

SHAPE SOCIAL MEDIA CASE STUDY

New Start-Up micro tourism business – South West Scotland Tours

Craig Murray, business owner

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthWestScotlandTours/>

South West Scotland Tours, a new start up business located in Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere, provides one- to three-day high-quality guided experiences within the Biosphere and beyond for groups of up to seven people. It offers wildlife spotting, industrial heritage and historical tours with itineraries customised to suit all needs and abilities.

The use of Social Media in small tourism company start-ups.

When you're starting up any small business with limited funds for advertising and marketing then the social media platforms are probably the best place to turn to try and get your brand out there. I'm going to try and cover two of the most popular social media that I have been using since I started South West Scotland Tours after completing the Biosphere Experience Guide Training: Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook

Facebook is, in my opinion, the best social media platform for the widest interaction. There are so many tourism groups that it's easy to join 30 or 40 and feed into your own page from there. Some don't like advertising, so expect a 30% ban rate if you share directly from your page. A way around that is to share from your personal account and engage with people who respond.

Ask your friends, family etc. to like and share your page the day you set it up then do it again every six months or so, it'll build up your page's profile over time. Don't be scared to ask people to do this.

Make sure your messages are turned on and set up an automated reply with another point of contact e.g. an e-mail address.

Use all sorts of eye-catching images. There's nothing wrong with phone snapshots, and, on the flip side, there's nothing wrong with manipulated images; a mix of both isn't a bad thing at all.

Interact with your post. If people comment, chat with them.

Instagram

Instagram, by nature, is a more visual platform than Facebook, with it being centred around photos rather than written script or captions. This leads to a tendency for people to over

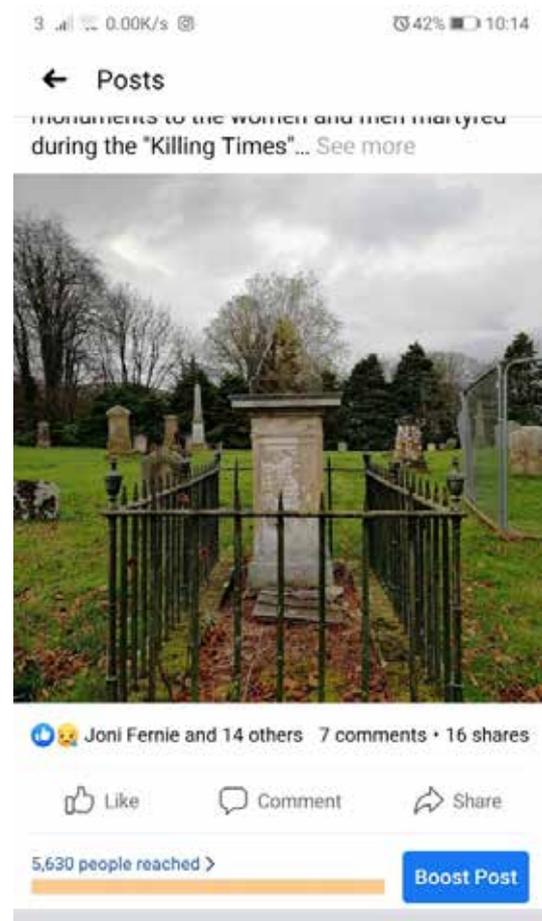
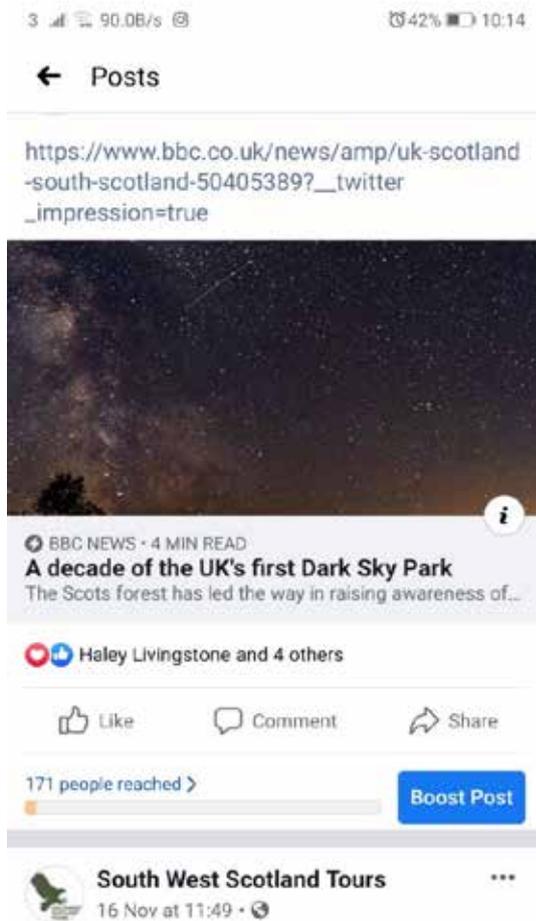
manipulate and filter images. Don't. A good, natural image can stand out more on this platform than one that been photoshopped to death and won't lead to disappointment when your customers see the real thing. Try telling a story – use 'stories' to promote up-coming events

It's the easiest platform to sell on at the moment, with business pages being able to add a "shop" button with very few followers.

The use of hashtags can extend your reach four or five-fold, but keep them relevant to your post. There is no point adding #phone to your post when your initial picture is of a river.

Again, interact with your post. Instagram algorithms appear to prefer longer than three-word replays or comments.

The first picture is a post that I put up on my own Facebook page without sharing. It reached 171 people in a week



The second picture is a Facebook post that I shared in two groups; that one reached over 5000 people in two days.