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**Developing Inbound Wine Tourism Toolkit**

# **Taking England's Wine Tourism to the World - an inbound toolkit**

**1st Edition**

# Welcome to taking England's wine tourism to the world.

## Your introductory guide to inbound wine tourism in England

This guide has been produced by VisitBritain/VisitEngland – the national tourism agency responsible for building England's tourism product, raising Britain's profile worldwide, increasing the volume and value of tourism exports and developing England's and Britain's visitor economy.

This guide is designed to provide you with the basic tools, knowledge and key contacts needed to build your wine tourism offering and enter them into the tourism export market. This information, combined with advice and assistance from tourism associations, industry bodies and tourism operators will help you make fully informed business decisions and will put you on the path to inbound tourism know-how.

### What's in the toolkit?

This toolkit is divided into three key sections to help build your understanding and capability around attracting inbound visitors and working within the travel distribution system.

A summary of the content for each section follows:

#### Section 1:

##### Laying the foundations: Why get involved?

- Setting the Scene
- Know your markets
- Our inbound visitors
- Tourist industry research

#### Section 2:

##### Setting up your tourism experiences: What you need to have.

- Wine sales and tourism
- Creating compelling experiences
- Mapping your visitor journey
- Selecting key inbound markets

#### Section 3:

##### Securing inbound business: How to make it work?

- The travel distribution system
- Product promotion
- Using your marketing content right
- Pricing for distribution
- Tourism talk and acronyms

This Handbook is designed to help you develop your inbound wine tourism business and make informed business decisions. Information provided should be used as a guide only, and any facts/figures are correct at the time of publication. It is recommended you seek further professional advice from relevant industry associations during the course of developing your inbound wine tourism plan.

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# Laying the Foundations: Why get involved?



# Getting started.

## 1. The Tourism Landscape

### What is the visitor economy?

The visitor economy refers to the economic activities generated by visitors when they travel to a specific destination. It encompasses all the spending and transactions associated with tourism, including expenditures on accommodations, dining, transportation, attractions, entertainment, shopping, and other services. The visitor economy plays a significant role in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and supporting various industries across England and the world.

### What sets it apart from tourism?

Each sector mentioned above contributes to the economy in its own way. While tourism is all about what leisure and business travelers spend, the visitor economy looks at how visitors impact local, regional and national economies through their spending. This spending boosts businesses across England and helps them grow, leading to more investments and job opportunities.

### How might it be advantageous to you?

Tourism has the potential to significantly benefit all areas, particularly rural communities, because of the money tourists inject into local economies. Consider the restaurants and various businesses in towns and cities – many rely on tourist spending to thrive. The same goes for numerous small-town enterprises. Retailers, especially, see a notable increase in sales thanks to tourist expenditures, with wine being a popular item among visitors.



## 2. Introduction to inbound tourism

### What is inbound tourism?

Inbound tourism covers all international tourist traffic entering a country. It is also known as 'export tourism' (England is the export), because although tourists enjoy their travel experience within England, they are paying for it using foreign currency.

### Benefits of inbound tourism

- International travel patterns are not focused around weekends and may level out seasonality problems
- Spreading risk across a range of international markets can minimise the impact of any changes in the domestic or a single international travel market (ensures you don't have all your eggs in one basket!)
- Tapping into inbound distribution networks opens up new forms of distribution and gives millions of potential travellers around the world easy access to your product
- International travellers provide a higher spend, on average, 3.1 times more than domestic travellers on each trip (2023 IPS\* figures)
- Booking lead times are usually longer, allowing better business planning
- The opportunity to meet people from a range of cultures and backgrounds can be extremely rewarding – many life-long friendships get established from around the globe!

### Why is inbound tourism so important?

As a nation, tourism is worth £127 billion annually to the UK economy, employing 3.1 million people across the UK and boosting economic growth across its nations and regions. Inbound visitors to the UK spent £31.7 billion in 2023, and £26.6 billion of that was spent in England.

For you, inbound tourism gives the opportunity to be part of this, to diversify your markets, and access new areas of business that may balance out regular domestic business patterns.

### What is the difference between inbound and domestic tourism?

Domestic tourism currently accounts for approximately 77% of all tourism value in England. International visitors to England make up the remaining 23%.

International tourists usually travel for longer and spend more money than domestic travellers – hence the appeal!

The vast majority of English operators concentrate on marketing their product domestically and then market to international travellers once they have secured a foothold at home.

While marketing your product to international travellers has many benefits, there are a number of differences between domestic and international tourism markets and it is important to understand these and tailor your business accordingly.

## What do I need to consider in advance?

Overseas markets are very competitive. Not only are you competing against companies that provide similar products, you are also competing against other international destinations.

Always compare your product offering internationally. What do you consider when you are choosing a holiday overseas – what destination and what experiences are you going to enjoy and why, what stands out and for what reason, how do you compare?

Now reverse this and consider how your product would stand up with the same analysis.

Selling your region, and educating travellers about your destination and its attributes is often the first step in selling your product. You will need to commit to selling the destination and then your product to entice international travellers. Putting the destination on the map comes first.

For example, if you operate walking tours in Norfolk, then it makes sense to work with others to raise awareness of Norfolk as a destination, in the first instance. This way consumers can understand where it is, how to get there and why it might appeal to them. This sets the scene for your walking tours. Working with destinations, gateways, and existing touring routes make this possible.

Successful inbound marketing requires a large investment of time and money and is based on establishing and maintaining good business relationships. In contrast to the domestic market, it may take several years before you earn a return on investment for your international marketing. Therefore, it is important to have a long-term marketing strategy when considering the inbound market and consistently maintain the relationships.

Domestic Market	International Market
Travellers are familiar with England	Travellers may have limited knowledge of England
Lower marketing costs	Higher marketing costs
Traveller needs have many commonalities across segments	Traveller needs vary in each market and segment
Distribution system is consistent across the one market and operators often deal with consumers directly	Distribution systems vary in each market
Simpler, short break style itineraries	Complex itineraries
No language or cultural barriers	Language and cultural differences
Easy market to enter and return on investment established more quickly	Long term investment to recoup costs

## How do I know who is travelling to England?

Visitor arrival details are published on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). VisitBritain/VisitEngland publishes forecasts for UK inbound travel twice a year.

The details are captured in the International Passenger Survey (IPS) – a continuous survey which covers all major air, sea and tunnel ports, providing detailed information on the numbers and types of visits made by people travelling to and from the UK.

Each year VisitBritain/VisitEngland sponsors questions on the International Passenger Survey to understand more about visitors to the UK.

All results are published on the VisitBritain/VisitEngland research and insights pages. You can search by market, date range, region, sub region and towns to look for the level of information to help you understand tourism trends to your area of England.

For more information: [www.visitbritain.org/research-insights](https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights)



# Know the markets?



## 1. England's Key Markets

### What are the key markets for England?

VisitBritain/VisitEngland is active in 22 markets and has 4 major regional hubs worldwide:

- Europe
- The Americas
- Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa
- China and North East Asia

As the tourism partner for The GREAT Britain Campaign, VisitBritain works closely with government department and agencies, including Department for International Trade, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Foreign & Commonwealth Office and British Council. Our marketing activity is primarily focused on those markets in which GREAT is active.

These key markets for 2024 are as follows:

USA	Qatar	Italy	Spain
Germany	France	Netherlands	China
UEA	Australia	Canada	India
Saudi Arabia			

We undertake activity in other international markets too from our network of 21 offices.

See for more details see [www.visitbritain.org/who-we-are](https://www.visitbritain.org/who-we-are)

### Why is it important to understand these markets and to decide which markets to target?

In order to succeed in an international market, it is important to tailor your business and product to your customers' requirements.

By understanding how your region and product might appeal to the international market, you can tailor your product, marketing and promotional activities to attract new business.

Understanding your consumer target markets will guide the development of your product, how you price your product in the marketplace, where you offer your product for sale and how you promote your product to consumers.

A key point to remember is don't try to enter every market at once. Select your markets carefully and take the time to plan your approach, allocating your resources to the markets which will generate the greatest return.

### Where can I gain further information on each market?

VisitBritain/VisitEngland produces extensive market profiles on each market.

Inbound market Insights can be found at [www.visitbritain.org/research-insights](https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights)

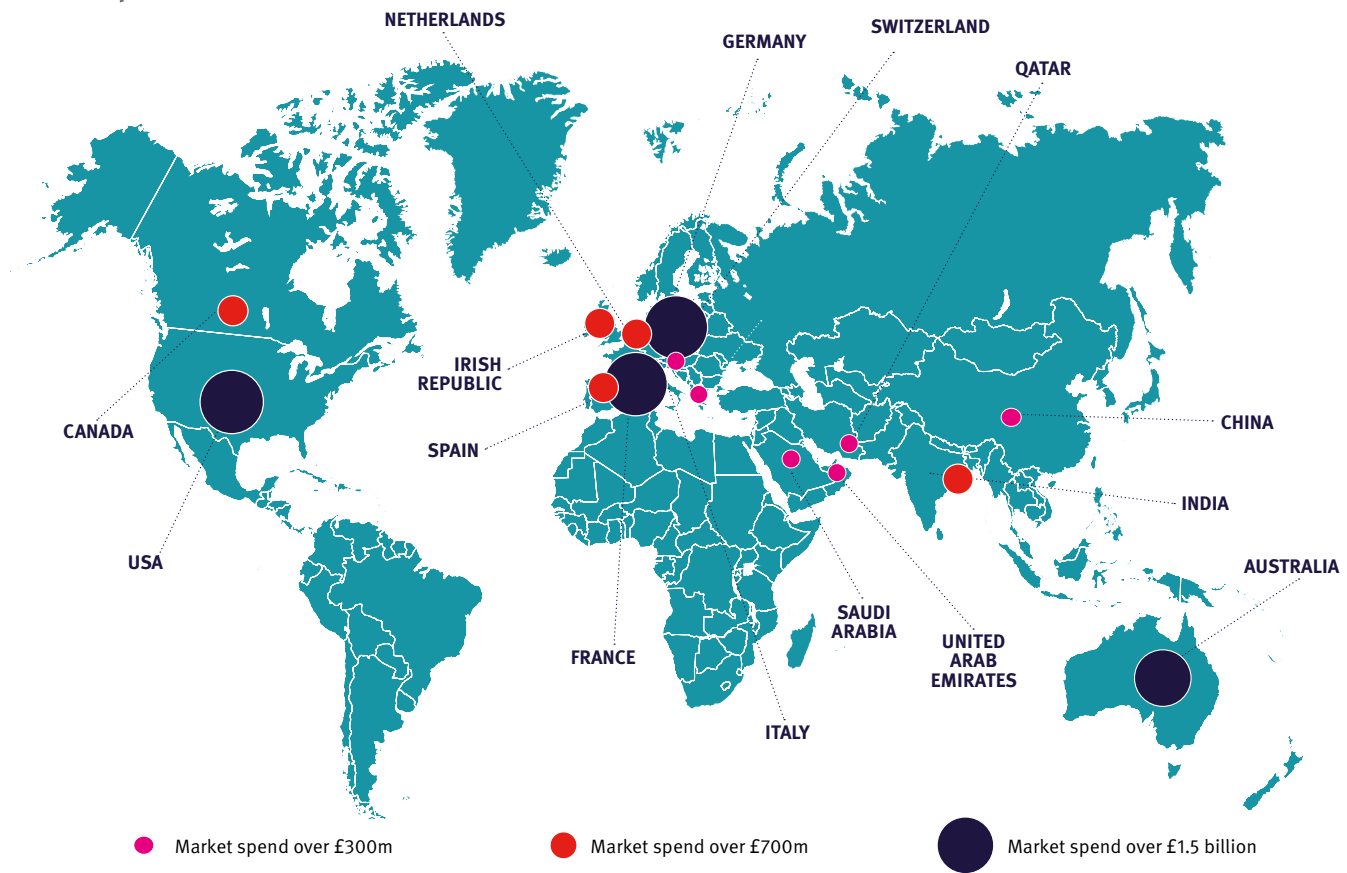
## 2. Market Seasonality

### What is the travel seasonality of each market?

It is important to know the key booking and key travel periods for each market to assist you in contracting with the key distribution partners and product planning. Whilst the following will vary by type of traveller, it gives an indication as to the key timings of which it is helpful to be aware.

## England's Key Markets

As a nation, England's key markets, in terms of spend in 2023, are shown on the map below:



Country	Key booking periods	Key travel periods			
USA	3-6 months before departure	17%	29%	32%	22%
Germany	3-6 months before departure	9%	27%	34%	30%
France	3-6 months before departure	16%	29%	25%	30%
Australia	6 months before departure	6%	24%	45%	25%
Spain	1-2 months before departure	12%	23%	27%	28%
Irish Republic	Not available	17%	26%	28%	29%
Saudi Arabia	Less than 1 month before departure	16%	23%	29%	31%
Italy	3-6 months before departure	12%	22%	30%	36%
The Netherlands	3-6 months before and 1-2 months before departure	20%	23%	30%	39%
China	Less than 1 month before departure	5%	26%	37%	32%
United Arab Emirates	Less than 1 month before departure	14%	22%	32%	31%
Canada	3-6 months before departure	7%	30%	41%	22%
Switzerland	More than 2 months before departure	12%	28%	29%	31%
India	1-2 months before departure	11%	28%	34%	27%
Qatar	Less than 1 month before departure	20%	35%	26%	19%

Data Source: VisitBritain (2023).

VisitBritain (2023).

Markets listed here represent the top 15 markets to England in terms of value (2023).

Key: J-M (January to March) A-J (April to June) J-S (July to September) O-D (October to December).



# Our Inbound Visitors



## 1. The types of inbound traveller

### What are the different styles of inbound travel?

A tourist's travel style will influence the choice of tours and activities, styles of accommodation, transport and where and how they make their travel purchases. These choices will be influenced by a number of factors, including the tourist's age, attitudes, budget, cultural background and previous travel experience.

The maturity of the outbound market from the tourist's home country will also influence their preferred style of travel. If you understand the different styles of travel, match and market your product accordingly, you will be on the right path to securing bookings from that type of traveller.

For example, a retired American couple will have very different requirements from a French student, or a family from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

### What are the differences between a short and long-haul traveller?

Tourist perceptions are influenced by their knowledge of the destination, the distance they need to travel to the destination, media coverage, advertising, the available holiday time and whether it is a first or repeat visit.

In short haul markets, such as Germany, England is a highly achievable destination. Short haul visitors often travel to England more than once and purchase shorter, more frequent trips. They then become more familiar with the destination and gain the confidence to plan their own trips, travel in a less structured way, more independently and beyond the gateways.

In long haul markets such as those in the Asia Pacific region, England is seen as a destination that requires a large commitment of both time and money, and thus may be part of a longer European trip.

### What are the most common travel styles?

Travel styles are constantly evolving and definitions will vary from market to market, however the table below summarises the key styles of which you need to be aware.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Fully independent travellers (FIT)  | • Search for competitive rates   |
| • Like the freedom of planning their own arrangements   | • Optional themed extras such as car hire and tours are offered at the point of sale to appeal to different segments |
| • Arrange some core holiday components prior to arrival   | • Group inclusive tour or travellers (GIT)   |
| • Organise the bulk of their itinerary independently without the assistance of a group tour, pre-arranged schedule or other group setting | • Pre-purchase the bulk of their holiday before leaving home via distributors  |
| • Rely heavily on word of mouth, the internet and social media when planning their trip   | • Prefer structured itineraries  |
| • Partially packaged travellers   | • Have highly organised and pre-booked tour arrangements   |
| • Pre-book "skeleton package" of airfares,  | • Use distributor's preferred products   |
| • Transfers and accommodation prior to arrival  | • Common in less mature markets and with certain segments such as educational groups.                                |

## What are the key purposes of travel?

The style of travel often depends on the purpose of travel. Some of the more specific reasons for travel are outlined below:

- Business travellers
- Includes delegates of a large conference or an individual on a business trip
- Often include a component of leisure travel during their visit such as pre and post conference touring
- Include delegates participating in an incentive tour – a specialised business segment which rewards performance with travel experiences
- Offer high yield as the per head spend is often very high
- Visiting friends and relatives
- Cite friends and relatives as the primary reason for travel
- Often travel beyond the family base to other destinations
- Likely to stay with friends and relatives as part of their stay
- Rely on the recommendations and advice of their England-based friends and relatives when planning their trip
- Study
- Includes short course participants,
- Long term university students, school excursions and exchanges
- Potential for year round visits – less constrained by holiday periods
- More likely to travel off the beaten track, and stay for longer (often more than 21 days)
- High propensity to engage in a variety of activities (e.g. education, adventure, work)
- Holiday
- Leisure travellers
- Will be looking to purchase travel, accommodation and activities
- Includes sub-segments such as special interest, and luxury.

## What are the different types of customer segment?

Beyond the style of travel and reason for travel, it is important to identify the different types of customers. Increasingly this is done based on attitude and experiences.

## Why are experiences so important?

Experiences are increasingly important to international travellers, as they are what compels and motivates people to travel from market to market. When travellers start planning a trip, they will generally select a destination that can provide the experiences that they are looking for.

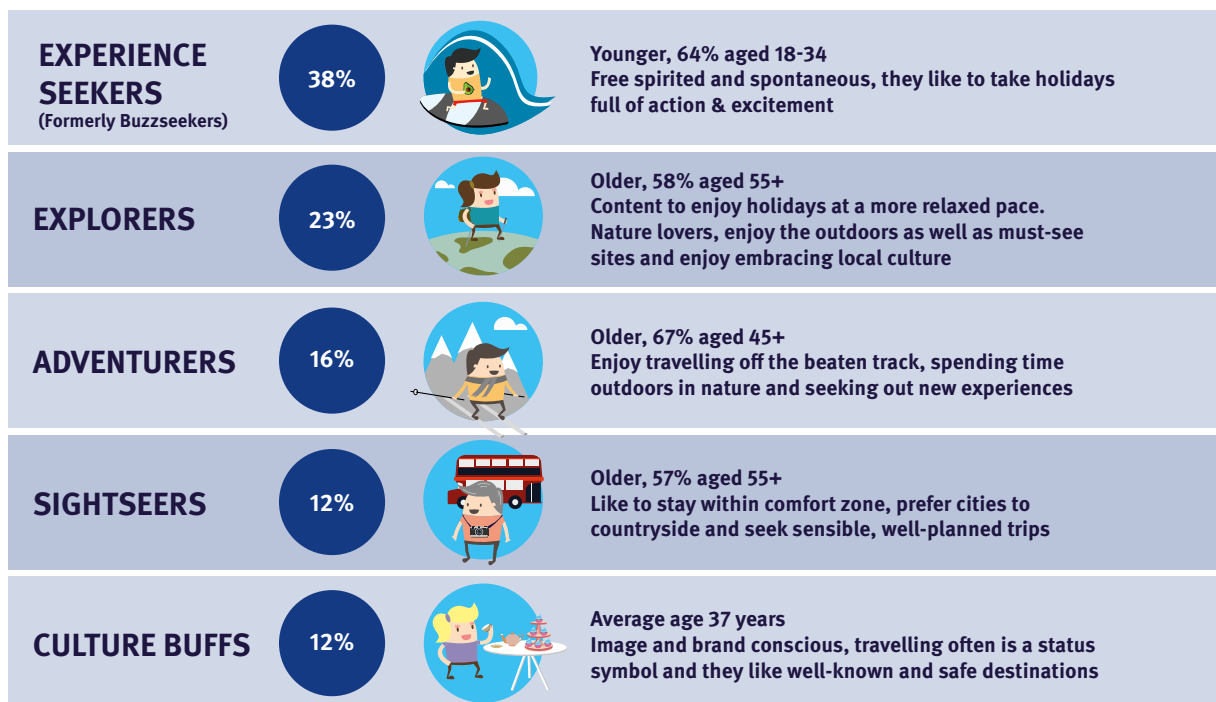
Therefore, always consider what ‘experience’ your product is offering and focus on this in your target marketing.

## VisitBritain/VisitEngland’s global customer segments

VisitBritain/VisitEngland has identified 5 global segments representing the best prospect customers for travel to the UK. These segments have been built around a number of key attitudes and age is then used to further classify each segment.

Key attitudes used to build and differentiate our segments include:	
<b>Image</b>	I care about the image I portray to others (and opposite)
<b>Challenge &amp; change</b>	I always seek out new experiences (and opposite)
<b>Busy vs quiet</b>	I'm more of a city person (and opposite)
<b>New Discoveries</b>	When I travel abroad, I like to get off the beaten track (and opposite)
<b>Pace</b>	I prefer holidays full of action and excitement (and opposite)
<b>Luxury</b>	When I travel, I enjoy exclusive or luxury experiences that others might find unaffordable (and opposite)

Whilst our key customer segments may change over time, they allow us to identify our target markets, and how best to reach them.



It is important to note that the exact characteristics and preferences of each segment are nuanced from market to market. For example, a European Experience Seeker will behave differently to an American Experience Seeker.

Updated segmentation profiles can be found at [www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/motivations-influences-decisions-and-sustainability-research](http://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/motivations-influences-decisions-and-sustainability-research)

## 2. Introducing our wine tourists

### Tourists from all over the world are interested in visiting a vineyard in Britain

On average, 42% of the tourists who are interested in visiting Britain and England are interested in visiting a vineyard when on a break or a holiday. This percentage is even higher in some countries, for instance, those visiting from Brazil demonstrated a higher percentage interested in vineyards at 72%, with Thailand, China and India being high on the list. USA is the biggest spending market for Britain and England, with 58% of those surveyed indicating their interest in visiting a vineyard.

