



## **MARKETING SOCIETY STAR AWARDS**

### **4.5 TOURISM, LEISURE AND SPORT**

HOW WE HELPED HISTORIC SCOTLAND TO CREATE THE BEST DAYS EVER



# HISTORIC SCOTLAND BESTDAYSEVER

## INTRODUCTION

If you live in Scotland, chances are you know a site or location that's managed by Historic Scotland. You may even walk past them on your way to work. From Edinburgh Castle to Skara Brae in the very north, you can find Historic Scotland just about anywhere around the country.

On the surface then, awareness isn't a problem. But in 2015 Historic Scotland wanted to turn general awareness into engagement. Hundreds of historical sites and a full year's calendar of events offered a real opportunity to provide great experiences to families across Scotland, but this potential needed to be unleashed.

This is where RAPP Edinburgh came in. We did our homework and gathered real insight to create an innovative multi-channel campaign built around our key proposition; Historic Scotland membership offers brilliant experiences that can be experienced again and again. And again...

And so, throughout 2015, RAPP Edinburgh and Historic Scotland helped thousands of people across Scotland create and share their Best Days Ever.





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## 1. AMBITION AND CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES

From Day 1, the challenge set by Historic Scotland was both ambitious and clear. Their 2015 marketing campaign was to be re-focused on membership – specifically, promoting the benefits that it brings, particularly to families in Scotland. Additionally, the campaign needed to be adaptive for Historic Scotland's events catalogue, involving everything from a full day of Scottish history featuring Roman soldiers and a Spitfire aircraft, to Christmas in a Renaissance castle. The campaign also needed to have strong adaptability across multiple communications channels, particularly in digital platforms.

The business objectives were tough; Historic Scotland wanted to increase membership by 6,000, and site attendance by 200,000.

Our campaign was significantly different from what Historic Scotland had executed before. Previous work had not placed regular emphasis on membership, with the main focus on events, and only events. We needed to use our budget effectively, clearly promoting an overarching membership message that would drive customers towards true engagement with Historic Scotland, whilst also increasing attendance at events, as it represented a major selling point.

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## 2. STRATEGIC THINKING AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Our focus was on creating a high-precision creative platform. To do this we started by forging a strong campaign team, collaborating with the client to gain a deep knowledge of their organisation, their activities, and their audience. Integrating with the media agency Carat was also critical, to ensure a unified direction in everything we did.

We delved into annual reports, customer surveys and consumer research to extract real insight on how best to meet our objectives. We studied year-on-year visitor numbers, to understand trends and where our audience was most likely to engage. We also examined Historic Scotland's existing social media channels, to recognise how best to leverage this important channel.

Naturally we examined other heritage organisations, but also considered the leisure market as a whole; today's consumers, and particularly families, face numerous options, are usually time starved and looking to get the most out of their money. So we factored in locations like cinemas and zoos, learning both how they marketed to families, and how they promoted membership. Depth interviews were conducted, to see how our target audience viewed Historic Scotland, as well as their general leisure behaviours.



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## 2. STRATEGIC THINKING AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Our diligence paid off – we distilled our findings into 3 key truths:

- The leisure market, and heritage in particular, is an extremely competitive environment. Our research indicated that people did not interact as regularly with historic sites as they did with other activities, such as cinema or theatre
- Membership represented a great value compared to industry norms like cinema; the cost for unlimited access to Historic Scotland sites for a family was just over £7 a month
- There is a strong affinity within Scotland for the historic environment. So our task was clear – we needed to translate this grassroots positivity for Historic Scotland's work into a desire for membership.

With all this valuable research, we generated our creative positioning: **the never-ending potential of Historic Scotland membership. Because, with membership, there's always the next adventure to look forward to. And the one after, and many more after that.**

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## 3. ORIGINALITY, CREATIVITY, EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

For membership, our creative approach brought our proposition to life to create a powerful campaign that was a complete departure from earlier, events-centric work.

