

## **1. Press & Public Relations**

The delivery of press & PR is crucial to the work of VB Marketing and will remain a cornerstone of our activity throughout the coming year.

2009 was a great year for generating positive media coverage on the city in both the UK and overseas, with the work of VB helping to generate coverage with an Equivalent Advertising Value (EVA) of over £2.5 million. In 2010-11, we will look to deliver even greater levels of media coverage in our key target markets and sectors via:

- Maintaining a contract with a specialist tourism PR agency to deliver coverage in the UK leisure market.
- Developing our recently formed relationship with Davies Tanner PR to deliver specific coverage on the city in the conference and events sector. For 2010-11 this activity will focus on the national association market and will be led by an overarching campaign entitled “*See Brighton through business eyes*”. (See ‘Conference Marketing’ section for details).
- Continuing our successful relationship with KPRN to deliver PR for the city in Germany, our key overseas market. (The 2009 Visitor Survey showed that Germany maintained its position as the most popular source country for overseas visitors to the city).
- Extending our relationship with KPRN to start delivering dedicated PR for the city in Austria and Switzerland. Residents from these two nations have a high propensity to travel and there is also a synergy with the media landscape in these nations with Germany, enabling KPRN to extend into these territories effectively and efficiently.

Our aim for 2010 is to deliver total media coverage with an EVA of over £2.75 million. We will also look to achieve ‘feature’ coverage in:

- 25 UK national leisure titles (daily papers, magazines, TV or radio)
- 10 German national leisure titles
- 5 conference / event titles
- 5 Austria / Swiss leisure titles

## **2. Media Partnerships**

In 2009 we worked with a number of media partners, including Time Out and easyJet, to deliver printed items or advertorial coverage for the city.

Given the success of the relationship with Time Out and positive feedback from Partners and visitors, we are currently in discussion with Time Out to extend our media relationship with them in the coming year. Exact details of the partnership cannot be announced just yet, but we are aiming to deliver a series of targeted and timely pieces that will resonate with our important London based audience. We aim to announce full details in January 2010.

### 3. Online Marketing

Alongside press & PR and media partnerships, throughout 2010-11 much focus will be on the delivery of effective online communications to potential visitors. This will take the form of:

- Continued development of [www.visitbrighton.com](http://www.visitbrighton.com), with the focus on delivering inspirational & informed content and effective design whilst making the site more 'bookable' for potential visitors. Section development will continue to take place with initial focus on the gay & lesbian site section to tie into our international marketing. (See 'Regional, National and Trade Partnerships' section for more details).
- Delivery of timely consumer e-communications to potential visitors, with the focus on promoting 'triggers' for visiting.
- Review and development of the channel sites linked to the main site. The initial focus will be on the update of the Groups site and German foreign language sub site.
- Use of social media to stir interest in the city. This may involve the delivery of unusual and interactive online content to stimulate visits to [www.visitbrighton.com](http://www.visitbrighton.com).

### 4. Seasonal & Thematic Campaigns

Throughout 2010, we will deliver a series of thematic campaigns that will link into both our press & PR and online marketing activity.

The schedule for these campaigns throughout 2010 is:

- **New Year, New You** (Jan – Mar 2010): this campaign will champion Brighton & Hove as a healthy destination.
- **Brighton: Festival City** (April – Jun 2010): this campaign will celebrate the main cluster of festivals and events taking place throughout May and the early summer.
- **Summer in the City: Life's a Beach 2** (July – Sept 2010): this campaign will promote the joys of visiting Brighton & Hove in the summer holiday season.

- **Brighton on Film – Brighton Rock** (Sept – Oct 2010): this campaign will tie into the release of the film 'Brighton Rock' and also will celebrate the city's historical association with the film making industry.
- **Christmas in the City** (Nov – Dec 2010): this campaign will champion Brighton & Hove as a place for a pre-Christmas break.

## 5. Regional, National and Trade Partnerships

In 2010-11 we will continue to develop our relationships with Tourism South East, Visit England and Visit Britain to ensure that Brighton is included within regional and national marketing campaigns & communications. This will include:

- Maintain involvement in the TSE 'Time for Us' campaign running in three phases (Feb – April 2010, Sept - Oct 2010 and Feb – March 2011)
- Inclusion as a key partner in a TSE led campaign in Germany - this will hopefully include a South East England supplement in a national German media title and a trade mission.
- Participation in Visit England consumer campaigns\* – these will include a series of advertorials on the city in supplements in national media titles.
- New partnership with Visit Britain to be part of their US marketing campaign focussing on LGBT travellers – this will include being a featured destination on a LGBT campaign website created by Visit Britain US office, inclusion in consumer e-comms to the US LGBT audience and participation in the press & PR activity (including a number of press trips).

\* *Subject to funding via LABGI.*

April this year also sees the national tourism awards - the 'Enjoy England for Excellence Awards' - being hosted in the city for the first time. VisitBrighton will be working with Visit England to maximise the benefits of this event to the city.

In 2010/11 we will also look to establish stronger links with key commercial organisations that have an interest in bringing visitors to the city. Initial focus in this respect will be train operators, FCC and Southern, and easyJet.

## 6. Conference Marketing

In 2010-11 we will be working with our Conference Sales team and appointed PR agency Davies Tanner to promote the city to this valuable market sector. Our focus will be on the 'Association' sector and will fall under the umbrella banner of "See Brighton through business eyes". This activity will include:

- Delivery of PR and press visits by conference / business media
- Promotion of our attendance at national and international business exhibitions / trade shows
- Continuation and development of our quarterly dedicated Conference e-newsletter
- Growth of our business database to generate new leads
- Creation of a new bespoke 'Conference' destination video
- Establish a direct communication programme with delegates that have attended conferences in the city to encourage repeat visits
- Growth of the conference led image library for use in proposals, correspondence and sales activity.

## **7. Festival and Event Partnerships**

We will be working with a number of the major festivals and events in the city throughout 2010-11.

Brighton & Hove's festival and event culture is a key aspect of the city's brand and our collaborative work with the organisers of the main festivals will aim to maximise the opportunities for growing visitors numbers to the city during these periods both in 2010 and in the coming years.

Full details of our collaborative working will be announced in due course.

## **8. Foreign Language Students**

Throughout 2010/11 we will continue to support the work of language schools across the city through promotional activities to this sector. This work will tie into other areas of this plan including foreign language sub-site and video / photographic development.

## **9. Video / Photographic / Brand Development**

To ensure that we are able to represent the city effectively and provide up-to-date images to media and Partners, throughout the coming year we will continue to undertake photography across the city.

In the coming year we will also continue to commission filming of the city so that we build up a 'year round' library of footage that can be used to support our marketing campaigns and online activities.

We will also look to continue the evolution of the VisitBrighton brand to ensure it remains relevant to our potential visitors.