The table below shows the full data from VisitBritain/VisitEngland's MIDAS research report:

Market	Those interested in visiting a winery
Brazil	72%
Thailand	69%
China	67%
India	63%
USA	58%
Israel	48%
Australia	42%
Japan	42%
Poland	42%
Hong Kong	42%
Singapore	41%
New Zealand	39%
Canada	39%
South Korea	37%
Spain	36%
France	34%
Belgium	34%
Norway	34%
Italy	33%
Malaysia	32%
Germany	32%
Sweden	32%
Ireland	31%
Denmark	30%
Austria	30%
The Netherlands	28%
Switzerland	25%
All market average	42%

Data Source: VisitBritain (2022).

It is worth noting, that whilst a market may show particularly high in terms of their propensity to visit a vineyard on their trips, it is important to understand their value and propensity to visit Britain and England. For example, Brazil ranks highest in propensity to visit a vineyard, but doesn't rank within the top markets in terms of their value. See – Understanding Tourism Numbers.

In addition to the above, we know the below statistics to be true of tourists interested in visiting a vineyard:

- Those interested in wine tourism are more likely to be Experience Seekers.
- They are most likely to be aged between 25-44, and slightly more likely to be male.
- They are also slightly more likely to identify with the LGBTQIA+ community compared to the average.
- 23% state that they or those in their travel party have a health condition or impairment.
- 60% would look for destinations that offer the opportunity to travel sustainably/responsibly, and 66% desire an inclusive and accessible destination.
- They are more interested in visiting Scotland and Wales than other travellers.
- They are also significantly more interested in visiting a number of English regions compared to other travellers, with this skew strongest for the East of England and East Midlands.

### 3. Cultural considerations

**The world is full of differences and we need to understand them.**

Cultural background greatly influences the way we communicate with the international market, and the way an international traveller experiences your product. International travellers often visit the same attractions but they may each take something completely different out of the experience.

For example, an Asian visitor may visit Stratford-upon-Avon to sightsee, interesting in the architecture of the buildings and have pictures taken with the landmarks, whereas an American visitor may want to experience the destination, therefore might choose to see a Royal Shakespeare Company performance as part of their visit.

Cultural background also drives the types of tours, activities, food and accommodation requested by international travellers during their stay in England. A Dutch tourist may travel over in his own car and visit remote locations. An American couple may request a twin room with two queen beds. A Chinese group may express a desire for certain foods during a tour.

#### **What are the key cultural considerations?**

For each international market you need to consider the following aspects or categories in relation to how they will interact with your product, and how you need to present your product to them. Whilst these may change with age range or generation within each market, an example of each consideration is provided.

Consider	Impact	Example
<b>Religion</b>	Can affect food, dress and activities	Sensitivities around appropriate dress e.g. beach photos with women in bikinis would not be appropriate in a brochure targeting certain markets
<b>Politics</b>	Can impact what and how you promote	Some governments ban the operation of casinos and gambling, e.g. China
<b>Food and Dining</b>	Can impact what you need to provide	Vegetarian, Jain, Halal, Kosher, etc. For Chinese culture, dining is a shared experience, loud and convivial, large shared dishes are more popular than individually - ordered meals
<b>Pace</b>	Needs to be faster for some visitors	Eastern Hemisphere visitors traditionally enjoy a faster pace of travel than Western Hemisphere visitors
<b>Punctuality</b>	Needs to be reinforced for some markets	The Indian market is traditionally known for being around 30 minutes late whereas German market is typically very punctual and like others to be
<b>Timing</b>	Need to consider if your target market traditionally starts early or late in the day or like to stay out late	Think of whether they eat earlier, later or around the same time as Australia, and how long they like to take to enjoy their meal. For example, Mediterranean countries tend to eat their evening meal a lot later and take a lot more time than other markets
<b>Language</b>	Can impact all components but especially be conscious of safety messages	Consider translation of all safety advices such as the use of life jackets, swimming, fire regulations, etc
<b>Sensitivities</b>	Need to be aware of any cultural sensitivities such as nudity and alcohol	Mormons, Muslims and Jain will traditionally not drink alcohol
<b>Superstition</b>	Need to be aware of any superstitions that impact the traveller	Certain colours and numbers are culturally sensitive in China. For instance, the numbers 4 and 13 are considered unlucky

## Tailor your message

Once you have reviewed the cultural considerations for each of your target markets, you then need to ensure that this translates into your marketing and also your day to day operations. How the visitor engages with your product, and how comfortable they feel, will ultimately define their experience.

At all times, be open and honest about what the visitor may experience, for example, stating that alcohol will be served at a touring lunch stop pre-warns the visitor and also allows them to feel comfortable in refusing or approaching the guide about it should they have any concerns.

When conducting a sales call\* or trade show appointment, tailor your message to appeal to the different markets and respect their culture. The quality of your tailored communications is critical to being successful. For example, when handing your business card to a Chinese market client the exchange should always be done so with two hands as a sign of respect. Chinese business cards represent the person to whom you are being introduced, so it is polite to study the card for a while and then put it on the table next to you or in your business card case (don't staple it in a book).

# Inbound traveller trends



## 1. What are the major tourism and travel trends?

According to Foresight Factory's research, there are some fascinating global tourism and travel trends that could influence the way we create wine and culinary experiences in the UK to attract international visitors.

### Key trends include:

- **Authenticity is key** visitors pride themselves on recognising "the real thing", whether that's a lesser-known destination or a restaurant popular with the locals. For travellers, ultimate authenticity means living like a local and discovering new, unique things that aren't tourist traps. Connecting tourists with residents through activities like walking tours or supper clubs, or providing insider guides that highlight under-the-radar local brands and experiences, are different ways of tapping into this trend.
- **It is not about the product, it's about the experience** the focus has shifted from merely selling a product to providing an immersive experience. Consumers expect both quality products and excellent service as standard. To stand out, businesses must create experiences that foster advocacy through memorable moments and opportunities for learning. This includes leveraging AI recommendations to tailor experiences to individual preferences, ensuring each customer feels valued and understood
- **Moving beyond inclusivity by championing the marginalised** not everyone has equal access to safe and healthy trips. Demands for better accessibility and inclusion will result in brands exploring how to recognise and cater more effectively to a wider range of individuals and lifestyles – spanning a growing cohort of older consumers, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community and solo travellers, who often face additional hurdles, including cost.
- **Effortless & cost-effective eco choices** travellers want experiences that positively impact the destination's environment and inhabitants. From eco-friendly accommodations to tours that offer travellers opportunities to participate in conservation efforts or social projects, which enable visitors to have a meaningful impact while adding uniqueness and enrichment to their experience. .
- **A carefree attitude of wanting to live for the moment** as high interest rates and living costs become the new norm, people yearn for relief and escapism. In today's uncertain world, they're eager to seize happiness while they can, driving a consistent demand for immersive travel experiences. Brands can cater to this carefree mindset by offering indulgent and spontaneous activities.
- **Authentic dining experiences.** travellers are in search of genuine, captivating, and immersive encounters; having the opportunity to meet the owner and hear their personal stories during an extended food and wine tasting or interactive tour is a method that truly fosters a sense of connection with the brand These often include visits to local food' markets and dining with locals or on primary production properties.
- **The solo traveller** with a growth in remote and flexible working arrangements, work-from-anywhere lifestyles are prevalent—particularly among the self-employed. This shakes up what travellers come to expect from hotels and tour operators, which need to adapt with long-stay options, co-working spaces and offerings that boost productivity. Providing the necessary business amenities as well as a sense of community, with opportunities for networking, socialising and relaxing, are key to attracting both the digital nomad and solo traveller audience.
- **Social wellness** 'is gaining recognition for its impact on health. Brands can help counter loneliness by promoting gatherings and facilitating social connections. Spaces and experiences can be geared towards social wellbeing. As the population ages and lifespans lengthen, it becomes more crucial to focus on facilitating trips that involve multiple generations, including "skip-gen" trips (where grandparents travel with their grandchildren) or multi-generational trips for the whole family

## 2. What trends are driving wine and food travel?

Creating a memorable experience is key when developing products for visitors, especially in the international market. That's why it's essential to keep up with global tourism and travel trends to create wine and culinary experiences that cater to the needs of your target audience.

Foresight Factory, commissioned by VisitBritain, have highlighted several trends that are likely to shape wine tourism in the years ahead. These trends give us valuable insights into how travellers' tastes and habits are evolving :

### 1. A Hyperlocal Focus - people want to connect with where their food and drink comes from

"Hyperlocal experience" for food-loving travellers means diving deep into the local culinary scene and culture. People want to connect with where their food and drink comes from; rising health and sustainability aspirations sees travellers wanting to connect with the natural world and where their food and drink comes from. Wine drinkers want this even more than the average person: according to Foresight Factory, 43% of those who drink wine every week want to buy more locally produced food or drink, compared to just 36% among global consumers generally.

### 2. Food and beverages as immersive and interactive food and drink experiences

According to Foresight Factory, 56% of global consumers agree that when they go to a restaurant, they want more than tasty food; they want a memorable experience. This is even higher among international travellers (62%) and weekly wine drinkers (65%). In today's digital-heavy world, travellers are increasingly seeking immersive and interactive culinary experiences that allow them to disconnect from technology, learn new things and engage with their senses and surroundings in a unique and meaningful way.

### 3. Embracing Inclusivity: Enhancing Culinary Tourism for All

There's a growing emphasis on making travel accessible to everyone, including those with mental or physical challenges. By being more inclusive, food and drink destinations can become even more appealing, ensuring that every traveller, regardless of their needs, can fully enjoy the flavours and experiences.

### 4. Growing diversity is improving access for visitors with distinctive needs.

Diversified choice in the culinary and wine tourism sector is transforming access for travellers with distinct preferences and needs. An explosion of choice and increased awareness of health means people now expect their individual food and drink demands to be catered to. Today's gastronomic experiences increasingly recognise a wide range of health and sustainability considerations and dietary requirements, including options like natural, organic, sulphate- and gluten-free, or low and no-alcohol—a demand driven largely by the younger generations.

### 5. Experiences are increasingly data driven

Technological advances are transforming opportunities for personalisation in the food and beverage tourism sector, offering a level of curation and customisation previously unseen. Through the collection and analysis of visitor data, restaurants, wineries, and culinary tours can tailor experiences to meet the specific tastes and interests of each guest—making each experience feel personal and unique, and enhancing satisfaction and engagement. The use of technology in creating these personalised experiences also offers opportunities for education and discovery. For example, augmented reality apps can provide diners/ visitors with interactive stories about the origin of their food and wine, the sustainability practices of a vineyard, or the history behind a product.

Consider how these trends could be relevant to your region and how they might improve your service offerings, either by implementing them directly or by forming strategic partnerships.

## How can you incorporate these trends into your planning?

What do these trends mean for wine and food tourism as you develop products for the inbound tourism market?

Consider these tips to assess your current offerings and generate new ideas as you progress through the Taking England's Wine Tourism to the World programme. The toolkit provides information and resources to support you in developing your wine tourism experiences and enhancing your brand presence

1. When designing your experience, think like a visitor! Choose a specific target audience and decide whether you want to create a product for a broad audience or if you're aiming for more customised, high quality immersive experiences.
2. Craft engaging and delightful experiences for your visitors, ensuring they are memorable and instantly shareable.
3. Design experiences that cultivate a connection between you, the provider, and the participants, enhancing guest experiences and bolstering advocacy
4. Create a tailored experience for the female demographic, fostering shared memories, especially on social media. Provide outstanding value and ample chances for participants to both look and feel fabulous.
5. If your experiences involve teaching something new, ensure the lesson is engaging, hands-on, enjoyable, and appeals to the senses, as people are eager to learn.
6. Create a captivating narrative about your vineyard that serves as the cornerstone of your brand, which is seamlessly woven into your marketing and branding efforts
7. Ensure a thorough understanding of the entire customer journey, including the individuals your visitors are expected to meet and the actions they must take to reach your doorstep.
8. Explore the concept of introducing temporary experiences in well-known spots during busy travel seasons in major urban areas. You could consider a 'pop up venue', seasonal markets or temporary venues.
9. Design a travel pack product for visitors to take home, allowing them to relive the experience and extend their memorable moments, whilst also encouraging sharing. This could potentially boost memberships and cultivate brand advocates.
10. Show a genuine passion for your work. Experiences infused with enthusiasm and sincerity, delivered in a fun and engaging manner, will foster advocacy for your product far more effectively than any promotional material. Additionally, don't forget to occasionally invite the travel trade to participate.



# Global culinary travellers



## Who are culinary travellers?

Culinary travellers prioritise food and beverage experiences, seeking out destinations known for their cuisine and culinary traditions. :

1. they are concerned about the origin of products
2. use dining as a means of socialising and exchanging experiences with others
3. have a higher-than-average spend on trips
4. demonstrate a high degree of loyalty
5. revisit destinations due to gastronomy.

In the UNWTO study, 88% of respondents indicated that culinary offerings were an important component for defining a destination's brand and image.

Understanding these consumer psychographics and spending behaviours is important for destinations and cellar doors because travellers who report culinary-themed travel experiences as a driving factor in trip planning exceed the average spend, not just on wine and casual dining, but also lodging, entertainment, shopping, and other general travel experiences.



# Tourism Industry Research



## What research is available?

When entering into the international market it is critical to undertake ongoing market research including the reviewing of the latest tourism statistics. There is a wealth of up-to-date statistical tourism information readily available for you to analyse. You just need to know where to find it. VisitBritain/VisitEngland provides research services to the industry through consumer and market insights, plus tourism, aviation and economic analysis.

They are responsible for identifying and understanding the needs and drivers for consumer segments that give the greatest return on investment. They also produce relevant and timely analytical research on inbound tourism markets, including analysing and communicating trends in global tourism and identifying new and high-yield markets.

For further information and reports visit [www.visitbritain.org/research-insights](http://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights)

## What factors do I need to consider?

When reviewing any statistics, it is wise to consider them in practical and realistic terms. For example, one market may be showing a significant percentage growth, but ensure you look at what base that growth is from. What is the real size of the market and does it hold the same potential as another market that may be growing at a slower rate yet off a higher base?

Also remember to consider the suitability of your product to each market. For example, you may see a high growth in the USA market, however before you start targeting that market make sure your product is an experience that that market is interested in and that your product meets the needs of that market. You may indeed get a better return from another market that would suit your product and region better.

## Therefore, don't consider the statistics in isolation. What factors do I need to consider?

When looking at the arrival statistics, don't consider them at face value for the total numbers. It is important to drill down and review. For example, instead of just reviewing the total arrival statistics for a market, review the specific arrival statistics for each category to see the actual size of your target market, namely; Holiday, Visiting friends and relatives (VFR), Business travel, Study (i.e. students).

Then consider the average spend of your target category, not the total overall spend, and how much of that has been pre-spent on carrier fares before they arrive in England. IPS stats will not record the cost of carrier fares (air, ferry etc.) to and from England.

Also, it is worth considering the regional spread of the market. For example, if you see a high volume of visitors from the USA, check how many of these visits are spent within your region.

## Let's look at the statistics for USA

USA Visitor Summary (2023)						
Ranking: Visits 1 <sup>st</sup> / Spent 1 <sup>st</sup>						
	Total	Business	Study	Leisure	Visiting friends and relatives	Miscellaneous
Visits	4.5M	0.6M	0.1M	2.2M	1.2M	0.5M
Average Spend per Visit	£1,084	£1,673	£2,583	£1,185	£855	£441
Spend per night	£158	£302	£46	£205	£82	£179
Average Nights per Visit	6.9	5.5	56.1	5.8	10.4	2.5

If we were to review the summary statistics alone, total inbound visits from USA in 2023 is 4.5M with an average spend per visit of £1,084 and an average stay of 6.9 nights. If you were a hotelier considering this in isolation you may think this is an extremely attractive market for you with USA guests potentially staying for a long duration from a big and growing market source. However, when you drill down per category, you will see that the average stay for a leisure visitor (likely to be purchasing hotel accommodation and therefore making up your target market) is 5.8 nights, with the market size being 2.2m leisure travellers. This demonstrates how the Study and VFR markets can put a slant on the statistics.

Another area where it is important to be cautious is regional dispersal statistics. The tourism industry commonly refers to regional dispersal as being outside capital or main cities. However, the International Passenger Survey (IPS) defines that regional dispersal means a stay overnight in a place and therefore does not include day visits. For this reason, the actual number of visitors to an area may be much greater than indicated, by the IPS statistics, since they do not include day visits. For example, if you look at USA, the total holiday market for USA consists of 4.6M visitors, with 3.02M of these visitors basing their trip in London. If you were a Vineyard owner in Kent, you will find the market for USA visitors is much smaller at 46,000 and there are higher number of French, German and Dutch visitors. Therefore it is important to drill down into the detail of the data to truly understand the market potential.

### Top tips for reviewing IPS statistics:

- Study & VFR increase the total average stay
- Expenditure excludes airfares and is reported by country of residence
- The IPS is a sample survey so is open to statistical error, but gives a strong indication

## How do I keep updated on a regular basis?

### Keep updated with VisitBritain/VisitEngland

To stay up to date with what is happening in the tourism industry you can also subscribe to the following e-newsletters.

VisitBritain/VisitEngland's industry newsletter for news and information on upcoming marketing opportunities, what's new in English tourism, details of the latest research reports, global tourism trends and developments.

Sign up [www.visitbritain.org/subscribe-our-newsletters](http://www.visitbritain.org/subscribe-our-newsletters)

VisitBritain/VisitEngland's media centre for information on new events, tourism products and new travel ideas to inspire and inform.

For further information [www.visitbritain.org/news-and-media](http://www.visitbritain.org/news-and-media)

You can also subscribe to your respective LVEP newsletters for area specific information and opportunities.

### The importance of industry associations

In addition to reviewing statistical information and market reports it is critical to keep up to date with your travel industry partners and products on a regular basis. This can be easily facilitated by your DMO or industry organisations such as UKinbound. Being a member of such an organisation gives you access to a wealth of information, industry comments, market trends and a broad industry network.

For further information [www.visitbritain.org/resources-destination-partners/local-visitor-economy-partnership-lvep-programme](http://www.visitbritain.org/resources-destination-partners/local-visitor-economy-partnership-lvep-programme)

## Form your own knowledge base

Use every opportunity to undertake your own research and gain market feedback. For example, when you are attending trade shows (such as the World Travel Market or Britain and Ireland Marketplace) or industry conferences; this is a perfect opportunity to ask your fellow industry colleagues for market related feedback.

Whilst statistical information is essential to review, you will also gain great insight by asking your industry trade partners. They will have a feel for how the market is tracking and also be able to give you some practical advice. This two-way communication will also enable you to market test ideas and gain instant feedback

Always focus on building your network of industry contacts as they can be a great resource to you.

For VisitBritain's trade events [www.visitbritain.org/training-and-events](http://www.visitbritain.org/training-and-events)

## Section 1 Checklist:

- |   |
|---|
| Understand where the inbound business is coming from.                 |
| Determine what you want inbound wine tourism to do for your business. |
| Have a 'long term' plan and approach.                                 |
| Determine key markets that are best for your product.                 |
| Consider cultural impacts.  |
| Keep up to date with VisitBritain/VisitEngland market profiles.       |
| Identify and target travellers that fit your product.                 |
| Understand what the statistics really mean.                           |
| Develop a plan to keep your onsite statistics.                        |



# Wine tourism



# Setting up your tourism experiences: What you need to have.

## 1. Understanding wine tourism

### What is wine tourism?

Wine tourism is a term that has come to be associated with the provision of wine tasting and other experiences at cellar door venues and on winery properties. In Europe it would be referred to as 'oenotourism', 'enotourism' or 'vinitourism' which refers to people visiting the wineries, vineyards and the regions in which wine is produced.

One of the earliest definitions of wine tourism captured this premise well, claiming wine tourism as, "Visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors." (Hall and Macionis, 2000)

WineGB set out five strategic pillars which encompass its vision for the industry over the next five years. These are driven by the core mission:

'To establish Great Britain as a sustainable wine region of world renown, recognised and celebrated for the quality of its wines and visitor experiences.'

### What is a wine tourism region?

A wine tourism region can be defined as 'a region which bases some or all of its appeal on wineries and wine related benefits'. However, not all wine regions are necessarily wine tourism destinations.

There are three perspectives to consider:

- 1. visitor** – travel and leisure motivations
- 2. winery** – cellar door as a sales and distribution channel vs a tourism enterprise
- 3. region** – tourism destination with wine as a drawcard.

The destination also needs to have sufficient infrastructure, facilities, services and attractions, along with a tourism- oriented community, in order to cater well for visitors.

Wine and food play an important role in region tourism. Some of the benefits include:

- the opportunity to convey a region's uniqueness through its wine and food offering
- potential to increase visitor satisfaction
- ability to attract repeat visitors
- increased yield per visitor
- increased awareness of the region among low-involved consumers, and
- expansion of the region's attraction assets.

As visitor expectations have changed and evolved to a more experiential orientation, there has been concomitant growth in the number and range of immersive experiences in wine regions and on winery properties. This has occurred within regions that could be considered wine tourism destinations and at wineries that are destinations in their own right, often located outside recognised wine or tourism regions.

## 2. Developing a sustainable wine tourism business model

### What type of cellar door are you?

Wine tourism is increasingly important for wine brands, as the domestic market becomes ever more saturated with both home-grown and imported products. In the same way as English wine consumers' tastes are broadening – along with their travel habits – so too are international consumers seeking new experiences in new lands. This situation augers well for English wineries wishing to develop or enhance their cellar door offerings through the introduction of tourism experiences that can deepen the customer relationship and provide additional revenue streams.

English wine producers are motivated by many different things, one of which is selling wine at a margin that enables the business to succeed. The decision to build a cellar door and enter tourism means that many producers need to consider – often for the first time – why they are doing it.