We wanted our audience to consider visiting Historic Scotland as an recurring adventure, far more than just one fun day out. So we highlighted the countless experiences to be had with Historic Scotland, and positioned membership as the key to continuing the enjoyment. We encouraged visitors to join with Historic Scotland in creating experiences that ranked among their 'best ever'. And so, this was our central tagline - #bestdaysever. We juxtaposed history with the present day, aligning the majesty or drama of a given time or location with the events and experiences to be found there in 2015.

In promoting membership, we created a fresh approach for Historic Scotland's social strategy. We used our insight to pinpoint the exact audience segments to target, and tailored our creative accordingly. Different creative executions were tested against each other, to determine whether a timely approach would be most effective, or a direct sales message. All in all, our precision based strategy allowed us to optimise and post the most effective execution to generate deep and efficient engagement.



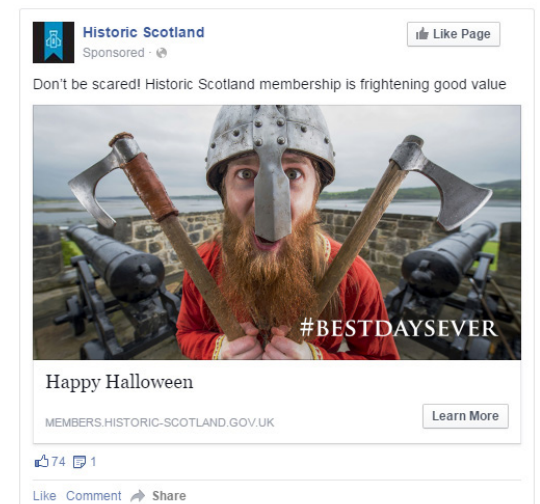
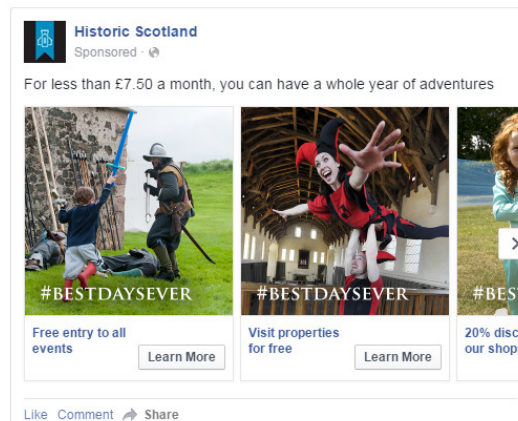
Bestdaysever.co.uk

# HISTORIC SCOTLAND BESTDAYSEVER

## 3. ORIGINALITY, CREATIVITY, EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

To stay timely and relevant, our targeted ads ran during key times in the family calendar, like school holidays and Halloween. And, the messaging of the ads was tailored to fit the time of year; we tapped into real insights, like the panic of parents trying to entertain bored kids during the school holidays, and referenced Historic Scotland sites and events as the prime solution to this common family problem.

To provide our audience with a single outlet for information pertaining to our campaign, we built a dedicated Best Days Ever microsite, using video, fun facts and social to drive engagement. We also deployed Facebook carousel ads to demonstrate the multiple benefits of membership, and developed radio ads that used the idea of historical storytelling to build an engaging journey to membership. This integrated, multichannel approach created a campaign that was adaptable, but retained a strong membership message throughout.





