

14 August 2024

Dear

ATISN 20775 FOI request about influencers

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 19 July. You asked for:

A range of detail on influencer activity undertaken to promote Wales, including costs, numbers of influencers and criteria around selection and how activity is evaluated. We have responded to each of the 11 specific queries below.

Our response

1. The total number of influencers who were paid to promote Wales as a travel destination within the last three years.

- Campaigns (e.g. relating to specific campaign activity/paid digital) – 9 influencers
- Content (e.g. for web and social media) – 7 (creating 13 films as part of 'Ar Gyfer Cymru' (*Created for Wales*) to be hosted on the Visit Wales YouTube channel, social posts and long term web articles for Visit Wales. The agreement also includes a different edit of this content to be published on each of the creators' YouTube and social channels).

2. The total amount of money paid to these influencers for promoting Wales as a travel destination within the same period.

- Campaigns - £17,427.15
- Content - £37,500

3. A breakdown of the amounts paid to each individual influencer, if possible.

We are unable to disclose a breakdown by individual influencer as this is commercially sensitive; however the total numbers of influencers and costs are covered in items 1 and 2 above.

4. What factors are considered to decide if the campaigns were successful?

To evaluate performance, we use a measurement framework which is based around four key metrics: visibility, social engagement, audience sentiment and site engagement. Using a combination of manual tracking and automated social media data collection, we collect data and analyse performance to measure the impact of the influencer partnerships.

Visibility is measured by number of followers, uploads, impressions and video views.

Engagement is measured across all channels by total reactions, likes, comments, shares, saves and story sticker taps received on posts and engagement rate.

Audience sentiment is measured by comment sentiment analysis and comment intent analysis.

5. What percentage of the campaigns were deemed to be successful?

We choose influencers carefully (see item 6 below) to ensure the highest possible rate of success with each piece of activity and we continually evaluate our approach and take learnings from each piece of activity.

6. How do you decide what influencers you choose to work with. Is there a criteria?

For every campaign burst the themes and audiences are identified through our initial insight work. We then crossmatch influencers who fit the focus topics and audience demographic. Using influencer marketing as part of our marketing mix enables us to connect with relevant in-market and pre-emptive audiences by delivering key brand messaging via trustworthy third-party voices. This can often be more impactful for consumers compared to messaging that is delivered directly from the brand.

For content influencers, creators are identified that have a particular niche audience interest where an independent trusted voice has additional credibility, this ranges from accessible tourism considerations through to activities such as walking itineraries. This approach strengthens our SEO website content delivery by publishing allowing us to publish searchable articles around each of these interest areas.

Specifically, I request the following records in relation to influencers who have been paid to promote Wales in the last 3 years.

1. Contracts and Agreements: Copies of all contracts and agreements between the tourist board and the influencers including terms of payment and duration of the agreement.

All campaign influencer activity is managed on our behalf by our incumbent agencies who are responsible for all contract management. Content creator contracts are commercially sensitive to each influencer/business and cannot be shared.

2. Payment Records: Detailed records of all payments made to the influencers including dates, amounts, and purposes of the payments.

If there are fees for campaign and content influencers we manage payment through our incumbent agencies, we may cover direct costs to tourism accommodation, activities or attractions at a non-discounted rate. All fees are agreed with agencies and creators prior to commissioning, and those aggregated costs are included in item 1 above.

3. Performance Metrics: Reports or analyses evaluating the impact of the influencer's work - on tourism metrics, such as visitor numbers, engagement statistics, and return on investment.

Annually we undertake (via a third-party research agency) a significant conversion research piece to assess the effectiveness of our integrated (so wider than solely individual influencer activity) marketing campaigns. i.e. from ecrm and paid digital to TV/streaming and other consumer touchpoints. This is used to determine outcomes such as engagement and ROI and the influence that has been achieved in inspiring holidays to Wales. [Conversion research \(re-contact surveys\) is published on the Welsh Government website.](#) In the context of purely influencers, each piece of activity is planned and evaluated according to specific outcomes as detailed in the first section of items (#6). We adapt activity month by month to reflect campaign and content priorities and audiences, and this includes consideration of engagement levels.

4. Communication Records: Copies of all communications, including emails and memos, between the tourist board and paid influencers/their employees/their representatives, concerning the partnerships and payment arrangements.

As referenced in item 2 in this section, we do not deal directly with influencers on aspects such as fees as this is agreed in advance and facilitated by our incumbent agencies.

Where we do, on occasion, communicate on email direct with an influencer it may be with regard to a query on for example, specific location information.

5. Complete Communication History: Where possible, the entire sequence of communications from the first to the last interaction with the influencers who have had paid partnerships with the tourist board, including the influencer's proposal/s and media kit/s, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the negotiation and agreement process.”

For campaigns our digital agency will source relevant influencers based on our content theme audiences, analytic reports and campaign objectives. All contractual negotiations are undertaken on our behalf by our agency. Content influencers meet a set requirement for being part of 'Ar Gyfer Cymru'.

For clarity, by “influencers,” I refer to individuals who have a significant following on social media platforms (such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, etc.) and who were specifically contracted to promote the UK as a travel destination.

If this request is too wide or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me so I can refine it. I would prefer to receive the information electronically.

Thank you for your attention to this request. I look forward to your response within the statutory 20 working day period.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,