Take a look through the four different lenses and discover what type of cellar door you are.



**Lifestyle** cellar doors are characterised by an artisan winemaking lifestyle where producing highly differentiated wines that strongly reflect their local region (and its produce) are the primary purpose of the business and sales of wine are the profit driver. The purpose of the cellar door is personal, and the intent is to share the specific experience intended for the wine. These operators form a critical part of the export story for their regions but are often less focused on commissionable tourism experiences as their core focus is on the wine and building a brand following. Many owners in this category may have a primary off-farm income.



**Wine sales** focused cellar doors tend to focus on tourism as a key sales driver. Tourism is used as a core driver for developing new customer relationships and experiences that lead to long-term brand involvement through both direct-to-consumer (DTC) and wholesale channels. Because wine sales are the primary driver, visitor experiences tend to focus on immersive, personalised experiences that are capable of leading to high value sales, and may be increasingly Inbound focused.



**Tourism and hospitality-oriented** cellar doors are characterised by tourism being a profit driver and growth engine in its own right, and where tourism, along with DTC can contribute strongly to domestic and export wine sales. Typically, they will offer a suite of inbound tourism experiences (often wine and food based), with the larger and more established operators having a presence internationally and the smaller being highly domestically focused.



**Brand focused** cellar doors are characterised by tourism being a brand validator and their cellar door venues are often regarded as 'brand homes.' These operators usually have global brands, many of which are celebrated as icons where the key role of tourism is to reinforce the brand. The destination is the wine and the experience is often highly personal.

Reflecting on what type of cellar door you are can help you make some critical decisions about where your wine offer fits with your tourism offer and what elements need to be prioritised. There is a tendency for cellar doors to default to being a Sales Focused operation.

### Are you a Lifestyle Cellar Door?

If you answer yes to a significant number of these questions or respond positively to these statements, you are probably a Lifestyle cellar door.

- My wines are designed to reflect my site and my region.
- My wine portfolio is made from grapes grown 100% on site, within close proximity of my cellar door or from select varieties and blocks in other w places.
- Specifically identified blocks represents over 40% of my production (in region or out of region).
- My wines represent the hero varieties of my region as they reflect the best match of soil and climate for the region.
- Our winemaker has a high profile in the region and is known for making regionally representative wines (winemaker may be contracted).
- Our owners are highly involved in the operation of the winery and of the cellar door.
- We undertake owner/winemaker dinners, promotions and trade tastings.
- Our wines are represented on fine dining wine lists and restaurants represent an important outlet for our product.
- We are focused on being profiled in serious wine magazines (i.e. Wine Spectator) and being well known amongst wine writers and sommeliers.
- Our brand claims include terms that evoke the importance of terroir and personalisation like handmade, hand grown, owned and operated, sustainable practices, artisan, small, family, etc.

### Are you a Sales Focused Cellar Door?

If you answer yes to a significant number of these questions or respond positively to these statements, you are probably a Sales Focused cellar door.

- We have a portfolio and range of wines that reflect the needs of our customers, some of which are estate grown and some purchased.
- Variety and region are the most important indicator for our wines, with only the higher end of our portfolio being identified by block.
- We would buy out of region grapes to complete a varietal portfolio.
- We either are or wish to be widely available in national (or international) retail chains.
- We have more than one distributor.

### Are you a Brand Focused Cellar Door?

If you answer yes to a significant number of these questions or respond positively to these statements, you are probably a Brand Focused cellar door.

- Our wines are globally available and recognised.
- We are a destination in our own right because of our brand and our unique experience – people will deliberately seek us out.
- Our wines are often available through specialty cellar door/stock release sales events.
- We regard the cellar door as our 'brand home' and structure our facilities and services to showcase our brand and story.

Remember it is possible to be more than one type – there are a number of famous examples of brand focused cellar doors that are also great regional tourism attractions.

### How do you develop revenue streams from wine tourism?

Wine tourism increases the opportunity to build relationships with customers and build mutual value. There are three core avenues to monetisation:

1. the immediate purchase – a purchase of a wine experience or a purchase of wine at the cellar door
2. the channel purchase – post experience purchases from liquor outlets, restaurants, caterers, online platforms and from the winery online store
3. the lifetime purchase – deriving from club memberships, with long-term automated wine deliveries, occasional additional purchases from campaigns, bringing friends and relatives to visit and attendance at winery special events over time.



Income stream	Lifestyle	Sales	Tourism	Brand
<b>Channel Packaged Wine Sales</b>				
Retail wine sales (domestic)	•	•		•
Retail wine sales (International)	•	•		•
External online retailers and clubs		•		
Wine retailer	•		•	
Bars and restaurants (on-premise)	•	•		•
Delivery channels (e.g. UberEats)				
<b>DTC Packaged Wine Sales</b>				
Cellar door take-away	•	•	•	
Direct mail campaigns	•	•	•	
Club sales	•	•	•	•
Online shop (own)	•	•	•	
Social media direct sales	•	•	•	
<b>Wine Consumed Onsite</b>				
Paid tastings (individuals)	•	•		•
Paid tastings (bus groups)		•	•	
Wine with picnic or small platter			•	
Wine with food or platter			•	
Wine on the grounds	•		•	•
<b>Food Consumed Onsite</b>				
Small platters or simple food	•		•	
Catering for large groups			•	
Café food and drinks			•	
Restaurant			•	•
Independent food operator fees			•	
<b>Events (Food and Bar)</b>				
Weddings/birthdays/social			•	
Business functions			•	
Music events			•	
Festivals and other events			•	
<b>Experience Sales</b>				
Wine-based experiences	•	•		•
Non-wine experiences		•	•	
Winemaker dinners	•			•
Member events	•		•	•
Other tourism referral/access fees				
<b>Other</b>				
Accommodation			•	
Merchandise - general	•	•	•	
Merchandise - branded high end				•
Packaged goods (e.g. food)				
Non-wine alcoholic products		•	•	

**Figure 2:** Types of income streams that wineries and cellar doors utilise, summarising which are critically important for various types of cellar door enterprises.

**Figure 2** shows a range of different revenue streams. Of course, this list is not exhaustive and should act as a prompt for the types of opportunities you can explore. Ideas for wine-based tourism experiences that can be developed include:

- extended tastings
- special tastings
- group tastings (exclusive)
- wine/food tasting (local produce pairing)
- barrel tastings
- blending sessions, and
- winery tours.

**Non-wine-based tourism experiences that can be developed include:**

- cycling (around and between wineries)
- nature-based and vineyard walks (subject to biosecurity protocols)
- 4WD Safaris
- food service (restaurant, café, providore)
- picnics
- local produce tastings
- retail (merchandise, produce, art etc.)
- golf driving range, and
- art exhibitions (artist-in-residence).

**Figure 3** shows a summary of the potential revenue streams for cellar door tourism. Activities that gain income from selling wine are indicated in blue, tourism experiences are shown in purple and food/culinary experiences are shown in green.

DTC sales (packaged wine)		Channel sales (packaged wine)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cellar door take-away</li> <li>• Electronic newsletter conversions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership sales</li> <li>• Online sale (own shop)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Social media direct sales</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid tastings (individuals)</li> <li>• Paid tastings (groups)</li> <li>• With picnic or platter</li> <li>• In café • In restaurant</li> <li>• On the grounds</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail (off premises)</li> <li>• Bars and clubs (on premises)</li> <li>• Online membership</li> <li>• Online stores • Online wineries</li> <li>• Food and drink deliveries</li> </ul>			
Wine-based experiences		Food consumed onsite	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special tastings</li> <li>• Winemaker dinners</li> <li>• Member events</li> <li>• Pairings • Barrel tastings</li> <li>• Blending • Site tours</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food with tastings</li> <li>• Small platters or simple food</li> <li>• Café food and drinks</li> <li>• Restaurant</li> <li>• Independent food operator</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycling • Walks</li> <li>• Safaris • Merchandise</li> <li>• Imagination is the limit</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Food and beverages</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parties (weddings, birthdays)</li> <li>• Business functions</li> <li>• Music events • Festivals</li> </ul>	

**Figure 3:** Summary of the revenue streams for cellar door tourism (selling wine in blue, tourism in purple and food/culinary in green).



**Figure 4:** Traditional cellar door with DTC income largely from take-away wine sales and connection to wider retail limited to brand awareness

## What does this mean for connecting wine sales and tourism?

The traditional wine sales distribution model for most producers separates the cellar door sales channel from retail and wholesale channels. In this model, the cellar door is effectively a single product sales outlet with a brand affiliation approach. This is often augmented by wine club sales that are attributed to the cellar door channel.

The models shown in Figures 4 and 5 demonstrate the traditional cellar door sales channel with direct-to-consumer (DTC) on the left-hand side, and business-to-business (B2B) on the right. B2B sales are typified by a sale from one business to another business who then on-sells to another business or to a consumer (think supermarket sales channels).

**Figure 4** shows a traditional model in which DTC income is primarily from take-away wine sales at the cellar door supported by retail and restaurant sales. Most cellar doors did not regard club sales as critical, however many early adopters of this channel have been highly successful in generating additional revenue by introducing differentiated club experiences.

Traditional cellar doors are typically characterised as having three outlets for wine: consumed on site (usually unpaid), take-away and club memberships. Note that by ‘consume onsite’, we are specifically referring to tastings and purchases of wine. Free tastings are the ‘tourism experience’.

Club sales delivered by a courier service were typically regarded as an expense or logistics solution, rather than being a key delivery partner or part of the customer experience. Sales in smaller operations may have been via a distributor, but many were as shown below, directly managed by a winemaker who meets with retail outlets and restaurants directly.

The modern physical cellar door (Figure 5) is only one part of the modern cellar door story. The other is the consumer wine engagement. The internet and rise in cloud-based technology platforms has re-written sales channels and brought the relationship between DTC and B2B sales much closer.

### There are four key innovations that have enabled this:

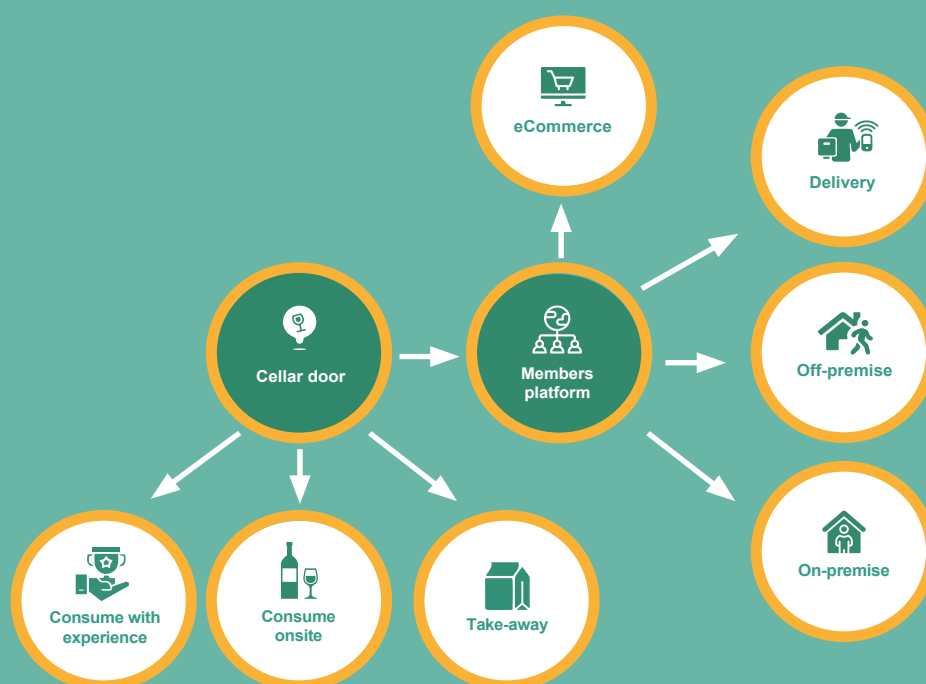
1. influencer networks and the social internet. This came about with the combination of Facebook and the iPhone and has been deeply impacting business since about 2015 when Facebook reached 1 billion users (or most of the developed world).
2. fulfilment. Amazon re-wrote delivery networks and globalised the USA's DTC catalogue fulfilment model, which is being rapidly deployed in England.
3. e-commerce platforms. The explosion in online travel agents, booking software and wine club e-commerce platforms has opened up myriad wine and tourism sales opportunities.
4. online wineries and high-engagement online stores (including highly engaging wine-specific sales platforms).

On the physical side of the cellar door this is most evidenced by global payment and fulfilment models that reflect a true B2B partnership. These fulfilment providers can now provide enhanced capability such as:

- the ability to manage customer payment details, eliminating inherent security risks
- enhanced reliability of delivery times and more effective re-delivery.
- direct fulfilment to more of the world, and

At this point most cellar doors will have distribution partnerships in place, rather than directly managing this activity themselves.

The consume onsite experience has been enhanced by increased food offerings, well designed (and often) paid-for tastings. The transition from platters to café's, restaurants, fine dining and sophisticated local produce offerings has resulted in much higher purchase of wine on site.

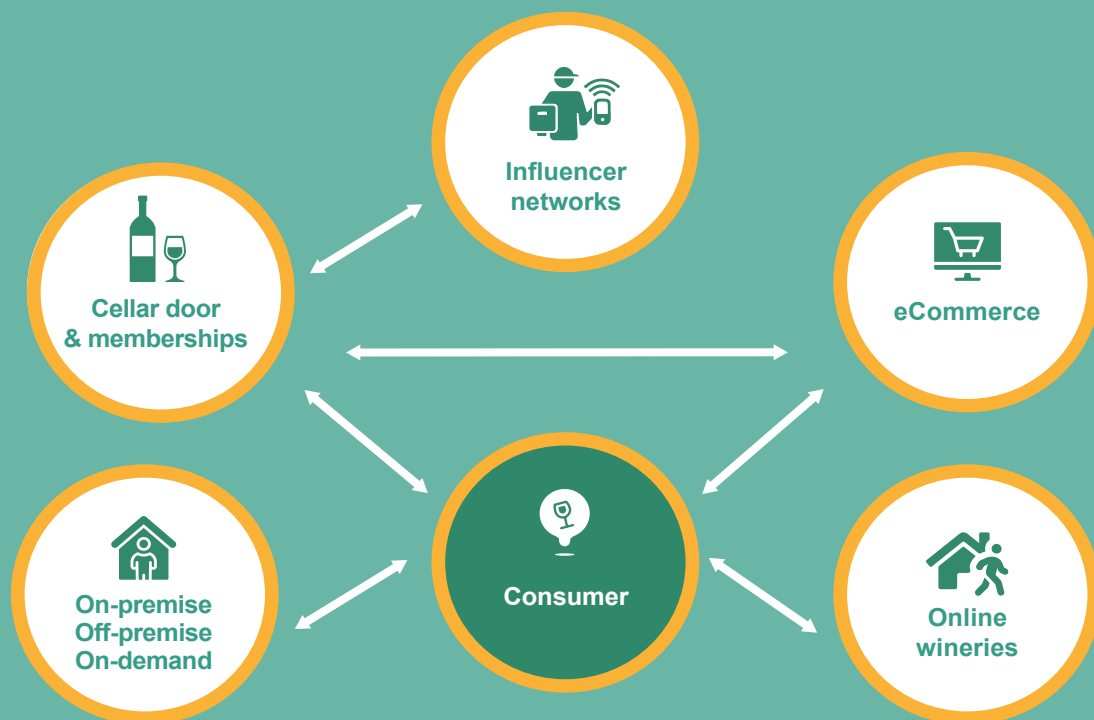


**Figure 5:** Modern Physical Cellar Door Sales Channel

As a result of this combination, tourism and sales have been tied together in an interdependence that has created the following tourism/direct sales channels:

1. wine club sales supported by automated marketing
2. electronic mailing of newsletters with customer segmentation capability
3. socially-driven sales built around the brand story and cellar door experience
4. direct sales of tourism experiences to social media followers
5. online store for both wine and tourism sales
6. direct booking widgets to enable real time bookings via mobile devices
7. international fulfilment, creating the opportunity for cellar door visitors to buy on the spot and receive deliveries anywhere in the world
8. online wineries, such as Naked Wines, that also trade on the tourism/lifestyle message of the winery
9. online review sites that can lead to greater engagement and sales opportunities (positive ratings) or decrease winery visits and sales in the primary and secondary sales channels (negative ratings).

**Figure 6** below shows the highly involved consumer engagement that has occurred through advances in online technology.



**Figure 6:** Consumer engaged multi-channel sales

The primary difference with this model is that the engaged consumer/visitor is at the centre of the experience, not the wine or tourism offering – an important distinction.

### The pillars of engagement are:

1. the availability of wine through traditional channels like restaurants and outlets plus new delivery models
2. the tourism experience (cellar door and electronically-enabled club)
3. influencer networks, pointing people towards particular products. These include a range of avenues such as social media (including wine company presence), rating sites like Google, TripAdvisor and Facebook, web search (particularly Google search, Google Maps and Apple Maps), rating and availability Apps
4. e-commerce platforms offering:
  - a. web sales (winery sites, Google Shopping)
  - b. social media sales (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WeChat, SnapChat)
  - c. email direct marketing (EDM) sales through newsletters and other direct response means (e.g. Survey Monkey, MailChimp)
  - d. sales through location Apps
  - e. sales through online booking platforms (e.g. Expedia, Viator, Trip Advisor, VB Shop, Getyourguide)
  - f. online stores of physical retail outlets (e.g. Waitrose, Naked Wines)
5. sales through online wineries, with Naked Wines being an important example (as it includes sales and global events) and through wine-specific platforms such as Vivino, English Vine and Majestic)
6. the improved fulfilment capability of the cellar door/tourism site (albeit invisible to the consumer).

### Within the winery/cellar door control are:

1. making commissionable product available for global tourism resellers
2. the company website, which supports all other online elements of the cellar door, particularly with story, tasting notes and links to critical elements such as reviews, shops and availability
3. the company brand champions who are able to be utilised in generating electronic content, where they are not active in producing it themselves
4. review site availability and responses, with the most important review sites being TripAdvisor, Facebook and Google
5. social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok for visual sites and Facebook for friendly sites
6. ensuring third party apps are aware of wine and tourism product.



An aerial photograph of a vineyard on a hillside. The rows of grapevines are arranged in a grid pattern, with some rows covered in white plastic mulch. The vines are green and healthy. In the background, there is a line of trees and a brown field. A blue banner is overlaid on the top left of the image.

# Create compelling experiences

# 1. The difference between products and experiences

## What is the difference between a product and an experience?

Your product is the combination of ‘goods and services’ that make up the visitor experience, including the standard of your facilities and equipment, the level of service you provide and the quality of your interpretation.

An individual product will make up only part of the total travel experience for a consumer.

The complete travel experience includes all the elements that a tourist consumes from the time they leave home until they return. This includes transport, accommodation, meals, attractions and activities. These may be purchased independently directly from the provider or bundled into a package for sale by an ITO or wholesaler.

When we talk about tourism products and experiences the words are largely interchangeable, and in this and while we’ll mostly use the term ‘experiences’, tourism distributors generally sell ‘products.’

## What is a wine tourism experience?

Wine is a tangible product that can be incorporated into an experience in which the visitor actively participates.

Most wineries regard their (usually free) wine tastings as an experience, which it is. However, in order to participate in tourism distribution, this basic experience needs to be elevated to a level that allows it to be charged for, or new experiences need to be created that sit alongside it, so that it evolves into a saleable product.

To become a sought-after destination in your own right and appeal to either a specific or broad range of visitors (both domestic and inbound), you need to create what’s known as a ‘total tourism experience’. For some wineries, this may include adding facilities such as a restaurant or cafe, accommodation, function centre and ancillary services such as bike hire. For this section, we’re only going to focus on experiences that incorporate a wine-related activity or occur at and around your cellar door.

## Key themes underpinning a memorable wine tourism experience

There are five key themes to consider when developing an experience:



**Figure 7:** Memorable Wine Tourism Experience themes

Contrived experiences are out, and authenticity is in. This is particularly important among the Millennials and Gen Z who are known to be seeking experiences that are unique and genuine.

First class hospitality elevates your standard tasting experience to a new level. Think about how the very best sommeliers, concierges and bespoke retailers take the notion of service and elevate it to a level of excellence that encourages you not only to purchase but to become a loyal brand advocate.

Developing experiences requires that you conduct extensive research to decide what is required and for whom. Start by doing a scan of what is available in your region and identify gaps and potential opportunities.

Using the information sources mentioned in Module 1, understand what types of people are visiting your region and who has the potential to visit.

Visitors to wine regions are interested in the local culture and seek to understand what is unique about its people, nature, geography, history and food. These aspects need to be embedded into your experiences, either directly, through engagement, or indirectly through the commentary that accompanies delivery of the experience.

Finally, your experience needs to have a real point of difference. This will usually be an extension or version of your overarching UVP that you've defined for your brand, but made specific for each experience. It needs to be articulated clearly and delivered consistently in order for people to understand and remember it.