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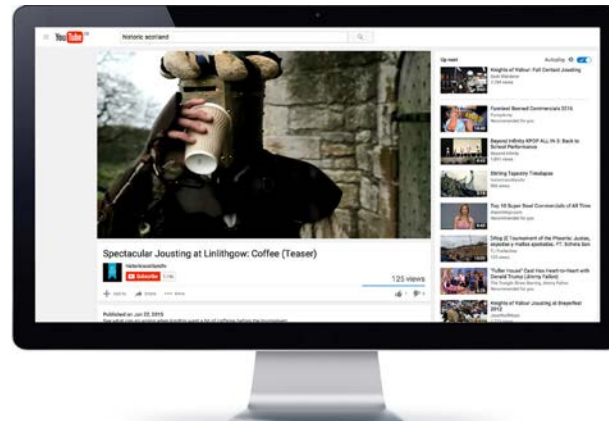
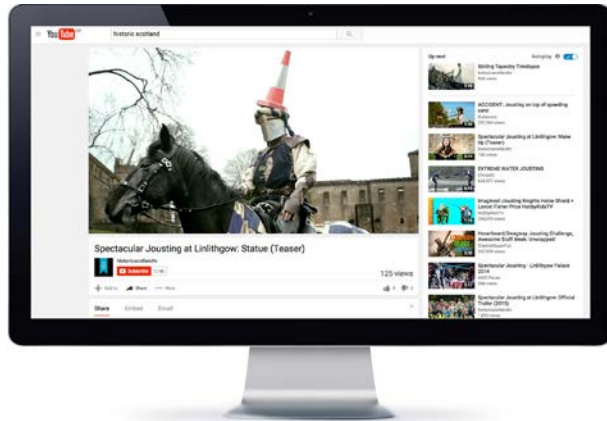
In promoting events, we continued our overall creative proposition; with Historic Scotland's full calendar of events, there's always the next adventure to look forward to. We also let the fun and enjoyment of the events shine through. Our social media work focused on fun and quirky content including a series of humorous, shareable teaser videos. Events teasers were also created, to provide direct snapshots of the events that quickly engaged and created buzz with our audience. This strategy meant we could serve a variety of content, in an easily digestible format that made our voice heard in a competitive digital landscape.

Events also demonstrated that our creative had legs. For each of the main events we created a full series of banner ads, while tailoring our creative for local media spots in a variety of channels. We also executed dynamic content as the campaign progressed, filming testimonial videos that were later used for social content.





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Facebook teaser videos we produced:

[youtube.com/watch?v=vAd45CaUrck](https://youtube.com/watch?v=vAd45CaUrck)

[youtube.com/watch?v=bdYGKhJO95U](https://youtube.com/watch?v=bdYGKhJO95U)

[youtube.com/watch?v=ldK1WRzfJl0](https://youtube.com/watch?v=ldK1WRzfJl0)

# HISTORIC SCOTLAND BESTDAYSEVER

## 4. SCALE AND EVIDENCE OF RESULTS

At the close of our 2015 campaign, our results spoke for themselves. Our work was instrumental in Historic Scotland not only meeting their targets, but significantly exceeding them. With the client looking for increased membership sales, we delivered. They witnessed **record-breaking** sales of new memberships, **which grew 15% year-on year, exceeding the target for 2014-15 by over 4,000**. Almost all growth was seen online – **sales growth of 44%** was a fine testament to our digital campaign. **Membership income increased 7%** on the previous year, almost double its expansion in 2013-14.

Events and attendance results were equally phenomenal. Overall attendance at Historic Scotland sites increased, with **final numbers more than double the original target**. And for events in particular, **footfall at the 5 key events exceeded targets by 10%**.

# 10%

## INCREASE IN FOOTFALL RATES AT THE 5 KEY EVENT

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## 4. SCALE AND EVIDENCE OF RESULTS

Our social campaign succeeded in driving awareness and engagement. The three main campaigns – supporting events in summer, autumn and at Christmas – generated around **10.42 million impressions and over 58,000 clicks**. Our teaser ads were a big hit, gaining a combined **reach of 62,500 on Facebook alone**. These results were made all the more impressive given the total campaign spend of under £18,000.

The feedback from satisfied customers was immense, from social media comments to the impressive increase in membership. Historic Scotland have been delighted with the work too, and has extended the partnership with RAPP Edinburgh into 2016. For these happy customers, and many more, we truly created some of the Best Days Ever with Historic Scotland.

**“I love your fun with knights!  
More! More!!”** Elizabeth

**“Fantastic – definitely for  
my next trip!”** Jacqueline

**“Lol! These ads are great!!  
Keep it up.”** Roberta