## Making it memorable

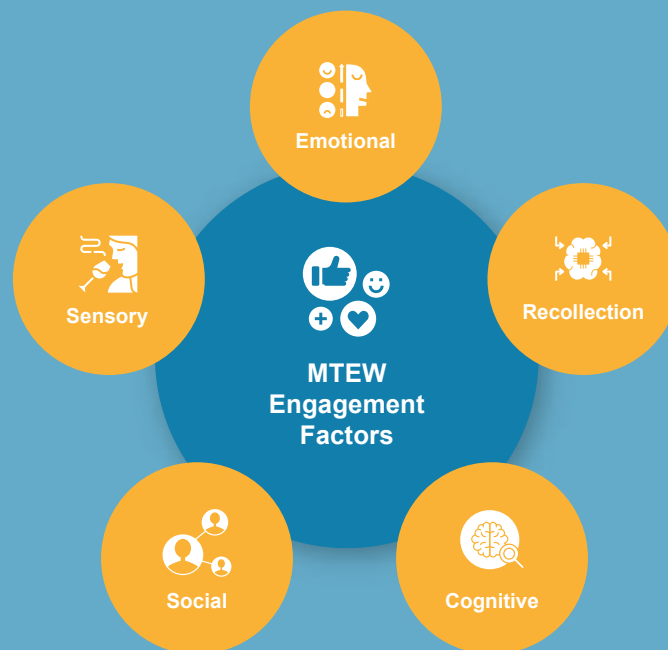
All of the above themes lead to the real key to success, which is creating a memorable tourism experience (MTE). This has been defined by researchers as 'a tourism experience remembered and recalled after the event has occurred' (Kim, 2010). Experiences are multi-dimensional in nature. While the actual experience and the feelings generated in that moment may be transitory, once the experience is stored in memory, where it can be recalled and thought about, it becomes significant.

This tendency to draw upon stored memories affects purchasing decisions because people consider their personal experiences as reliable sources of information and therefore motivation to purchase (or revisit, or recommend) is high when drawing on past memory. Since MTE's are inherently subjective, it is important that the experiences you create facilitate the likelihood that visitors can recollect the experience favourably post-visit.

## Engaging your visitors

Extensive research has been conducted regarding what makes experiences memorable and there are a number of engagement factors to consider when developing your experiences. The more factors you can combine, the higher the likelihood of creating an MTE that is positively remembered and recalled.

- 1. emotional:** pleasure, imagination, positive behaviour
- 2. sensory:** immersive activities involving the senses and the broader sense-scape
- 3. social:** shared experiences, cultural interaction with hosts
- 4. cognitive/intellectual:** new knowledge gained, transformed opinions
- 5. recollection:** efforts and actions undertaken to remember and reflect on the experience



**Figure 8:** Memorable wine tourism engagement factors

Research published by Elsevier in 2016 suggests that emotions are a crucial aspect of influencing tourism experiences. This highlights the importance of providing an environment where your visitors can shape their own memorable experiences. It's also important to recognise that emotions play a significant role in all aspects of the customer journey.

The level in which a visitor might be willing to engage depends on things such as their prior knowledge, leisure motivations, frequency of visit or consumption of your products and general interest. Therefore, highly-involved visitors (ones who have an existing connection to your brand, the region and wine in general) are more likely to participate in structured wine experiences that help them gain greater knowledge, whereas low-involved visitors just starting on their wine-learning journey may be more interested in the cultural, production and social aspects of an experience.

Levels of engagement will likewise vary between new and repeat visitors and customers due to their differing levels of familiarity with your brand and offerings, however the deepest levels of engagement are achieved through interaction and collaboration. A perception of authenticity is generated when the visitor has the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the providers and collaborators encountered during the experience. The main message is that the more they are engaged, the more benefits visitors will derive from the experience, and the higher the likelihood it will lead to a memorable tourism experience.

## 2. Reviewing or developing new products

### What should I consider when reviewing or developing new products?

- **Market Suitability** – Does the product suit the markets that I am targeting? Look at the characteristics and product choices of the consumer from this market and is there a match? The development of your product should be guided by the type of experience your target market seeks
- **Product Tailoring** – Do I need to make product changes or enhancements to suit certain markets, as consumer tastes vary per market? Small changes to tailor-make your products can have significantly positive impacts
- **Unique selling points** – Do you still have a point of difference from your competitors? Review your Unique Selling Points
- **Product feedback** – What feedback have you received on your products? Review your customers' feedback including websites such as Trip Advisor. Have any of your customers or trade partners provided suggestions for new products or changes? What would your consumers like to see?
- **Product Pricing** – Is the product competitively priced and does it allow for all levels of commission? Is the product profitable?
- **Location** – are there attractions and facilities nearby which enhance the appeal of your product? Are you promoting the destination as well as your products?
- **Accessibility** – is your product accessible enough? Could you provide better transport links?
- **Seasonality** – are you open to coincide with peak arrivals from your target market?
- **Hours of operation** – are they regular and compatible with transport times and meet the needs of your markets?
- **Time** – how do you fit into an international itinerary? Consider providing suggested itineraries to demonstrate this
- **Information availability** – for both tourists and your distribution partners
- **Reservations** – How easy is it for consumers to book your product?
- **Sustainability** - make your business more sustainable to save money, reduce your impact and win more customers

### What is product bundling?

It is often difficult to attract international visitors to an area outside established destinations as they may have limited time and knowledge of the area. By working cooperatively with your region to promote the destination as a whole, there is a better chance that visitors will take the time to visit. If a potential visitor can see that within your local/regional area there is a plethora of attractions, day trips, activities and more, they are more likely to extend their stay, thus bringing more value to the area.

To achieve a full destination proposition, work in cooperation with local operators and create a bundle that will make your product more enticing. Bundling refers to aligning and marketing complementary products together to form compelling and unique experiences for the consumer. It helps to improve visitation through regions and increase tourist revenue through multiple suppliers offering complementary products, or via single suppliers providing services that complement their core offering. It also assists by offering a stronger commission-able proposition for distribution partners.

Bundling can be done in many ways. It could be as simple as having links to other organisations' websites on your website. Or it could involve joining forces with other businesses in your region to create more substantial marketing activity and promotions. Most importantly, the key to effectively bundling your experience is to cross-promote like-minded experiences that enhance the overall visitor experience in your region.

### 3. Accessibility

There is a compelling business case for making tourism venues and experiences inclusive. People with health conditions & impairments and their travelling companions spend around £15.3 billion on trips in England each year and people from this market are anecdotally very loyal to places that meet their requirements.

We provide free guidance on how to make your business more accessible in our free Business Advice Hub, including the top 10 tips for inclusive tourism, disability awareness training providers and an Accessible & Inclusive Marketing Toolkit.

You can also produce an Accessibility Guide. An Accessibility Guide enables you to accurately describe your venue's facilities so that disabled visitors can make an informed choice about whether it is suitable for their requirements: [www.accessable.co.uk/](http://www.accessable.co.uk/)

Find out more at [www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible-and-inclusive](http://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible-and-inclusive)

66% of tourists who are interested in visiting a vineyard on their next break or holiday to Britain desire an inclusive and accessible destination. 23% state that they or those in their travel party have a health condition or impairment. It is vitally important that we get this right when planning our wine tourism experiences to ensure as many people as possible can experience what we have to offer.

Identification	Those interested in visiting a winery
NET: Health conditions or impairments	23%
Vision - Blind	4%
Vision - Partially sighted (uncorrected by glasses)	5%
Hearing - Deaf	2%
Hearing - Partial hearing loss	4%
Physical or mobility impairment (wheelchair user)	3%
Physical or mobility impairment (non-wheelchair user)	4%
A specific learning difficulty or intellectual disability (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD(H)D, Down's syndrome)	4%
Dementia (e.g. Alzheimer's disease)	2%
A mental health condition (e.g. depression, schizophrenia, anxiety condition)	6%
A social/communication impairment (e.g. an Autistic Spectrum condition)	2%
A long-term illness or health condition which may reduce the ability to carry out day-to-day activities (e.g. HIV, chronic heart disease, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, severe food allergy)	4%
A health condition or impairment not covered by the categories listed	4%

**Source:** VisitBritain MIDAS Research 2022

## 4. Sustainability

VisitBritain/VisitEngland defines sustainable tourism as practices taken by visitors and businesses in the visitor economy to minimise the negative environmental and social impacts of tourism, and to enhance the economic and cultural benefits for visitors, businesses, and host communities.

Protecting the environment in which we operate is vitally important. 60% of tourists that want to visit a vineyard on their next break or holiday look for destinations that offer the opportunity to travel sustainably/responsibly.

We look at four stages when thinking about sustainability. These stages are pre-trip, in-trip, post-trip and distribution/dispersal.

### Pre-trip

- Planning
- Bookability
- Connectivity

When your customer comes to book an experience at your vineyard, it is a perfect opportunity to promote your sustainability practices. For example, providing your customers with details on how they can visit in the most sustainable way, how they can navigate the vineyard without causing any damage, and removing litter. You can also incorporate this into your pricing structure. For example, there are many businesses in England who offer discounts to customers who visit using more sustainable forms of transport, or if you can understand the customers' carbon footprint, offer ways in which you can help them offset this.

### In-trip

- Buy local
- Reduce waste
- Improve energy efficiency
- Service provision

There are so many areas in which you can support sustainability within your wine tourism experiences. Some of the obvious ones are buy local, use fresh local produce in your offering to showcase the area, in the same way you want people to buy your local wine.

Encourage the reduction of waste, for example, a wine producer in England started to produce their own wine using additional produce from the vineyard. And look for any ways in which you can reduce your energy consumption.

### Post-trip

- Long term commitment
- Infrastructure investment

Supporting sustainability is a long term commitment, but something you ought to be thinking about. Encourage your guests to share information from their trip, especially if they can encourage others to also be sustainable. Invest in your infrastructure and ways of working so you can maintain the environment, and your vineyard in a way it can last for generations to come.

For more information see our VisitBritain regenerative Toolkit [www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/regenerative-tourism](http://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/regenerative-tourism)

## Distribution/dispersal

- Final mile (transport)
- Extending opening season
- Dispersal (city/rural/coastal)

Think about ways in which you can distribute and disperse your customers. Can you partner with local companies to improve the final mile? Is there an alternate way you can encourage customers to use local public transport, or can you work with group operators to encourage more visitors to arrive by bus or coach for example? If you find your summer season is particularly busy, can you extend your opening season to spread out your demand and put less pressure on the vineyard?

There are many ways in which we can support sustainable wine tourism development. Sustainable Wines of Great Britain (SWGB). SWGB is a group of vinegrowers and winemakers whose aim is to secure sustainability at the heart of the UK wine industry. Working within WineGB (the national professional association) their ambition is to create a strong and vibrant community within the English and Welsh wine industry that actively promotes sustainability through information sharing and a certification scheme that is inclusive, effective and well-respected by our customers.

You can find more information [winegb.co.uk/our-wines/sustainable-wines-of-great-britain-certification-scheme/](https://winegb.co.uk/our-wines/sustainable-wines-of-great-britain-certification-scheme/)



## Maintaining a sustainable visit

Educating visitors about refraining from walking among your vines is essential to prevent potential damage or disease. It's important to raise awareness about the risks and encourage visitors to stick to designated paths.

While your cellar door provides wine tastings, food, and diverse activities amidst the scenic vine rows, visitors may be enticed by the ideal Instagram-worthy photo opportunity. It is crucial to dissuade visitors from venturing into the vineyards without relying on expensive or unsightly barriers. Clear signage could effectively communicate this message..

It's crucial to have clear and conspicuous signage regarding moving vehicles. You'll need to determine precisely where you're comfortable with visitors walking, both within the vineyard and while viewing the winery.

Achieving this objective requires effective education, meticulous management of visitor flow and the creation of responsible experiences. Subtle signage can also reinforce the message and help maintain vineyard integrity.

## Tips for protect vines

1. Train cellar door staff, wine tourism, and marketing personnel on the optimal methods for maintaining vine health by managing visitor flow throughout the wine tourism site. Equip your staff with detailed information on specific hazards in the vineyard. Ideally, integrate this into the staff induction process and provide annual updates for existing staff.
2. Educate visitors about their role in keeping vines healthy by not walking into vineyards without permission.
3. Utilise signage to emphasise which areas are off-limits and the reasons behind it. Alternatively, consider installing an "Ask before Access" sign at or near the cellar door or vineyard.
4. Install signage in the car park and outside cellar door encouraging people to enter cellar door first before going to other areas of the property.
5. Encourage visitors to follow gravel or paved roads and paths while exploring your estate. Provide car parking away from the vineyards and establish clearly marked pathways connecting parking areas with restaurants, cafes, and toilets, all while maintaining a suitable distance from vine rows.
6. Highlight specific designated areas that offer fantastic photo opportunities with signage while ensuring that visitors avoid venturing into the vine rows.
7. Ask visitors not to take away any vine material or soil as a souvenir.
8. Don't create unrealistic expectations for tourists by sharing photos of people in your vine rows on your website, on your social media platforms or in your marketing materials.



## 5. Using an occasion-focused design approach

By taking an occasion-focused approach to your product development you will be better able to refine your offer for specific markets, identify the required capability, work within or expand your available capacity and clearly articulate your product's point of difference in line with your business' UVP.

There are four aspects to the Wine Occasion Matrix to help you create relevant products.

### 1. Wine occasion

This is based on the travel desires of different groups of people and includes:

- a. engaging in a social activity (enjoy life, have fun with family and friends, rejuvenation, etc.)
- b. celebrating a special occasion (birthday, engagement, recognition, reunion, etc.)
- c. experiencing wine deeply (winemaker hosted tasting, blending experience, etc.)
- d. enjoying a once in a lifetime experience (special anniversary, high-end culinary experience, bucket list trip to favourite brand / destination, etc.).

### 2. Specific Interests

Interests are aligned in part with the psychographics of particular segments. For example, culinary travellers are likely to want to explore the nexus between wine, food and culture while also enjoying the natural environment of a vineyard location. People visiting wine regions will usually have a combination of primary and secondary motivations that need to be met.

#### Primary wine interests include:

- a. general interest in wine and experiencing it from the source (often regarded as low-involved wine consumers)
- b. enthusiasm for wine and regional style (often regarded as mid-involved wine consumers).
- c. highly engaged wine enthusiast (often regarded as high-involved wine consumers who seek back vintages, specific wines and time with producers).

Food is an important component of most wine tourists and levels of interest can vary from:

- a. good, approachable, fit-for-purpose food
- b. high quality, popular dining options
- c. high end, regional and specialty culinary experiences.

Other secondary factors can influence visitor choice to varying degrees depending on the occasion. These include:

- a. history, culture and learning (people, interpretation, stories, icons, interactive tours, regional festivals, etc.)
- b. events (food, wine, music, art, etc.)
- c. natural environment (beautiful vistas and views, wildlife encounters, soft adventure, etc.)
- d. child friendly venues
- e. pet friendly venues.

### 3. Visitor Profile

This is dictated by both occasion and interests with the key factors being:

- a.** group size (individuals, couples, small groups, large groups)
- b.** age (specific cohorts can overlap enormously and creating different experiences for each cohort can be problematic; consider broad brackets and modify for specific groups as needed)
- c.** ability to pay (again, wealth is relative and some younger wine enthusiasts may be prepared to spend big on a 'once in a lifetime' or special occasion)
- d.** geography (unless you intend to be highly specialised, most of your experiences will be relevant to domestic and international visitors, although some may be more suited to locals, such as small-scale local events and festivals).

### 4. Venue / Host


Your own capabilities, capacity and infrastructure will dictate your final product development choices, your target markets and how you attract your ideal visitor. Considerations include:

- a.** languages spoken (i.e. Chinese, German, French, etc.)
- b.** group capacity (separate spaces for small/large/intimate groups, events, functions, etc.)
- c.** target countries/cultures (based on factors such as regional visitor profiles, current export markets, in-house resources and cultural alignment, etc.)
- d.** special targets/segments (domestic FITs, female travellers, families, culinary travellers, etc.)
- e.** site infrastructure (winery and vineyard tours, walking trails, picnic areas, wetlands, native bush, dining facilities, function rooms, onsite accommodation, playground, etc.).


The benefit of understanding occasion is to identify the specific characteristics and needs of each visitor type in order to meet and (hopefully) exceed their expectations. Clear segmenting should help you understand how best to connect with your visitors, leading to greater marketing efficiencies as you tailor your messaging and collateral for specific markets.




## Occasion Matrix Template

**2**  **Specific interests**


Primary (wine)	Secondary (Food)	Secondary (Food)	Secondary (Food)	Secondary (Food)
Highly engaged enthusiast	High-end, regional and specialty culinary experiences	Pet friendly venues	Child friendly venues	Events experiences
Enthusiasm for wine and regional style	High quality popular dining options	Events		
General interest in wine, visit the source	Good, approachable and fit-for-purpose food	History, culture and learning		

**3**  **Visitor profile**

Group size	Age	Ability to pay	Geography
All	Any	All wealth demographics	Local, Regional & Domestic
All	Any	All wealth demographics	Local, Regional, Domestic & inbound
Individuals, couples, small groups	Tends older	High income/saved specially	Domestic, Inbound
Individuals, couples	Tends older	Wealthy	Domestic, Inbound

**1**  **Wine occasion**

Visitor objective	Availability, quality	Life outcome
A. Engage in social activity	Accessible, enjoyable (£)	Fun, social, escape
B. Celebrate a special occasion	Accessible, premium, enjoyable (££)	Gift, unifying, memory-making
C. Experience wine deeply	Limited, premium, impressive (££)	Special story to tell, transformative
D. Once in a lifetime experience	Restricted, rare, super-premium (£££)	Unforgettable, high story value, transformative

**4**  **Venue/host**

Languages spoken
Group capacity
Specific countries/cultures
Special targets
Site infrastructure

## 6. Design experiences for different markets

### What types of wine tourism experiences can be created?

The following components can be considered when developing your wine tourism experiences:

1. your wine range
2. tasting options
3. food and produce
4. site tours
5. culture and events
6. merchandise
7. member specific experiences.

#### 1. Your wine range

Many wineries have quite a large selection of wines available for tasting, consumption and sale at the cellar door. Analyse and segment your list with different target markets in mind so you can structure experiences around the visitor. For example, younger travellers who are relatively new to wine may prefer lighter/sweeter styles, so these might be the focus of a wine and food matched experience specifically aimed at this segment. If your wines are widely available in retail stores, a cellar door only range and access to back vintages will appeal to brand advocates and can form the core of a comparative tasting.

Unless your brand is sold internationally, your inbound visitors may not know about your wines, so an introductory level structured tasting presented alongside the winery's history/philosophy can become an entry level experience that appeals to a broad range of visitors.

#### 2. Tasting options

From a sales perspective, year-on-year research from the United States supports the concept that structured, seated tastings generate up to 6x higher sales per person than casual tastings at the bar. Therefore, it is worth considering how you can incorporate a seated tasting experience around a particular theme. This could be a winemaker hosted structured tasting, food and wine matching experience, comparative tasting, vertical tasting or even a regional comparative tasting of specific varieties. We know visitors are seeking knowledge as part of their experience, so blending sessions, 'winemaker for a day' and barrel tastings are all experiences that hold appeal.

The Tasting Options table (Figure 10) shows several different tasting options and which visitors they might suit. As you design your experiences, you'll need to go deeper into your market segmentation and choose a particular target for each. The Tasting Selection Template (Figure 11) can be used for this purpose.



Tasting options	Delivery method	Description	Tasting charge	Visitor Type
<b>Informal – standing or seating</b>	Casual	Standard bar/table tasting; pre-booking not generally required	FOC or minimal tasting fee; reimbursable	General winery visitors
<b>Informal – scattered seating</b>	Delivered to guests	Various seating, indoor/outdoor across site; pre-bookings generally not required	FOC or minimal tasting fee; reimbursable	General winery visitors Small private groups
<b>Formal standing or seated</b>	Guided or self-guided	Tasting conducted in private section of bar or separate seated area. Focus on specific ranges of wines.	Fees apply; potentially commissionable	Mid-high involved consumers. Small groups members/VIPs Trade Inbound visitors
<b>Structured – standing or seated</b>	Guided	Specialised tasting for large groups. Complementary food item may be included	Fees apply; Commissionable	Day tour coach groups Charter groups Large private groups Corporate groups
<b>Combined – seated</b>	Guided or self-guided	Wine and food matched tasting	Fees apply; Commissionable	General winery visitors Small groups Inbound visitors
<b>Educational</b>	Usually winemaker or senior host-led	Range of specialised tastings flights (i.e. comparative, vertical, contrasting, etc.); Barrel tastings as part of site tour, blending sessions	Fees apply; Commissionable	Mid-high involved consumers. Wine and food clubs. Private groups. Inbound visitors members

**Figure 10:** Tasting Options

Tasting selection template for different audiences.

### 3. Food and produce

It can be argued that more people travel for food than they do for wine, and wineries – and wine regions – are in a unique position to capitalise on this trend. In addition to simply eating to satisfy hunger, people are keen to learn about the region and venue they are visiting through its food culture and offerings. The decision about whether to incorporate food into your offering will depend on your willingness to invest in simple (or elaborate) preparation, storage and serving areas.

Most English wine regions are fortunate to have access to fresh local produce that can be served readily at the cellar door on platters, in a café or restaurant setting. Other options include offering samples of produce that are also available for take-away sale, such as smallgoods, cheese, relishes and other condiments. Such items can also be included in picnic baskets for consumption on the property.

Taking it a step further, consider introducing cooking classes or demonstrations, either using your existing infrastructure, or investing in ‘pop-up’ options throughout the year by inviting a chef, butcher, baker or other specialist. This works particularly well if a reasonable portion of the produce is grown on the property or nearby.







Testing Selection template for different audiences						
	Casual (served at bar or table)	Scattered (served on-site)	Formal - private bar or table		Structures, private (seated)	High involvement
			Served/ self-guide	Served & guided		
						
 Day tour						
						
Deep wine experience						
						
 Once in a lifetime						
						

Figure 11: Tasting Selection Template

## 4.Site tours

Visitors are seeking experiences that help them understand the provenance of the products they taste and purchase, so the ability to offer winery or vineyard tours can add considerable value to the tasting experience, and contribute to a visitor's MTE. Depending on your site attributes, available resources and accessibility, you can offer a guided or self-guided tour. Self-guided tours will usually require you to develop wayfinding and interpretive signage at key sites on the property along with a brochure or smartphone app for guidance.

If your estate boasts scenic areas, woodlands or other points of interest, why not consider creating a scenic walking trail? This trail could feature designated areas for visitors to pause and soak in the surroundings, have a leisurely picnic, or even partake in a guided tasting session amidst a unique setting.

## 5. Culture and events

Cultural tourism has emerged as a major driver of demand in line with the desire among travellers to immerse themselves in experiences such as local rituals, traditions and stories. The expression of local culture takes many forms, from the passive (observation of artefacts, paintings, storyboards, etc.) to the immersive (participation in an activity, making a physical object, etc.).

It is highly likely that there are several talented arts and crafts people located in your region that you can partner with to present unique works of art that tell the cultural story of your region. Perhaps you have an interesting family history that can be conveyed through storyboards, photographs and other interactive and static interpretive displays throughout your cellar door and venue.

Just as some visitors are interested in being a winemaker for a day or blending their own bottle of wine, others will be interested in producing a piece of art or a practical object they can take with them.

Consider inviting an artist to take up residence during certain seasons and run classes around specific themes using different media.

Events are another way to express the culture of the brand and the region through seasonal themes and are known to be a primary motivator for travel by 50% of people visiting wine regions. Many well-known wine festivals occur around harvest or when the new vintage wines are released. Others focus on the wine styles for which the region is recognised. Individual wineries might focus on events that attract specific market segments, such as people interested in live theatre performances, by hosting a 'Shakespeare in the Vines' event or participating in county-wide cultural events. Community events are another way to attract a new market, work with the local region and convey your values to visitors.

## 6. Merchandise

Souvenirs play an important role in memory-making for travellers, however from a brand perspective, it's important that the type of merchandise you offer positively reflects both your brand and regional provenance wherever possible.

The type of products you choose will be dictated in part by the space you have available for display and storage, your ability to consistently source products that are unique or directly relate to your brand, the importance of merchandise as a revenue source, the role of your cellar door as a tourist destination and the capacity of your team to actively promote products.

If you decide to stock a range of products consider the four R's of merchandising:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. right time – seasonality, demand cycles, promotional periods | 3. right quantity – inventory on hand, stock on shelves, ability to meet demand |
| 2. right place – location, visibility, accessibility            | 4. right price – competitive pricing, promotional offers, member pricing.       |

While it's tempting to source cheaper items made elsewhere, consider how well this practice will reflect your brand and your region and consider alternatives whenever possible. Products labelled 'Made in England' or even in your region will have much greater appeal to inbound visitors, in particular, than items made overseas and potentially in their home country.

Many products lend themselves to sampling. For food products, ensure you follow food safety guidelines, maintain freshness and cleanliness of the area and keep the area well stocked. Provide information about each product, how it can be used, along with purchasing and delivery information. Products that are used in your tasting experiences and on your menu are often popular purchases for visitors and many travellers seek gifts for friends and family. Gift vouchers are another option for travellers with limited space in their luggage.

## 7. Member Specific Experience

Your members are likely to be your most loyal customers and are therefore capable of introducing new customers to your brand. Consider allocating specific areas of your cellar door for members to bring guests and offer exclusive experiences applicable to their membership type and interests. Remember, access is more important than discounts for members, so look for ways to elevate their experience wherever possible.

## Designing an experience

There are several steps to consider as you design your experiences. If you already offer the product, consider how it can be tailored to create 'new' experiences for different markets. You may be looking to attract a specific market with particular requirements, and a small enhancement could have a significant impact on the outcome. This is referred to as 'product tailoring' and you should review all previous customer feedback before deciding what to change about the product.

Review your Trip Advisor and Google reviews, direct customer feedback forms and consult your trade partners for suggestions. If you don't already offer the product, you are creating a new experience, either for an existing market or a new market which you define.

Use the following points as a guide and use the Experience Design Template to create each experience.

### 1. Why is the product required?

Before you decide to offer a particular experience, conduct a regional audit to see if it already exists. If it does, consider whether there is sufficient demand to offer a similar product, or how you can tweak the offer to create a different version or story around the product, perhaps for a new market. If the product doesn't exist, ask yourself what gap it is going to fill and what new or existing market segment it is likely to attract.

### 2. Which market and audience are you targeting?

Many wineries simply offer experiences they think their target audience might want without doing any market research. A thorough understanding of the specific segment you are targeting will help you create the right product, refine the messaging and attract distributors who work with that target market, as some markets seek particular types of experiences while travelling.

If you are planning to sell direct to the consumer, an understanding of their persona and visitor journey will help you communicate your offer effectively. This is known as 'market suitability'.

### 3. When will your product be offered?

Consider the effects of seasonality and frequency of offer relative to your target market. Do your opening hours coincide with peak arrival times? Hours of operation need to be consistent and compatible with transport options and timetables, and also convenient for travellers. International visitors aren't constrained by days of the week in the same way as domestic visitors, and often want to visit during the week when many wineries may choose to close. The duration of your experience is also important and needs to be clearly promoted, especially if you are part of a multi-visit or multi-day international itinerary.

### 4. What is the activity or experience?

Outline each of the components of your experience. For example, if you are offering a tour and tasting, describe each element in detail using adjectives to capture people's imagination and entice them to book.

## 5. What resources do you need and what is the cost?

Resources include people, time, infrastructure and cost of goods. For example, a winery tour and tasting might require a guide, use of hard hats and hi-vis vests, interpretive signage, specialty glassware, wine, tasting mat and notes, pens and private seating area.

Some of these components only need to be purchased/created once, others constitute variable costs that relate to the number of participants.

## 6. What will you charge?

The amount you charge will be based upon your input costs, the distribution channels you choose, the profit margin desired and market expectations. The final retail price should allow for distributor commissions of between 10% (travel agents / local trade partners) and 30% (Inbound Tour Operators) – more detail is available on pricing for distribution partners in Module 3. Ensure your product is competitively priced and that the price can be maintained for at least 18 months.

## 7. How will you promote and sell your product?

The most profitable channel is direct to consumer so ensure visitors can book online via your website. Set up a page for visitor experiences and clearly promote each product, including a price and book now button. Ideally this will mean having reservation software so bookings can be paid for up front and confirmed immediately. Many third-party reservation platforms also provide a service for travel agents to book your products on behalf of their customers. Local promotion activities start with your Destination Management Organisation's (DMO) website and visitor information centre.

## 8. How will you measure results?

Each product should have its own set of measurement criteria that can be evaluated regularly. Calculate the minimum number of sales per product to achieve break-even and set specific goals around frequency, volume and profitability. You can use post-visit surveys to measure customer satisfaction.

## 9. What is the product's UVP?

Your ultimate goal is to have people raving about the wonderful experience they had with you, so consider carefully what you want them to be saying – online and in person. Ensure they leave with a thorough understanding of your brand and can readily articulate the point of difference between your experience and any others they encounter.



# Map your visitor journey



## 1. Understanding journey principles

The visitor journey begins long before someone turns up at your cellar door and typically follows a logical sequence along a series of ‘touchpoints’. The process of mapping these touchpoints provides you with insights into the journey undertaken by different types of visitors and enables you to analyse and improve their experience.

As discussed previously, the modern visitor is at the centre of the experience and their behaviour influences the outcome of both yours and their own actual experience. By focusing on the outcome – creating a memorable tourism experience – you will be able to maximise each window of opportunity presented along the journey.

Not all aspects of the visitor journey are within your direct control so while you need to be aware of how each touchpoint can affect the visitor experience, narrow your focus to those ‘moments of truth’ you can really influence.

### What is a journey map?

The journey map is simply a diagram that shows each step your visitors take on their way to your door – and beyond. While there are numerous important touchpoints, there are three broad stages:

1. before the experience
2. during the experience
3. after the experience.

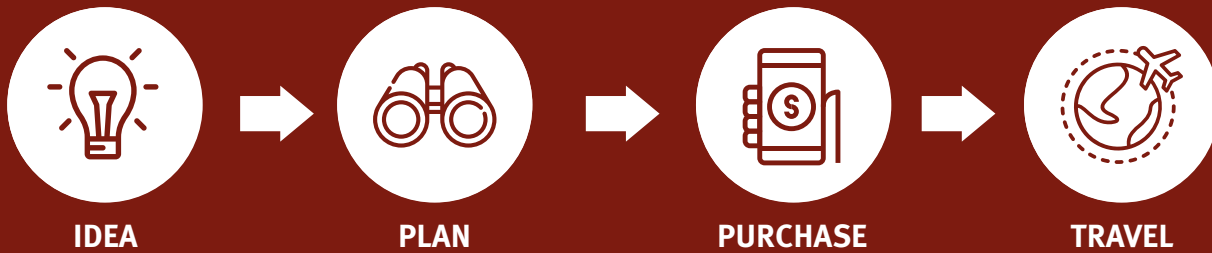
The timing between each stage can vary considerably from hours to months or even years, depending firstly on the geographical location of your visitor relative to your business, along with other practical considerations such as affordability and timing. Someone may have a strong desire to visit but be constrained by lack of resources or inability to take time off work during the travel season, or have family commitments, so they may spend considerable time in the first phase before circumstances allow them to take action. Staying in the consideration set for these eventual visitors is vitally important.

Touchpoints may be direct (you are in contact with the visitor, reservations are through your website, etc.) or indirect (information / bookings are conveyed through a third party, communication is one-way, etc.). It’s important to focus on those you can realistically influence and service while being aware of how your business or experience is being promoted through other channels.

Finding out what your ‘ideal’ visitor wants and needs is important in designing your experiences and influencing their journey. Information can be sourced via direct feedback (i.e. surveys, interviews, social media reviews, phone, email and feedback forms), direct observation and secondary research from tourism organisations and research institutions. Armed with this information, which should include motivational factors, you can readily map the journey of each market segment you have previously selected as a focus for your business.

Before, during and after are useful ways to break down a tourism experience. Once an experience is developed, designed and implemented, creating a visitor journey provides a way of ensuring that their experience is enjoyed. The overall experience will be diminished if the visitor encounters significant barriers during their journey (i.e. inability to make a reservation, communicate with you or locate your property). Post-visit is also important – you must take the opportunity to embed lifetime customer value that turns a first-time visit into a long-term earning opportunity.





## Stage 1: Before the experience

Planning a trip is as much an emotional journey as it is physical, so it's important to consider what motivates people to visit your country, region and enterprise, as this will influence your messaging for each type of experience you offer. There are also likely to be various barriers and other uncertainties that may influence their purchase decision which need to be removed or allayed during this phase. This part of the journey should be viewed primarily from the visitor's perspective.



### 1A. Idea

Before people can get to your experience, they need to know about it, and knowing starts with an initial idea. During this dreaming/awareness phase, visitors may be seeking inspiration and education through travel stories in magazines, travel sites and blogs or television and YouTube videos. Regional marketing and advertising (traditional and digital) each have the ability to influence the initial idea that will ultimately result in them finding your experience. Stories and links on your own website will also increase the chance that someone with a particular idea in mind will land upon your page using keyword search.



### 1B. Plan

The research and review phase is a critical part of the journey, and an area you can directly influence.

During this phase, a potential visitor might seek out actual traveller reviews (i.e. Trip Advisor) about the destination and available experiences, locate the regional website (through Google search or Google Things to Do), perhaps read guide books and seek specific 'insider' advice on hyper-local tourist websites. Images play a key role in generating positive emotions among potential travellers to take an action, so ensure you have a well-stocked gallery featuring your property, facilities, activities, people and products.

The higher the visibility of an individual business or group of operators, the higher the likelihood that a particular visitor will select you. Being visible on generic web searches, Trip Advisor, regional tourism websites, regional maps, and Google/Apple maps all increases the possibility of a visit being booked. You are also easier to find if you are part of some of the regions tour bus/car routes that many customers use as a way of planning trips.



### 1C. Purchase

Buying and booking is a critical part of the 'before' experience. Once the visitor is ready to book, searches will encompass transport and accommodation options, either through direct search (websites) or via a travel agent. While some visitors book only the major components of their trip in advance, those who don't like to leave things to chance will seek to book their meals and activities as well.

The ease with which this can be done will have a significant impact on whether you get the business or not, especially if a visitor is from a different region or overseas, or is booking their travel through an agent. Millennials are particularly keen to use online reservation services to book all manner of services and activities, including wine experiences, especially if they have seen a positive peer-review or received a direct recommendation. The availability of bookable experiences increases your chances of being included on a tour operator or travel agent's itinerary, and reduces your reliance on over-resourcing your cellar door on the off-chance walk-in visitors may request a tour or special experience.

Once bookings have been made, it is likely some research will continue until the date of travel, as visitors seek 'social proof' through sites such as Facebook and Instagram for both validation, further inspiration and reassurance.



### 1D. Travel

The popular adage tells us that getting there is half the fun, and indeed it can be. Or it can be infuriating, fear-inducing or just mildly frustrating. Travelling to the region in which you are located then finding your property is the final component of 'Before the Experience'. You don't have any control over airline schedules, trains and other public transport services, but you can assist visitors who are self-driving. Availability (and accuracy) on mapping services like Apple and Google are the first things to address. Check your Google business listing and make sure that when someone selects 'Directions' and activates their smartphone's GPS it will take them directly to your cellar door – not your head office, or somewhere up the road. Regional maps, both physical and digital, are also used widely by travellers, so make sure you're listed and your location is accurate. Directional signage on and from main roads is essential for self-drive travellers who are not relying on digital guides to find you.

Where possible, ensure signage is located at a suitable distance from your entry or turn off for visitors to safely brake and turn.





## Stage 2: During the experience

Your visitor's experience probably began long before they arrived at your property, during which time they formed a specific set of expectations that need to be met or exceeded in order for them to have a memorable tourism experience.



### 2A. Arrival

Wayfinding begins when people arrive at your property and see your sign, which should clearly state your hours of operation and provide a welcome message when you're open. Good directional signage will indicate where to find the cellar door and other facilities, and where to park. Once parked, signage should direct people to the front entrance where they are greeted by a staff member who can provide further direction and information.

First impressions can make or break a business and it's often the small things that count. If your entry pathway is steep and gravelled, some people will find it difficult to navigate, and they'll spend their precious first minutes staring at the ground while trying to remain upright. If the cellar door is a considerable distance from the car park, how will people manage during inclement weather? Once they've found their way through the front door, how long do they need to wait before being greeted, seated and taken care of? There are numerous factors to consider at this point that will heighten the experience and create a strong brand impression, so it's worth spending time considering each element carefully from a sensory and practical viewpoint.



### 2B. Experience

The experience itself will have several components, depending on what you're offering. We're going to assume you've developed a commissionable product that a visitor has pre-booked for a specific time period. Just as with any booking, they'll need to 'check in' with staff first. If you don't have a dedicated concierge or meeting point, consider how visitors will make their presence known to staff. This 'moment of truth' needs to be handled professionally. The experience itself offers the opportunity to truly work your magic, ideally immersing your guests in an educational, entertaining activity that engages their senses and encourages interaction. In addition to meeting the product specifications that the guest has booked, the experience needs to be delivered by well trained and passionate brand ambassadors (whether they be staff or owners).

### 2C. Satisfaction

This critical moment of truth occurs at the conclusion of the booked experience when the visitor mentally ticks off the delivered experience against their pre-visit expectations.

At this point your visitor is emotionally connected to you and your brand and potentially ready to become an advocate and lifelong customer. This is not the moment to step away: actively seek feedback while the experience is fresh, and don't be afraid to ask for constructive criticism if the situation warrants, as true satisfaction often results from a well-handled complaint.



## 2D. Purchase

Let's face it, if you're a winery, you want to sell wine, not just experiences that contain wine. Fortunately, purchasing wine (and other products) is an important and legitimate part of the overall experience. The point of visit is the best time to make a wine sale while the emotional connection is strong.

Depending on the circumstances, you may be able to sell a case of wine or a commitment club membership, both of which are more likely to create ongoing loyalty than a token bottle of wine or merchandise. Having said that, any brand- related purchase is likely to enhance memory-making, so it's important that staff are trained to identify the right solution for each visitor. This is particularly important if your visitors are from overseas and interstate where travelling with wine is impossible, but taking a gift pack of produce or a book about your brand is easy. Advising visitors where they can purchase your wine post-visit is also important. Be sure to also include a list of restaurants in their home town that offer your wine.





## Stage 3: After the experience

Post-visit engagement with your customer is vitally important if one of your goals is to create lifetime value through repeat visits and purchases. Attracting new visitors based on the experiences of happy customers means activating your most important referral channel: word of mouth – both in person and online.



### 3A. Sharing

There are many ways for your visitors' memorable experiences to be shared. These include:

- obtaining testimonials before they leave and sharing these on your website, newsletters and social media channels
- using crowd sourced content from social media and review sites to build your presence in the marketplace and reach people who are in the planning stage and not currently aware of your business or what you offer
- your own content based on events and happenings
- your own content by replying to positive comments and negative reviews in online forums such as Trip Advisor, Google Reviews and Facebook Reviews
- referring your customers to other businesses and places that may be of interest with an instruction to let the destination business know who sent them
- formalising reciprocal referral programs with complementary tourism businesses
- formal 'refer a friend' campaigns to encourage word of mouth and elicit new business.



### 3B. Return/Re-Purchase

Unlike many tourism businesses, wineries have a unique ability to create ongoing relationships that lead to future visits and regular purchases. Research undertaken by the University of South Australia recognised that people who visit cellar doors and purchase wine have a high propensity to re-purchase within 3-6 months of visit, either direct or from a retail outlet.

Re-purchasing of your product can occur via a number of avenues:

- membership and loyalty club (ideally signed up on the day of visit)
- order forms for future purchase (ideally with a special offer)
- subscription to a mailing list based on preferences (i.e. events, special offers, new releases, etc.)
- online store to purchase wine, gifts and event tickets
- Facebook buy button for those that follow you on Facebook or Instagram
- list of outlets so that people can access your product at retail.

Returning can be enhanced via a number of means:

- getting visitors to follow you on social media so that remain high in the consideration set for their next trip
- using paid promotion options on social media to increase frequency of viewing among followers
- responding to reviews and providing additional information to encourage a repeat visit
- providing incentives to re-visit
- maintaining regular contact (based on their preferred method of communication) to provide information about new experiences – yours and others in your region – and special offers to encourage repeat visits.











### 3C. Engage

Engaging post-visit is the process of activating previous customers and visitors with whom you are not in regular contact. Activities include:

- retargeting people who have visited your website with relevant web advertising and calls to action
- paid promotions on social media
- using analytics to test which stories, offers and news get the best response rates on your EDM's
- calling lapsed club members and others who have visited for specific events
- offering regular buyers and members special deals beyond the usual offers
- sending Christmas or other special occasion cards, where you have a physical address, with a promotional voucher
- segmenting your list and inviting intrastate and interstate customers to re-visit with family and friends through a special offer or event.

## 2. Build desire along the journey

Pulling it all together will build desire across the journey. Each touchpoint is an opportunity to increase initial interest, improve the overall experience, increase wine purchases and create lifetime value from a visit.

	 IDEA	 PLAN	 PURCHASE	 TRAVEL	 EXPERIENCE	 SHARE	 RETURN	 ENGAGE
<b>Above the line</b>	Branding	Branding	External Platform					
<b>Media</b>	Stories	Stories		Signage				
<b>Regional</b>	Stories	Keyword Search	Book	Directions			Re-visit Region	Re-target
<b>Online Sellers</b>	Promotion	Product search	Book online					Promotion
<b>Review Sites</b>		Reviews	Book/ phone	Address/ link		Review		
<b>Mapping Sites</b>	Browsing	Searching	Book/ Phone	Directions		Review		
<b>Social Media</b>	Scrolling	Profile Review	Link to reservations	Directions	Insta/FB	Regular posts		Re-target/ respond
<b>Your website</b>	SEO, Re-target	Your story	Book/ phone	Directions		Guest stories	Retailers and shop	Re-target
<b>WOM</b>	Referrals	Referrals				Referrals Tell friends	Bring friends	
<b>Members</b>					Joins	Referrals	Buying	Offers
<b>EDM</b>							Click throughs, calls to action	Offers
<b>Staff</b>			Phone/ email response	Hospitality	Engage	Your stories		

This table summarises a range of opportunities to influence the visitor journey. It is virtually impossible to develop a comprehensive plan all at once so select the parts that you are able to do really well and create great desire-enhancing components from them. Deliver on them well and work on improving other areas to the greatest of your ability as time and resources allow. Building a visitor journey is a journey in itself. Use the table and Visitor Journey Template to create a plan of action.

# Your unique value proposition (UVP)



# 1. Understanding and using your UVP

## What is a unique value proposition?

A Unique Value Proposition (UVP) is a two or three sentence summary, which lists the features, advantages and benefits of your product or experience. It speaks directly to your customers, but it's not just a catchy phrase or slogan and it is not the same as a mission statement. Its job is simple: to explain to your ideal customers what your product or service does, why they need it, and why yours is better than what others offer.

## Why do you need a unique value proposition?

Consumers face an abundance of choice daily, such as when searching for accommodation, there are many brands and types of accommodation, each with its own reviews. The Unique Value Proposition (UVP) clarifies why your option suits them best. By incorporating it into marketing and the customer experience, it aids decision-making and even enables customers to justify their choice to others. A compelling UVP fosters confidence in their purchase, potentially turning them into loyal advocates. Ultimately, your UVP sets your offer apart from competitors.

## Know who your customer are

Start by getting to know your customers! Why do they purchase your product or experience? Think about breaking them down into groups based on things like age, interests, what they need, or what they're aiming for. The more details you have, the easier it is to make your product just right for them. You can even create 'buyer personas' to represent the people you're trying to reach and understand what makes them tick."

## Research your competitors

Check out your competition, there are many tools such as SWOT analysis, Porter's five forces, or 'Strategy canvas' that can help you see what they're great at and where they might need a boost. Look at their websites, social medias and check out their reviews. This gives you insight into how they are winning over customers and what they're offering. This will help you to spot the gaps and identify where you can really shine. It's all about finding your unique spot in the market!"

## Think about what should be included in your Unique Value Proposition (USP)

It must align with your customer segments and competitive analysis. Your UVP should concisely answer what you offer, how it meets your customers needs and why you it is superior to alternatives. Emphasise your unique benefits that directly address customer needs, using a formula such as 'Product or service helps customer segment achieve goal or solve problem by unique feature or benefit'. Make your UVP clear, compelling, and convincing enough to prompt customers to choose you.

## Spend time testing and refining your value proposition - to get it right!

Testing your UVP is vital to ensure it resonates with your audience. Use methods such as surveys and questionnaires to gather feedback to help you to refine your message. This process can help to create a more compelling and relevant UVP. By aligning your messaging with customer preferences, you increase your chances of attracting and retaining customers.

## 2. Creating your UVP

Focus on clarity and keep it simple, ensuring you address the following three key points

- What products and experiences are on offer?
- Why is what you offer, better than the alternatives
- Why should the customer choose you?

Creating your Unique Value Proposition (UVP) in 4 easy stages

<b>Step 1</b>	Make a list of all your products and experiences, and for each, identify its FAB statement (Features, Advantages and Benefits).
<b>Step 2</b>	Research your customers to better understand your target audience. The best approach is to ask your existing customers why they choose to buy from you. Ask why they selected your product or service and what other options they considered.
<b>Step 3</b>	Investigate your competitors. This will help you to identify ways to distinguish yourself. Consider practical aspects, but also don't forget the less tangible benefits such as customer service, how you make them feel and your brand perception.
<b>Step 4</b>	Finally, begin drafting your message and then test it out! By now, you should have an understanding of your strengths, your customers' desires, and what makes you stand out. Aim for two sentences and remember, it might take some time to get it just right! Once you have a couple of versions, try them out on your customers to see which one works best.

Here's an example from another industry:

Be part of the family on a real working farm – from paddock to plate (a natural experience)		
Working Farm	Cattle Farming Education Tours	Aussie BBQ
Explore	Discover (Learn)	Sample
8ha of farm country	Guided tours by owners	Platters Wide range of options Vegetarian dishes
Typical farming area		
Within 3hrs of Sydney	Blue Mountains/ Featherdale Wildlife Park	

### 3. Using your UVP

#### What kind of things might you want to be talking about?

- tastings - paid, public, private, tasting room with winemaker, food matching
- food - local produce, alfresco, fine dining, picnics, specialty areas
- environment - gardens, sculptures, vineyard views and landscapes
- accomodation - your own accomodation or accomodation that is close by

#### Using your UVP

The reason it takes so much time to get the UVP right, is that it should be created once and used often. It will be the base of everything you say about your product, how you present your product and how you deliver your product. It will be used in:

- your sales pitch
- your marketing materials
- your promotional message
- your customer interfaces
- signage

In terms of signage, the key use for the UVP is to help customers fully understand your offering and how to engage with it quickly and easily. We call this your experience “set up”.

Some key points about how the “set up” can help your business:

- It allows visitors time to understand your offers and make decisions as to suitability and purchase.
- It also assists with language and cultural issues.
- It should be used externally, and at point of purchase.
- It should speed up ticket queues and your staff.
- If staff receive the same enquiries on a daily basis - you need to adjust the set up!
- It is critical to include timings, duration and costs for experiences.

Here is an example of a good UVP set up:

“We guarantee you will see Sea Lions - any day, any time, up close and personal”	
Two Ways	
On Your Own	Guided Tour
Look over the beach at them Public pathway Viewing deck Available anytime Minimum time: 10 minutes <b>Cost:</b> Free	See them from the beach Separate pathway Qualified marine ranger guides Available on the hour Duration: 45 minutes <b>Cost:</b> \$25 per adult, \$15 per child
Park open every day of the year - 10am to 5pm	

The real working farm example is about the total offering and benefit that the operator provides. It is made up and supported by the three key categories of product or experience that they offer.

It is necessary, however, to now start looking at the UVPs for each of those products and experiences. If we look at the example, the key benefit for each of the experiences and therefore all that needs to be done is to build out the details.

Be part of the family on a real working farm – from paddock to plate (a natural experience)		
Working Farm	Cattle Farming Education Tours	Aussie BBQ
Explore	Discover (Learn)	Sample
8ha of farm country	Guided tours by owners	Platters Wide range of options Vegetarian dishes
Typical farming area		
Within 3hrs of Sydney	Blue Mountains/Featherdale Wildlife Park	

So, the benefit or UVP of each experience can stand alone:

- explore a working farm
- discover and learn all about cattle farming
- sample an Aussie BBQ.

Whilst these are simplistic examples, they nonetheless highlight what you need to do for each experience and the need for all experiences to add together for the total offering.

Research shows that establishing brand or experience ambassadors is one of the best ways to promote your brand and products internationally. You want them repeating your UVP, and telling others about it. You want to create a lifetime value with the customer. Remember, whatever you promise **MUST** be delivered, and you need to look at what happens when they leave your place.

We strongly recommend you consider:

- **fulfilment:** Most people want to take some of your great wine home to remember their experience and can't take it on a plane. Set up international fulfilment in line with your target markets
- **membership:** Invite visitors into a club with delivery and other benefits – they want to remember the great experience you have delivered (and get it to them again and again and again).
- **online store** with international fulfilment
- **special offers** and benefits are a must.

We have stated throughout the program that the UVP is one of the most challenging but rewarding elements for success.

# Select key inbound markets

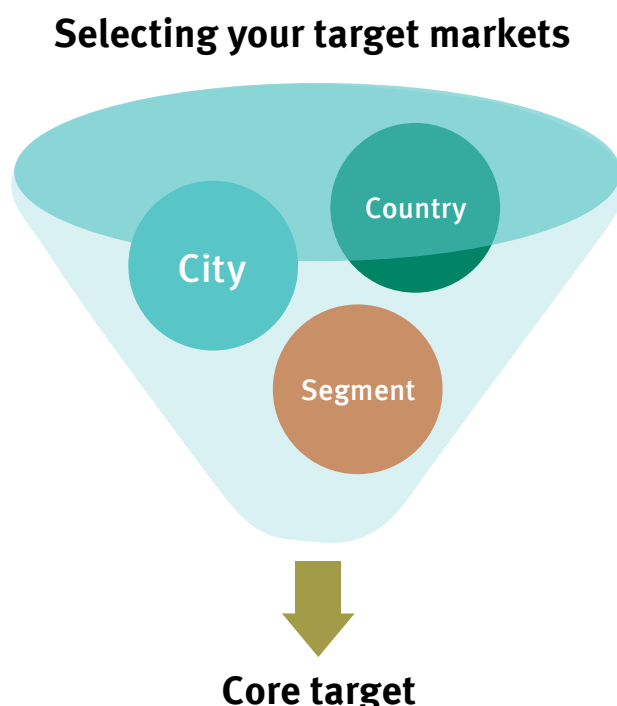


## 1. Select your target markets

### Where do you start?

You have to target and prioritise. Most of you don't target all of England because it is too big and not all of it is relevant or has potential for your business. The same is true when we talk about inbound travellers. It is better to reduce your selection and work harder for success, than to spread yourself too thin.

In many cases remember that the populations of these countries are much larger than England and, in many cases, so are the populations of individual cities. You need to be sure you have the capability and the capacity to service the demand if successful.



**Figure 12:** selecting your target markets

### How does it impact you?

It means using all of the tools we have already introduced in the program to date.

<b>Step 1</b>	Define what you want the inbound business to do for you.
<b>Step 2</b>	Know your business offer via your UVP.
<b>Step 3</b>	Review your current customer profile information.
<b>Step 4</b>	Review and refine your wine tourism experience offer.
<b>Step 5</b>	Build a profile of the customer occasions that you believe will best match with this experience.
<b>Step 6</b>	Select a maximum of 2 specific segments on which to focus.
<b>Step 7</b>	Identify which markets (primary and secondary) and which cities (primary and secondary) best match each segment/occasion.
<b>Step 8</b>	Input to your Wine Tourism Plan.

## What are the key segments?

Segmentation is a research and marketing term that relates to dividing consumers into specific groups of people who share similar characteristics, and/or shared needs and desires.

There are four key groups of customer segmentation which we have previously identified:

### Main Segments

Geographic	Psychographic	Demographic	Behavioural
Of a region or regions	Of a particular attribute, view, value, personality or lifestyle	Of a particular age, generation, or socio-economic group	Of a specific behaviour

However, segmentation at this level is not the only method of identifying potential visitors due to inherent constraints imposed by a set of specific factors. These include:

- your wine brand, which positions you in the minds of consumers
- a retail product that usually reflects a specific regional style
- a fixed location within a defined region
- finite resources (time, people and cash)
- a reputation that is externally defined by the region
- a propensity for travellers to visit 3-4 similar venues in an outing.

The expanded table below shows how you can further categorise your target markets to select which is most appropriate for your business and your product offering.

### Main Segments

Geographic	Psychographic	Demographic	Behavioural
Of a region or regions	Of a particular attribute, view, value, personality or lifestyle	Of a particular age, generation, or socio-economic group	Of a specific behaviour
By country By City	Free and Independent	Age brackets	Type of travel
	Transformative travellers	GenZ	Purpose of travel
	Lifestyle	Millennials	Length of stay
	High value	GenX	Repeat visitors
	Inbound	Baby boomer	Purpose of travel
	Culinary travellers	Female solo travellers	Length of stay
	Foodies	Upper Middle Class	Repeat visitors
	Frequent flyers		

People from different segments have different motivators, needs, and expectations. In order for you to find your best prospective customers you need to create a fit with the type of occasion for which you are being visited. From this you can identify your:

- product offering
- capability
- capacity
- business reasons for wanting them.

## How can you do it?

It is not easy but there is a range of information that can help you identify which markets may be best for you.

This relates to the total potential number of visitors, their motivators and perceptions of wine, your ability to meet their specific requirements, limiting risk and the capability and relevance for direct booking of your offering.

We have created a tool called the Market Comparison Template, which is available in your Resource Toolkit, to assist you in assessing different market opportunities.

## Market comparison template

### Module 2 Checklist:

	Review requirements of wine tourism.
	Determine your primary wine tourism business model.
	Review ideal revenue options.
	Prioritise and target markets, visitors and segments using the Wine Occasion Matrix.
	Base experiences on authenticity, culture, hospitality, research and differentiation.
	Design experiences for your target markets based on available resources and demand.
	Identify your target audience.
	Build desire around critical touchpoints.
	Learn how your visitors book their trips.
	Tailor and adjust service delivery to meet visitor needs.
	Know your unique product experience and make it your UVP.
	Focus on the visitor.
	Use it as the basis for all your messaging.
	Tailor and adjust your service deliver to meet visitor needs.
	Know your unique product experience and make it your UVP.
	Keep up to date with VB Market Updates.

# The tourism distribution system



# Securing inbound business: How to make it work?

## 1. Wine distribution versus tourism distribution

### How does wine distribution compare to tourism distribution?

While there are distinct differences between the way in which wine (the product) and tourism products/experiences are distributed, they both are eventually purchased by an end-user – the customer.

Let's look at the differences and similarities between wine distribution and tourism distribution. They both have exporters, wholesalers, distributors and retailers. In the model below, the physical nature of wine distribution is represented by the ship, warehouse, delivery van and retail counters.

Wine distribution consists of producing a product, setting a wholesale or FOB price and selling it through a distribution system of exporter/importers, wholesalers, in-market distributors, retailers and finally to a customer.

Wineries can also choose to sell direct to any distributor in the channel and direct to the customer.

The travel distribution system is somewhat similar in that there are distributors at the inbound, wholesale and retail levels and wineries can choose to sell through any of these channels or direct to the consumer. Unlike wine distribution, in tourism all parts of the supply chain are virtual/online from the perspective of the wine tourism provider. In this model, the exporter is represented by an Inbound Tour Operator, wholesalers are aggregators of tourism products while the Online Travel Agent is effectively the last-mile delivery van, although many now play multiple roles within the system. The Retail Travel Agent can take many forms, from bricks and mortar offices, to online resellers, Destination Management Companies, visitor centres, tour operators and more. Each of these distributor types will be covered in detail in the next section.

Wineries fall into the category of 'tourism operator' or 'attraction' within the tourism distribution system and the experience you provide is called a 'tourism product.' These references will be used throughout this section.

In addition to selling wine direct through cellar door, clubs and online stores, many wineries also choose to sell wine indirectly through restaurants, wholesalers, retailers, online resellers and export channels. The purpose for doing this is simply to sell inventory through as many channels as possible, at a reasonable rate of return to maintain a profitable business, while building brand awareness and market security.

Tourism distribution works in a similar manner, only you're selling a different kind of 'product' – in this case an experience, where wine may or may not be part of the product. To understand this concept, you'll need to regard your bottle of wine as simply a component of the experience, not the experience itself, and not a product in its own right.

## How does the distribution system work?

The travel distribution system is a complex, global network of independent businesses, so you will need to understand the structure of the distribution system specific to your target markets before marketing internationally. This network includes a series of distributors or intermediaries, who play a specific role in the development, promotion and purchasing process of English tourism experiences.

## 2. Travel distribution

### Why work with travel distributors?

Travel distributors allow you to broaden your customer base far beyond the reach of your own limited marketing budget. They are important to the inbound tourism industry as overseas consumers still rely heavily on the advice of local travel experts when planning and booking their holiday in England, particularly in long haul and emerging markets. Travel distributors can also provide market intelligence, insights and advice on a specific market.

The travel distribution system covers all the channels through which an international traveller can buy your product. Other than approaching you directly, international travellers may book your product as follows:

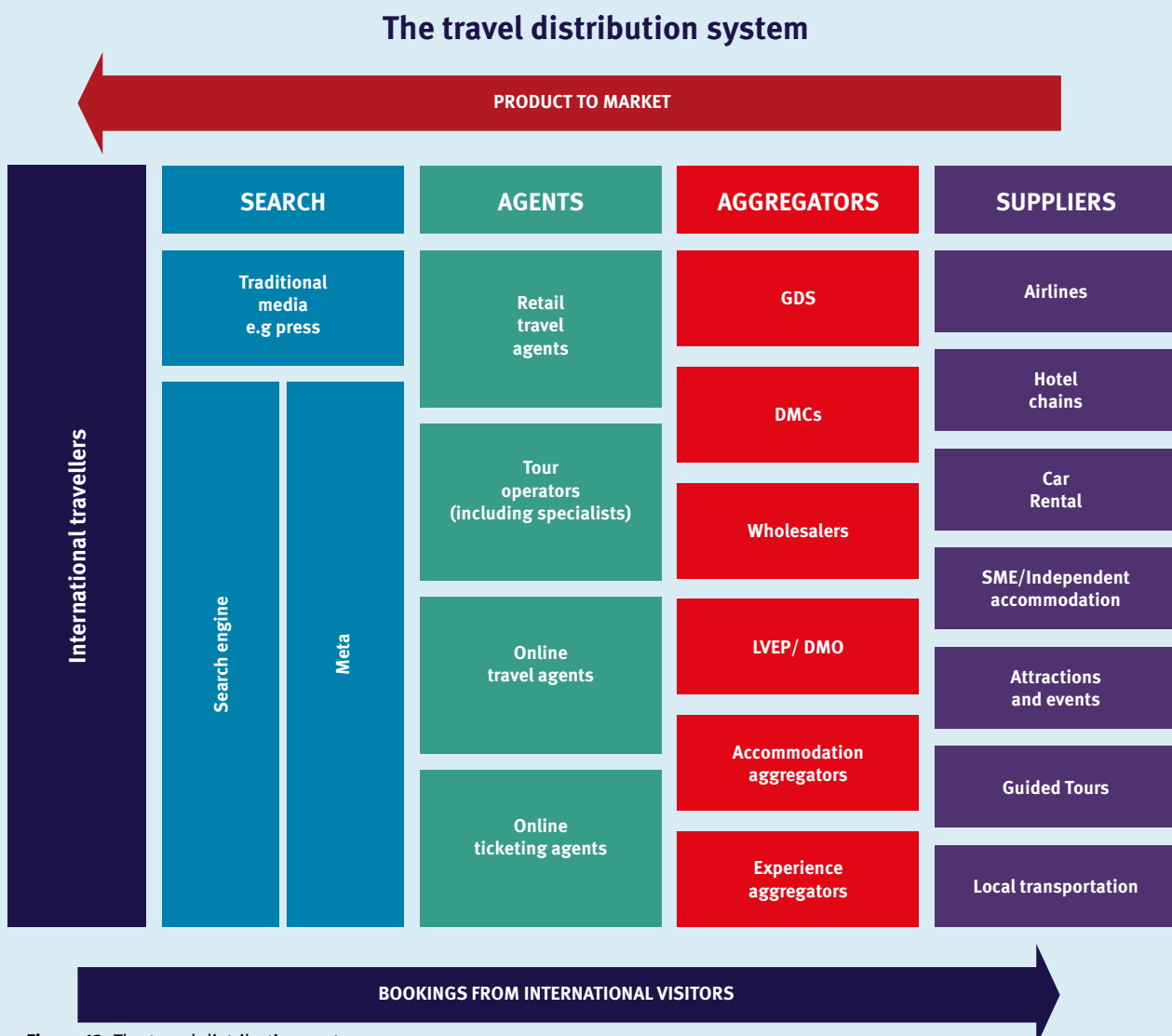


Figure 13: The travel distribution system

## How does the distribution system work?

The travel distribution system has customarily been very structured with clearly defined functions for each role in the chain. However, online technology and company mergers have transformed the tourism industry, with an increasing amount of crossover in the roles and functions of various sectors of the distribution system. Businesses are engaging a mix of distribution partners to ensure the most effective way of reaching their target consumers.

The diagram on the previous page shows the elements involved in the travel distribution landscape. As this distribution system continues to evolve, it is important to understand the structure of the companies that you work with and their relationships with other organisations.

With the growth of the internet, many traditional travel distributors such as wholesalers and travel agents are taking an online approach as well as offering their services from a retail shop front. There has also been an increase in online travel agencies (OTAs) who operate solely in the online environment.

Both online and traditional distribution partners have the opportunity to work with each other and directly with products and customers. Therefore, it is vital to understand each partner's role and how your product can benefit from their part in the distribution network. For further information, please refer to section 5 - Know your markets.

## Who are the key players?

### Search

#### *Traditional search*

Involves offline search e.g. press, offline listings etc.

#### *Search engines*

Those online tools such as Google and Bing.

#### *Meta search*

Refers to aggregators (see Experience aggregators and Accommodation aggregators) which search across multiple websites and show the results in one place on their own website e.g. Viator, Get Your Guide, Trivago.

### Agents

#### *Retail travel agents*

Retail travel agents are based in the consumer's country of origin and deal directly with consumers. Retail travel agents offer wide distribution in prominent shop front locations and are a convenient place for travellers to make bookings and buy holidays.

Retail travel agents usually belong to a larger chain of travel agencies, and may be vertically integrated, selling the products of a specific tour operator.

#### *Tour operators*

e.g. Flight Centre, Dertour, Cox & Kings, TUI, coach operators

Tour operators contract supplier product or may have it supplied by a wholesaler, or a DMC.

They coordinate the reservation, confirmation and payment of travel arrangements on behalf of the consumer and may package up ground arrangements with flights.

They operate B2C when selling direct, or B2B via a travel agent.

#### *Online travel agents*

e.g. Expedia.

Online travel agents (OTAs) specialise in online distribution and deal directly with consumers and tourism product. Consumers can purchase a product or an entire holiday package online.

## Agents

### *Online ticketing agents*

e.g. Viator, getyourguide

Online ticketing agents contract tickets to attractions, and sell directly to the consumer online.

## Aggregators

### *Global Distribution Systems (GDS)*

e.g. Amadeus, Sabre, Galileo.

A global distribution system is a computer system that holds inventory from airlines, hotels, car hire etc. Sellers (e.g. retail travel agent, online travel agent) have direct access to this inventory.

### *Destination Management Companies (DMCs)*

e.g. Tour Partner Group, Abbey Ireland & UK.

A Destination Management Company normally operates in two ways:

1. As a contracting operation and supplier of packages or itineraries which it sells B2B (e.g. via a tour operator). For example, Tour Partner Group supply product for Dertour, in Germany.
2. As a provider of group travel services (e.g. bespoke travel services for groups). This may involve some or all aspects of meetings, incentives, conferences and events travel (MICE). It may also involve travel for schools, or other groups. Here the DMC can be involved in a few or all elements of the group travel.

### *Wholesalers*

e.g. Miki Travel, JAC Travel.

Wholesalers contract supplier product. They are B2B and act as a silent partner. They will sell these products via travel agents, tour operators, coach operators and other third parties.

### *Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP)*

e.g. Marketing Manchester.

Some LVEPs have their own retail sites, for products they have contracted relevant to their geographical area.

### *Accommodation aggregators*

e.g. Trivago.

An accommodation aggregator searches across multiple websites and show the results in one place on its own website.

### *Experience aggregators*

e.g. Viator, Get Your Guide,

An experience aggregator searches across multiple websites and show the results in one place on its own website.

Documentation branding will either be that of the aggregator or the supplier, depending on the set up of the aggregator.

### 3. How to work with the distribution system's main players

#### What are tourism distributors looking for in products?

In the previous section we identified who the key distributors are and how the overall system works. If you have decided to work with these distribution partners, you need to ensure that your product offers the following minimum requirements, commonly termed as being 'export ready':

- Quality products and experiences that are delivered consistently.
- Reliability and efficiency (consistent operating hours and regular schedules).
- High levels of customer service and helpful reservations staff.
- Clear and easy to understand collateral, both online and offline.
- Understanding of the cultural needs of different markets.
- Consistent pricing policies that consider all levels of distribution and offer commissionable rates.
- Easy communication via phone numbers, email and other online messaging tools.
- Fast and efficient turnaround and response times for bookings and enquiries (within 24 hours).

#### How do I distribute my product with wholesalers?

Building a relationship with a wholesaler is critical. To engage successfully, you need to work with all the distribution partners along the chain and ensure there is awareness and interest in your product. This might begin with building relationships with UK based wholesalers to familiarise yourself with international audiences with the support and expertise of the UK businesses.

Once you finalise your offering and objectives, you can start to look at international wholesalers. This can be achieved both nationally and internationally. If you feel more comfortable with events based in the UK you can engage with events such as the World Travel Market in London (UK stand delivered by UKinbound) and BIM the Britain & Ireland Marketplace (by ETOA) to meet with key travel decision makers

Don't be surprised if it takes several years of contact before a wholesaler begins to use your new product. This is partially due to their loyalty to existing product suppliers and stringent consumer protection laws in some major markets, and also their own product cycle planning process.

Wholesalers also need assurance that you are an established operator that will remain in business for many years.

Once you have secured a product distribution deal with a wholesaler, you will need to provide the wholesaler and key frontline sales staff with ongoing education and product updates to keep your product front of mind via newsletters, sales calls, trade shows and educationals.

Educationals are visits that allow sellers to experience your product first hand and to improve their product knowledge.

**Top tips for working with wholesalers include:**

- Research – find out which markets and market segments the wholesaler targets, the type of experience they sell and who their distribution partners are (e.g. tour operators).
- Keep wholesalers updated on any new developments or changes to your product.
- Suggest ideas for packaging your product with complementary products in your region to make it easier to sell.
- Be open to ideas from wholesalers that can help to improve sales of existing products. Feedback is important to developing and improving products.
- Highlight your unique selling point (USP), the benefits of your product and the factors that set you apart from the competition.
- Ensure you allow for wholesaler commissions in your rates and include concise terms and conditions. Be prepared to provide rates up to 18 months in advance.
- Keep in mind consumer protection laws that the wholesaler must adhere to. There are strict consumer laws that require companies to deliver the promised standard of holiday experience.

**How do I distribute my product with DMCs (Destination Management Companies)**

The information for distribution via wholesalers also applies to working with DMCs.

Additional top tips for working with DMCs:

- Offer a variety of itineraries that include unique and diverse experiences.
- Suggest interesting ways to package your product together with other experiences.
- In the case of Business and MICE travel, participate in cooperative marketing activities organised by VisitBritain/ VisitEngland and your local Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Find out what their specialisms are (if any) and make sure your product fits with their requirements and customer's needs.
- Build a good /long term relationship with your DMC partners. Take time to visit them and invite them on educationals. Use their feedback on helping develop further product that fits their needs.
- Consider offering a DMC a package that is unique solely for them, like a behind the scenes tour... something that is only available to them.



## How do I distribute my product with online travel agents and online ticketing agents?

As online travel agents and online ticketing agents deal directly with the consumers, you can research their website as if you were a consumer. See how it operates and how it will promote your product. Contact them to see how information is loaded and updated. An excellent tool to determine the most visited consumer travel websites is Experian Hitwise. This company provides insights and reviews into the performance of travel websites.

Many sites provide you with access to maintain and update your details. While this does provide you with control over the information on your product it can also be very time consuming, especially if you are featured on a number of sites. Online distributors may also run a number of affiliate sites on-selling packages. It is important that you are aware of any affiliate sites and where rates may appear.

When distributing online, rate competitiveness is critical. Rate competitiveness exists when the same rate structure for a product exists across all its distribution channels. When a product effectively controls rate competitiveness, rate integrity is assured and the consumer becomes confident in booking the product. Rate competitiveness ensures an even playing field and protects a product's relationship with all its distribution partners. This will ensure that consumers receive the best pricing and value no matter which of these channels they use to make their reservations.

When considering online distribution, it is important to think about the possible impacts on your traditional distribution partners. You need to manage and preserve the relationship you have with these partners. It should be your goal to mirror the same retail rates at all points of reservation for your travel distribution partners. It is important to:

- Clarify commission and inventory levels required and the level of promotion for your product.
- Find out how much new business the site may generate.
- Check if there are any affiliate sites that may operate in addition to the main site.
- Check how your information on the site is maintained - by you or the site host?
- Check how the site is promoted. Is it targeted at the trade or consumers? Are there any distribution agreements in place?

## How do I distribute my products with a tour operator?

Larger tour operators, online travel agents and ticketing agents have product and contracting departments that identify and select the products and suppliers they want to sell. These departments can offer advice on suitable markets for your product and suggestions about product development and packaging.

Top tips for working with tour operators include:

- Research who the tour operator works with in the distribution system and which markets they target to ensure your product is the correct fit.
- Compile a sales kit with product fact sheets (in PDF format), brochures and images .
- Ensure information on your website is up to date.
- Provide reviews of products where possible. At the same time as finding reputable operators, reviews help to back up a product offering.
- Provide a visual presentation, including video footage.
- Provide rates that allow for commissions and include concise terms and conditions. Be prepared to provide rates up to 18 months in advance.

- Provide information in other languages (online fact sheets, brochures) if targeting markets where English is not commonly spoken.
- Participate in networking events, workshops or educationals organised by your local LVEP or VisitBritain/VisitEngland.
- Provide prompt (same day) turnarounds on enquiries, quotations and bookings.
- Don't expect prepayments or deposits.
- Accept vouchers and trading terms.
- Action complaints promptly.
- Provide updated product information, training and educationals for key tour operator staff.
- Check that the tour operator is licensed. Don't be afraid to speak to other businesses that work with the tour operator to confirm that it is a reputable company.

### How do I distribute my product with overseas retail travel agents?

One of the best ways of distributing your product at the retail level is to identify established wholesalers/DMCs/tour operators with a wide distribution via retail agents.

Training the wholesalers/DMCs/tour operators about your product and providing them with the tools to train their retail partners is the most effective way to target these retail agents.

Top tips for working with retail travel agents include:

- Meet retail agents and wholesale reservation agents by attending trade shows that target these staff.
- Establish and maintain good relationships with your retail travel agent's preferred wholesalers/DMCs/tour operators.
- Provide key agents with regular but relevant product updates.



# Product promotion



# 1. How to get the most out of trade shows

## What are trade shows and why attend?

Trade shows are a forum to meet key industry players and develop or enhance business relationships. They are an excellent opportunity to meet with a large number of targeted clients in the one place at the one time.

Trade shows are held either in person, or virtually, throughout the year, each targeting different audiences and designed to achieve different objectives. They may target specific members of the trade distribution system (wholesalers, tour operators, frontline retail staff), specific market segments (youth, luxury) or particular industries (business events).

Events may be more time and cost effective than conducting individual sales calls, however often your appointment time will be limited. At most trade shows you will need to pre-arrange appointments with trade buyers in order to give a short presentation on your product.

If attending trade events, especially those held overseas, it is a good idea to incorporate individual sales calls, pre or post the event, into the visit. Refer to Section 12 – Relationships are key for further information.

Trade shows require an organised and targeted approach, with clearly set goals and committed staff to ensure you meet your trade marketing objectives.

Whichever events you choose, be prepared to commit to participation in the same event for a minimum of three years. The awareness of your product will significantly increase each year, as will your own expertise and knowledge of how to work the show.

## Tips for preparing for a trade show

- **Get with the programme** – know the event program inside out to ensure you don't miss out on any opportunities. Understand all the terms and conditions and maximise the process for making pre-scheduled appointments.
- **Deadlines** – don't miss any!
- **Booth/appointment space** – obtain accurate information on the dimensions of your booth and its exact location to enable you to plan your display accordingly.
- **Order and deliver your marketing materials** – often trade shows have freight partners.
- **Prepare to stand out in the crowd!** – Consider a company uniform or brand feature that carries through your attire. See if there is an event dress code.
- **Book your travel arrangements well in advance** – often discounted accommodation offers will be available.
- **Ensure your booking systems and website are up-to-date** – Consider where the trade show buyers may look for information about your business and products. Is your website the best it could be?

## Know what you want to achieve at the trade show

### Make sure you set measurable goals such as:

- Making a specific number of new contacts.
- Meeting a set number of existing clients.
- Gaining competitive information.
- Discovering trends in the market place.
- Supporting existing trade partners.

Develop a strategy to achieve these goals, including ensuring you are well prepared, that you conduct successful meetings and that you follow up after the trade show.

### **Invest the time in pre-trade show research**

- Ensure you have reviewed your booking system reports identifying sales by distribution partner and comparing them with the previous year. Clearly identify the partners where you can see growth, and the partners whose sales have declined. This will form the basis of your discussions with existing clients, and also assist with your appointment preferences for the trade show.
- Know in which brochures you are and/or listed online for sale.
- Review the delegate lists and identify new partner opportunities.
- Determine how your product may fit within the partner's existing product selection/portfolio.
- Know as much background information as possible about the partners and the current market conditions.
- Know where the partner sits in the distribution chain.
- Talk to your reservations and sales teams to gain specific partner feedback (both positive and negative) that can be addressed in your meetings.
- Overall, be informed and be knowledgeable to demonstrate to the partner that you are enthusiastically monitoring their business with you.

### **Meeting preparation pays off**

- Make contact with distribution partners prior to the trade show via email, ideally before they select their trade show meeting preference.
- Ensure distribution partners are well versed in your products and have your seasonal contract rates.
- Maximise the pre-appointment scheduling opportunities by accurately reviewing the list of distribution partners and ranking your meeting preferences based on your prior research. If available, use online messaging to fill gaps in your appointment schedule.
- Prepare your presentation, remembering to keep your message short, sharp and measurable. Bullet points work best as they allow you to tailor your presentation during your partner meetings.
- Use visuals to showcase your product and focus on delivering a professional presentation. Ensure your images are of a high standard and accurately represent your product, proof read your presentation and practice its delivery, keeping in mind different distribution partners.
- Know your destination. In addition to selling your own product, you are also selling the destination. Ensure you know as much as possible about your region.
- Be aware of the international planning periods. Each market has a different time of year in which they plan brochures and undertake their marketing. There are also key holiday periods that differ between countries so understanding these is imperative.
- Make a great first impression by being prepared for each individual meeting – have pre-prepared notes specific to each partner.
- Ensure you are prepared to capture key contacts and information – design an easy to use template to use in each appointment. This can also act as a prompt in discussions.
- Review the products that you are offering and consider tactical offers or product bundling to boost interest in your products.
- Consider giving partners a promotional item/gift as a further reminder of your product - Face to face only.

### What should I take to trade shows?

- Your delegate name badge that you will receive at registration – otherwise access will not be allowed.
- Your appointment schedule – don't miss an opportunity to slot in a key appointment.
- Pen / Paper (or electronic device/ required chargers) – don't rely on your memory at trade shows, they are a busy few days.
- Business cards (lots) – you can never have too many.
- Stationery kit (pens, paper, stapler, staples, scissors).
- Your presentation on an iPad, Laptop or similar.
- A reference copy of your marketing material (e.g. brochure).
- Water – replenish frequently!
- Energy boost type snacks for you and your delegates.

### How do I conduct the perfect appointment?

- Arrive early and be organised. Make sure you have everything set up well before your first appointment.
- Know who your client is before they sit down. Use your research and have a clear outline of the information or questions you need to ask your trade partner, in front of you. Make sure you are fully aware of the different markets and cultural expectations.
- Typically, you have 15 minutes so use the time wisely – listen for 80% and sell for 20%. Make sure there are opportunities for the trade partner to ask questions throughout the meeting. Bear in mind that you might not do business during this meeting, but be prepared to follow up.
- Pinpoint one truly amazing thing about your product or region and open with that. Focus on your compelling selling points and what really makes you stand out from competitors.
- Make it relevant and don't deliver a rehearsed spiel. Use bullet points to allow you to tailor your presentation to each trade partner and their market so it is relevant to them. Partners want to feel that you really want their business, not just that you are repeating the same thing over and over.
- If the trade partner is already sending you business then thank them for it. Review the sales with them, ask for any customer feedback and update them on changes or new products. Don't be afraid to ask why their sales have increased or decreased.
- Make your product memorable. Even if the trade partner only walks away with one piece of knowledge, as long as it stays with them, you have succeeded. Remember, you will be providing the partner with detailed information in your follow up.
- Remember to ask questions. This is your product development opportunity to ensure you are meeting the trade partner's needs and to ask the hard questions. What can you do to improve the business? What are their clients looking for? Are they aware of your product or even the destination?
- Avoid the use of slang or colloquialisms and be mindful that English may be your trade partners' second language.
- Use the correct commission levels in your discussions. Make sure you understand where they sit in the distribution chain.

- Take notes! It is perfectly okay to take notes at trade shows – it demonstrates your commitment. You can use your pre-prepared template for this.
- Invite trade partners to experience your product through trade educationals.
- Don't give out brochures or heavy information packs – use your follow up to further showcase your product, or consider providing USBs with your information.
- Understand your outcomes. It is important that you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve from each appointment (remember your goal setting). You should be aiming for leads, awareness and relationships in order to successfully promote your product. Conclude each appointment by summarising your follow up actions and agreed path.
- Seek opportunities for further discussion – invite the trade partner for a drink or coffee during any free appointments / breaks and or networking opportunities.
- Ensure your booth is attended at all times you don't want to miss that great 'passing by' opportunity.
- Review your progress and make any necessary changes to your strategy – this can be done either during breaks or at the end of each day.

### Don't forget the value of networking opportunities

There are often multiple opportunities available during trade shows that allow you to build or consolidate business relationships outside the scheduled business appointments. The organised social functions are prime occasions, as well as breakfast or quick catch-ups in the hotel lobby before the show, or even walking around the trade show floor. For further tips on networking see.



## The appointment is only as good as the follow up

- Following up is the most critical component of any trade show. If you don't have the time to follow up, then consider not participating in the trade show.
- Timing is imperative - follow up should be done either during or immediately after the trade show.
- Personalise and thank you – each trade partner should receive an individualised follow up specifically referring to the content of your appointment and always thank the partner for the business and their ongoing support. Use your meeting template to prompt you and personalise your follow up – make reference to your discussions during the trade show.
- Categorise your trade show appointments/ leads in order of priority and complete your follow up in this order.
- Send all the material and information that you promised as soon as possible.
- Continue to promote and update your latest marketing collateral and information online.
- Post trade show planning should include a multiple contact plan until you meet the buyer again. Keep the buyer updated and focus on strengthening the relationship.
- Consider using your social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter to boost your social media activity.
- Ensure your follow up includes all partners in the distribution chain – if the buyer partners with a local tour operator ensure you also follow up with the tour operator directly as well as the overseas buyer.
- Prepare and distribute training material to buyers – this extends the reach of your appointment to the front line reservations teams.
- Remember to also follow up with complementary sellers and industry associations – continue to work together and seek out joint opportunities.
- Be in regular contact with your DMO to jointly promote the region and the products offered and to seek out opportunities.
- Be patient – understand that it takes time to establish a relationship and to be selected for brochure/online inclusion.
- Some relationships may not come to fruition even within the first year. If not, it's important to stay connected to the buyers, as the opportunity might arise later on.
- Add new contacts to your database and track if business is generated from them. Keep your buyers updated on their sales achievements.
- Update your teams on the outcomes of the trade show and any required actions specific to each buyer.
- Measure your trade show success against your pre-set goals. Consider such questions as what worked, what you could improve on next time, did I meet the right people, what did I learn from others, what did I learn about the competition?

## 2. Sales missions

### What are sales missions and why consider attending?

VisitBritain regularly conducts sales (or trade) missions into key overseas markets. These missions are useful for first time entrants into the market as well as operators already established in the market looking to further develop their business. Visiting the market allows you to present your product to the travel trade. Travelling as part of an organised sales mission allows you to present your product and destination alongside other complementary products to a targeted group of distributors.

### Top tips for sales missions

The golden rule for international sales missions is ‘do your homework first’. The more preparation you do, the greater the return on your investment.

During a sales mission the audience will vary from retail travel staff to wholesale or tour operator product managers so make sure you are aware of who you are meeting and tailor your presentation to suit their needs.

The guiding principle in a successful sales mission is not the amount of ground covered or even the number of meetings held. It is in seeing the right people from the right organisations that have an interest in seeing you and the potential to sell your product.

Develop a sales kit for sales calls, sales missions and staff training to include: brochures, product fact sheets, your sales presentation, a collection of images on DVD/USB, online tools such as podcasts and video-casts, display banners and posters. When developing your sales kit, keep the look and feel consistent and ensure information is accurate and up to date. Make sure that you have full rights and permissions to the images and video footage that you share (see Section 17 - Creating engaging content).

Always check with the host organisation what the format of each event during the sales mission is and what marketing material is required and will be allowed. For example, at some events banner space may not be available, or you may be required to deliver a group presentation rather than having one-to-one appointments so be prepared.

Certain countries have customs not usual to England; observing local courtesies and morals will be highly appreciated by your hosts and significantly enhances your chances of success.

Remember you are travelling with a group and you need to be timely, as per the assigned schedule and mindful of travel etiquette. Consider your luggage, keep it minimal and be well organised.

As with all types of sales activity, follow up is vital. Don't forget to send a follow up thanking them for their time and include any information that may have been requested.

What can a General Sales Agent (GSA) or Product Representation Company (PRC) offer?

A general sales agent (GSA) can represent and market your product in key international markets and provide a local booking service for retail agents. It is essential that you consider all channels of distribution and the needs of your business before signing a GSA agreement.

Many businesses choose to appoint an international sales representative or product representation company (PRC) to actively promote their product in their key international markets. However, unlike a GSA, a PRC doesn't provide a booking service.

**PRCs can:**

- Make sales calls to wholesalers and retail agents.
- Train wholesale and retail agency staff.
- Provide representation at trade and consumer shows in the market.
- Give feedback and advice on market trends.

**Key factors to consider when appointing product representation**

- Do they have experience in destination and product-type representation?
- Do they have other clients with English product? Have they represented similar products to yours in the past?
- Do they hold other contracts and are they complementary or competitive?
- Can they provide trade contact records and reports? How will you measure their effectiveness and how will they report on their activities to you?
- Do they have established relationships with the clients that you want to reach?
- What is their reputation in the market? Are they respected by the industry?
- Do the GSA retail products and how will this impact on their ability to sell your product?
- Consider the cost versus the level of business from the market and balance these against the cost and benefit of making calls and attending trade shows yourself.



### 3. Working with the media

#### The power of publicity – how can I maximise my media exposure?

Generating positive publicity is a vital component in establishing and maintaining your reputation. Publicity can create a powerful media endorsement that acts effectively as a word-of-mouth recommendation. Positive media coverage can assist you in raising awareness of your products and experiences and can lead to direct enquiries and bookings.

Journalists are approached constantly by businesses seeking to attract their attention. So how can you make a journalist take notice of you? How do you achieve publicity?

VisitBritain/VisitEngland's Global Public Relations Team works with all levels of the English tourism industry to generate inspirational publicity about England in the world's print, broadcast and online media. They are also responsible for generating influential word-of-mouth commentary through a range of cutting edge advocacy programs. Their online media centre provides a wide range of information and resources for those looking for written and visual content relating to England.

Media representatives also often attend trade shows looking for story angles, hence you need to be well prepared to respond to both delegate and media enquiries. On some occasions, official media events are held prior to a trade show and are definitely worth participating in, so ensure you always have a media kit prepared.

#### What is a media kit and what should it include?

A media kit is a pre-packaged set of promotional materials that is distributed to the media for promotional use. It should give media representatives a thorough background on the topic and provide information in various formats.

A media kit in either hard copy or electronic format could include:

- Current media releases.
- Fact sheets about your business and products.
- A background on your company's history.
- Recent awards.
- Product biography.
- Executive biography.
- Latest brochures.
- High-resolution images (either on a tablet or downloadable – make sure you have full rights and permissions) of products, company logo, key executives etc.
- Media contact information.



## What is a media release and what should it include?

A media release is a written statement that provides information in a ready to publish form that you provide to a journalist or editor to make an announcement or inform them of something you would like reported. The media release is one of the most fundamental PR tools, but it is easy to get wrong.

Top tips for your media release include:

- Identify key messages and ensure you deliver them early on in the release.
- Use lead paragraphs to sell your idea – make sure you include “who, what, where, why and how” in the lead paragraph.
- Always use clear, simple language and avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Pay attention to grammar, punctuation, capitalisation, spelling out of numbers etc.
- Provide quotes from a credible spokesperson who can be contacted at any time.
- Make sure that you have included all the relevant information that the journalist will need to know, such as prices, inclusions, validity for any special offers and your full contact details.
- Make it easy for the journalist to understand your story and get in touch with you.
- Copy should be written in the third person, i.e., the “he=she” format as in: “he said”.
- Have high-res (1MB) pictures readily available (ensure you have full rights).

Often it is a good idea to have both a hard copy presented in a folder as well as an electronic version so it can be emailed to a journalist quickly.

## Review your images and video – do they make your product shine?

Photographs and videos can be one of the most effective methods of communicating the true nature of your tourism experience. A really good image can make the difference as to whether your story is published, or even whether a distribution trade partner is interested in working with you.

- Make sure that all your images are captioned to explain the content of the photography (including the location); names of people and any copyright issues or photo credits should be clearly indicated. It is important to ensure that you have permission to use any images which are not your own, and that all approvals have been obtained prior to printing (for example, be sure you have signed talent release forms).
- Avoid using out of date imagery, in particular with landscapes and people. This is mostly noticeable through style of clothing, hairstyles, vehicles and built environment or infrastructure.
- Most publications will require high resolution images, a minimum of 300 dpi and around 1MB in size. Often it is best to present these high resolution images to media representatives on a tablet, or have them in a downloadable format on your website for easy access.
- Make sure you have a selection of interesting, high quality images. Ensure they are motivational, and that the people in the images bring the experience to life. Investing in a professional photographer can pay off both in terms of publicity via the media and also securing partnerships with trade buyers. Remember, your images tell the story of your product.

## 4. Maximising educationals & familiarisation trips

### What are trade educationals and media fam trips?

In the tourism industry, trade and media are key third party proponents of your product and story. Trade educationals and media fam trips provide a taste of what's on offer by experiencing your product first hand. They are your chance to educate and win over the people who influence consumers in making their holiday decisions.

- Trade educationals - includes your distribution partners, for example wholesalers, inbound tour operators; their product buyers and sales teams.
- Media fam trips - includes journalists and writers for print, broadcast and online media channels.

If trade partners and travel writers know your product and like it, they can do a lot to sell it through their respective channels. Building trade and media relationships is an essential part of doing tourism business. After all, your product competes not just on a regional level, but also with tourism destinations and products across the globe. Educationals and fam trips are a relatively low cost way to promote your product to larger networks of trade and media.

Many local LVEPs are proactive in organising these trips. VisitBritain/VisitEngland also runs media visits on an ongoing basis, and trade educationals as an add on to Britain and Ireland Marektplace (BIM). You can also build your own programmes and invite delegates directly.

#### Tips for hosting a successful education/familiarisation trip

<b>Before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are approached to participate in a familiarisation trip/educational, find out as much information as you can before committing to host the group. Determine if they are part of your target market and what the benefits of hosting the visit are for your business. Don't be afraid to say no to a request if you don't think that your product is suited to the group.</li> <li>• Generally, support for these trips is requested free of charge (FOC) or on a comp (complimentary basis), in return for the benefits for your business via the exposure. If you are unable to offer complimentary services you may consider offering a reduced rate. Discuss options with the organiser to try and create a "win win" situation.</li> <li>• Know their itinerary and obtain contact details – when do they arrive and depart, where the group has been and where they are going, have they experienced a competitor's product?</li> <li>• Consider the available time and present your product as the customer would experience it</li> <li>• Be culturally sensitive. Be aware of the cultural sensitivities such as religious dietary requirements, appropriate conduct and greetings. If you aren't sure ask the trip organiser.</li> <li>• Brief staff, making sure that all staff are aware of the group</li> </ul>
<b>During</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionalism – be on time, well presented and groomed, offer refreshments if required</li> <li>• Make sure that participants are welcomed – introduce yourself and exchange business cards</li> <li>• Ensure the product is at its best</li> <li>• Outline the programme while at your property or on your tour</li> <li>• Escort the group during the familiarisation trip and be a gracious host</li> <li>• Give time and attention to questions and make a note to follow up any requests</li> <li>• Present an information kit and offer to post information to participants</li> <li>• Ask the group for feedback on your product</li> </ul>
<b>After</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add the participants to your contact database</li> <li>• Send a thank you email and follow up any requests for additional information</li> <li>• Follow any sales lead opportunities presented by the fam visit/ educational</li> <li>• Keep participants informed of any relevant changes or updates on your product</li> </ul>

## 5. Build effective partnerships

### Who are your collaborators?

The beauty of creating experiences is that you don't need to go it alone. Many of the options mentioned above involve other businesses that specialise in a particular complementary experience. Your task is to identify like-minded operators with whom you can partner.

Most wineries see other cellar doors as their direct competitors, and in theory, this is true. However, it is a well-known fact that wine-interested travellers will go to at least three venues during their visit to a region, so collaboration is key. No single winery can be all things to all people, so knowing who has what in your region enables you to direct visitors to other venues to ensure their needs are met and their entire regional visit exceeds expectations.

In the tourism industry, relationships are everything, and collaborations offer you the opportunity to create innovative new experiences along with new marketing opportunities that differentiate both your business and your region. Before you decide who to collaborate with, take stock of your own strengths and identify where you can add value, and where there is a gap that can be filled by another operator.

Collaborations can be formal or informal, comprise packaged commissionable products or simply be marketed under a common banner.

Packaging is common in leisure travel and generally combines two or more products into a single price offering. Packages are particularly effective for promoting a region during the off-season by offering a compelling reason to visit and stay. A package may offer an overall price discount compared to booking each component individually, but it is more likely to appeal to the target market due to convenience, uniqueness and perceived value. A typical package aimed at an interstate festival-goer may comprise transport, accommodation, tickets and meals. Where packages are sold as a single product to the market that is booked directly, bundling is more about collaboration and offering visitors a smorgasbord of complementary activities and services from which to choose at their discretion.

### How do you create a package?

Creating a package is very similar to creating a product or experience, except that your product will form just one part of the overall package. While the opportunities for creating packages are only limited to your imagination (and some practical considerations, such as what other operators exist in your region), to be successful requires focusing on and responding to the needs of your target market. An appealing package will generate demand, provide good value for money, offer consistent high quality, be well coordinated, highly differentiated and return a profit for each participating operator.

Packages offer considerable advantages for participating businesses by allowing them to 'hide' individual prices, which can be important when developing packages to entice visitors in low and shoulder seasons. By contrast, visitors see packages as convenient, allaying stress, enabling a one-time booking and, as 'extras' are often included, represent considerable value. Likewise, travel agents and distributors find packages appealing as they are generally easy to book and are commissionable. The key to delivering a successful package is getting the right mix of businesses who all share similar values in regard to theme, target market, timing, service excellence, visitor satisfaction and marketing initiatives. In terms of pricing, set one retail price and then determine the net rate for your trade distributors.

Packages can be simple affairs where you decide to work with two other businesses, such as an accommodation provider and restaurant, to offer one night's accommodation, dinner and a wine-based cellar door experience. You could also create a package centred around an event – your own or a regional event – that incorporates accommodation, transfers, tickets and complimentary glasses of wine on arrival. Sometimes travel distributors seek out products to create their own packages, such as incorporating a winery tour or food and wine matching experience into a three-day regional tour package aimed at a particular market.

As with any business collaboration, you'll need to enter into a contract with the other providers before you can sell the package, or be part of a package. This means discussing and agreeing things such as length of the agreement, expectations regarding promotion and distribution, payment terms and methods, consequences and terms of withdrawal, dispute resolution, confidentiality, claims, IP and performance.

### What is product bundling?

It is often difficult to attract international visitors to an area outside established destinations as they may have limited time and knowledge of the area. By working cooperatively with your region to promote the destination as a whole, there is a better chance that visitors will take the time to visit. If a potential visitor can see that within your local/regional area there is a plethora of attractions, day trips, activities and more, they are more likely to extend their stay, thus bringing more value to the area.

To achieve a full destination proposition, work in cooperation with local operators and create a bundle that will make your product more enticing. Bundling refers to aligning and marketing complementary products together to form compelling and unique experiences for the consumer. It helps to improve visitation through regions and increase tourist revenue through multiple suppliers offering complementary products, or via single suppliers providing services that complement their core offering. It also assists by offering a stronger commission-able proposition for distribution partners.



## What should I consider when bundling products?

- Target – Who do you want to target?
- What markets, who are your customers? Does this market align with your products?
- Inclusions – Based on your customer profiles what package inclusions would appeal to them and at what price? For example, a ‘Romantic Package’ for an accommodation provider could include dinner at an exclusive restaurant, or a picnic basket option, a personalised tour or spa treatment.
- Time elements – be careful not to ‘over package’ and remember that some customers enjoy flexibility in their travel choices.
- Partnerships – what specific product partners will you need? What agreements will you put in place? Ensure these are mutually agreed and confirmed by legal agreements.
- Price – distributors might expect that the sale price would be lower based on a bundled product, due to the shared costs for promotion meaning that the need for a margin on the rate would be lower, or due to volume of services purchased.
- Branding – Think creatively when naming your bundled product, the name must appeal to the target market.
- Promotions – With your product partners, agree on all elements of marketing the bundled product including what promotional mediums you will use, what promotional.
- Copy and PR activities. Develop a communications strategy to consumers and trade partners, decide on what sales activity will be undertaken, what the marketing budget will be and how you will jointly review the return on your investment. These details should also be included in your agreement.
- Agreed terms of operation – work out all the logistics with your product partners and include these in the agreement. For example: What period will the product be available, how will you price your product ensuring you allow distribution system commissions, how will the bookings be handled, what booking lead times does each component need, create a specific tour code, ensure all reservations and operations staff are cross trained on each product, ensure all legal and insurance compliances are met.



## 6. Relationships are key: formal & informal

### Focus on building industry relationships and have that 'elevator pitch' ready

Building relationships with distribution trade partners is critical to your success in the international marketplace. This is a relationships industry and nothing beats face-to-face contact either via formal meetings such as sales calls, staff training and trade shows, or via informal networking opportunities such as industry social nights and trade event social functions either pre-planned or unplanned.

At all times, be prepared to deliver your elevator pitch – secure their interest in your product. Be prepared to highlight who you are and what your company and products are about. You should be able to do this quickly, and your listener should walk away with good information and a desire to know more.

Whether you are at a trade show, networking event or scheduled sales call, the key to a successful elevator pitch is to focus on your compelling selling points – your unique assets that make you stand out that you would have defined in your marketing plan.

### Top tips for building industry relationships

- Your pitch should take no longer than 30-60 seconds or be no more than a couple of sentences.
- Use language that everyone understands, don't use fancy words or jargon.
- Tell a story and make it entertaining.
- Aim your pitch at a specific audience. If you have a few diverse target markets, you might want to develop a unique pitch for each.
- Have a clear goal in mind of what you want to achieve.
- Briefly describe your product but do not go into excruciating detail.
- Have a hook at the beginning - something that attracts your listener's attention and makes them want to know more.
- Explain the benefit your product gives to people – why they love your experience.
- Be passionate. This is your business, be proud to promote it!
- At the end of your pitch, ask for something do you want their business card, to schedule a meeting or to go into more in- depth training information?

### Why are sales calls and staff training essential?

Maintaining regular contact with your distribution partners and providing them with updated product information helps foster strong relationships. Face-to-face sales calls are an excellent way of building rapport.

Remember, distribution partners are like an extension of your sales and marketing force, therefore you need to ensure they are always kept up to date and know how to best sell your product. Once you have established a relationship with the distribution partner and they have begun using your product, you should train and educate their staff so they are able to effectively sell your product.

It is also a good idea to train staff when your product is being featured in any special campaigns or promotions.

## When and how often?

Plan a sales call schedule each year as part of your marketing activity, and book appointments well in advance (at least a month).

The number of times you visit on a sales call or training will depend on how much business, current and potential, they generate for you. Speak with the Product Manager, as you will find some companies are more flexible with training than others. Remember, distribution partners are busy people; don't visit them more often than you need to.

For international sales calls, the timing of your visit is also important and this will vary from market to market, so don't just plan around your overseas holiday. When planning individual sales calls in market for the first time, contact your local DMO as they may be able to assist with planning and introductions to key wholesalers and travel agents on your first sales visits.

Always keep in mind that distribution partners, whether in England or overseas, have peak working months or periods where they are on reduced team resources (e.g. around traditional holiday periods). Due to work demands they may have dates that they don't take sales calls visit or only have certain days of the weeks or time slots.

You will also have an opportunity to meet with distribution partners at trade shows, workshops and sales missions that you attend.

## What should I consider when planning a sales call & staff training?

- Consider your purpose and who you need to meet with. Always meet with the key product buyer/s to discuss rate contracts and provide updates on your products before training the reservations teams.
- Is your product being sold as part of an itinerary? It is often good to conduct training with other complementary products to sell a destination.
- How many staff will you be training?
- How much time do you have?
- Allow enough time between meetings for travel (and hiccups) and also for potentially longer meetings than initially planned.

## What are the 'do's and 'don't's of sales calls and staff training?

### Do

- Make sure you have something new and interesting to discuss or feedback to give. Make an appointment and turn up on time – be organised.
  - Reconfirm your appointment a few days prior.
  - Research the distributor before you call. What markets do they work in? Do they sell a competitor's product or product that is complementary to your own?
  - Make sure you have a basic understanding of cultural differences and local customs even if they are based in England, i.e. if you are visiting an Asian distributor don't be afraid to take a small gift. Research cultural differences and respect them.
  - Be flexible – impress your distribution partner by offering to accommodate adjustments in product or booking procedures and offering incentives when necessary to secure their business.
  - If possible, provide your distributor with feedback, let them know how much business they have been producing for you.
  - Keep your presentation simple, factual and interesting. Include a simple overview of the products you provide using great images, focusing on your unique selling points (what makes your product different from your competitors) and the functional aspects of booking your product.
  - Take brochures and any additional relevant sales collateral.
  - Consider bringing in morning or afternoon tea.
  - Follow up and honour everything committed.
- In addition, consider creating webinars or pre-prepared content that sales teams can digest in their own time. As there are time pressures on many sales teams, this might be a way to get greater reach if they are able to do this in their own time.



## X Don't

- Visit during busy periods, when major trade shows are being conducted or during product planning.
- Don't arrive unannounced – cold calling is almost never appreciated and likely to prove counter-productive.
- Don't commit to rates or services without keeping a written record.

### Who else should I contact for sales calls and staff training?

Apart from your distribution partners, always keep your local DMO updated. These organisations are also promoting your products and packages, providing opportunities for e-newsletter inclusions and joint marketing opportunities, and can provide updated information and contacts.

### What opportunities can networking offer?

There is often a range of social events held within the tourism industry that provide networking opportunities, which can further support your relationship building and product awareness.

Networking can be undertaken at formal events, such as welcome and farewell functions at trade shows or at informal events.

However, don't wait for a trade show to network, as there are plenty of other opportunities. As a start, contact your local LVEP who may have a listing of upcoming industry social events.

Even better, offer your venue or product as a networking location – not only will you get to meet industry professionals but you will get to showcase and provide a familiarisation on your product at the same time. People who are in the tourism industry tend to be very social and welcome the opportunity to meet each other.

### Understand the purpose of networking & set your goals

To make the most out of networking opportunities you need to understand your goals, such as getting to know people, asking questions, sharing information about your product, building new relationships and further developing existing relationships.

Quality is more important than quantity – don't focus on grabbing as many business cards as you can, rather, focus on building the best relationships you can. Also keep in mind that it's important for you to return the goodwill by giving referrals as well. Supporting and encouraging other businesses may facilitate referrals back to you and provide opportunities for synergies.

By having a pre-prepared list of the questions you want to ask, you will avoid awkward silences and ensure that you gain the information and outcomes related to your goals. Don't be too scripted, be natural, however be mentally prepared with some ideas for discussion. Focus on open-ended questions to ensure the continued flow of conversation.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands harvesting a bunch of dark grapes from a vine. The person is wearing a blue wristband. The background is filled with green and yellowing leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. A bright pink rectangular box is overlaid on the top left of the image, containing white text.

# Using your marketing content right

## 1. Engaging your direct-to-consumer channels

In today's digitally connected world, understanding how to engage visitors to English wine regions is crucial. Traditional methods like brochures or positive reviews are no longer sufficient. Instead, identifying pathways to your target audience and leveraging various online platforms such as mobile devices, social media, and review sites is essential. With competition among wine regions intensifying, it's vital to adapt to consumers' digital preferences and cater to their needs effectively. Whether targeting wine enthusiasts or casual visitors, strategic online targeting is key to attracting and retaining visitors in this dynamic landscape.

Smart devices, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, review sites, winery websites, online travel agents, destination websites, wine apps - these are all ways that consumers now access information online. This internet enabled consumer is the one you must attract. They are overstimulated, have a low attention span and expect to find everything at their fingertips any time they want it. Irrespective of which segment you are targeting, they will be active online. When you know who you are targeting, you need to figure out where they are on the internet and specifically target them there.

### Targeting your ideal consumer through marketing?

Marketing can be, full of challenges; success requires careful planning, a deep understanding of your market, and the ability to think creatively.

- **Enhance your wine visibility** – You can manage aspects like awards and accolades by choosing which competitions to participate in and which reviewers to submit your wines to. Then, share your achievements through channels that appeal to your target audience. Actively engage with sommeliers to secure placements on restaurant wine lists. Although retail presence may offer limited control over placement and pricing, promotional efforts can boost visibility. Participating in consumer events aligned with your target market is another effective strategy; set specific goals for each event.
- **Online presence** – Maintaining an accurate and current online presence is crucial. Ensure all information is up-to-date and correct by reviewing your listings across various platforms. You may find outdated entries from past engagements or partnerships. Assess whether it's necessary to remove outdated listings and add new ones. Collaborate with your local LVEP to effectively promote your region and business. Check if your business is featured on their website for maximum visibility
- **Visitor Information Centers** – These hubs also cater to inbound FIT travellers, making it vital to establish a presence there. Provide your promotional materials in formats preferred by these centers, be it flyers or digital versions compatible with iPads or screens. Extend your reach by distributing leaflets to nearby service stations, accommodations, and gateways to boost visibility. Consider advertising in these spaces; for example, Ridgeview is advertised at Gatwick Airport. Consider local train stations or ferry ports.

- Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) – You have minimal control over how this channel operates and how your offerings are promoted, especially given the rate of consolidation in the industry. Nonetheless, it remains a crucial channel for many consumers. Ensure careful management of your inventory, whether it's for accommodations, dining, or experiences.
- Inbound Tour Operator (ITO's) – Consumers typically won't directly interact with an ITO unless the business also operates directly with consumers through a subsidiary company. However, it's essential to provide them with quality images and videos of your products for use in their marketing materials
- Travel Agent – Your visitors will likely engage directly with the travel agent either through a physical shop front or online. While digital ticket delivery is prevalent, physical vouchers are still in use. It's crucial to ensure that the information provided to consumers through this channel is up to date. Additionally, ensure that your landing page accurately represents your offerings to potential customers
- Business website or landing page – This is an area where you have full control. Prioritising a mobile-first design (as more than 70% of viewing occurs on mobile devices) is essential. Incorporate booking functionalities and ensure swift access to crucial information for your visitors, facilitating quick decision-making for potential visitors with clear Calls to Action. Integrate a media gallery for press and trade access, and ensure seamless links to your social media platforms.
- Influencers – are becoming increasingly influential in food, wine, and niche travel on social and digital platforms, especially among Millennials who trust peer and celebrity reviews. The rise of micro-influencers is notable as people prefer user-generated content. Establishing designated photo spots allows you to shape the narrative presented by visitors and influencers. You can also influence the content showcased in digital and print media. While you can't directly control bloggers' actions, fostering relationships with them is feasible.



## 2. Sales and marketing materials

### Why do you need a brochure?

Travellers frequently rely on online resources to research travel and tour options, yet they still appreciate having tangible materials to reference while at a destination. Similarly, trade partners often prefer having brochures for promotional purposes, whether in digital or physical format, especially during trade shows.

To ensure that your brochure effectively promotes your brand and stands out, it must be compelling and align with your brand image. Designing such a brochure to the required standard and quality may take time, incorporating images from various seasons to enhance its appeal.

### How will your brochure be distributed?

Before embarking on brochure production, it's crucial to determine whether it will target consumers, the trade, or both, aligning with your specific target market. Tailoring the brochure message accordingly is essential.

Distribution decisions significantly influence brochure design. Factors to consider include distribution venues such as brochure racks, trade shows, and travel agencies, which impact size and layout. While unique shapes, sizes, or layouts may be visually appealing, they could limit display and distribution options. Sustainability considerations are also important, particularly in choosing materials and formats that align with eco-friendly practices.

### What should you consider when producing a brochure?

- **Research** - Undertake research about your customers, your competitors and your budget. Who are your target markets and what will appeal to them? Look at competitor and tourism industry brochures and objectively review the good and bad features. What is your budget to produce and print the brochure? Can you afford to get your brochure professionally designed, or will you be doing it in-house? What is the most common brochure size for your region? Do you want to produce something a bit different, or conform to the norm? Remember, your brochure needs to be practical and fit into a brochure rack.
- **Brochure heading & front cover** – Remember that in a brochure rack it is likely that only the top third of your brochure will be visible. Consider if your product will be selected based on your company name, or based on an eye-catching description of your product? This will depend on the strength of your current brand and how well your business name describes your product. For example it may be better to have “Experience the English Coast by Boat” rather than your company name, as this may be more eye catching. Your front cover is the most important part of your brochure as it should inspire customers to select your product over others.
- **Written content** - Provide a concise, factual description of your product and your key selling points. Use short sentences and language that's easy to understand and focuses on the experience. Remember, English might be a second language for some of your customers. Consider having your collateral professionally translated for a specific market should you feel it is worth the return on investment.

- **Contact Details** - Ensure that marketing materials feature a clear call to action outlining the desired customer response. Additionally, include comprehensive contact details such as physical address, email address, website address, links, and web chat details.
- **Images** - Employ high-quality images showcasing individuals enjoying the experience your offering provides. Visual media communicates effectively and evokes diverse emotions. It's crucial that your visuals meet high standards and accurately represent your product. Opt for prominent visuals, like a 'hero image,' over multiple smaller ones. Numerous tourism organizations, such as LVEPs and VisitBritain/VisitEngland, provide access to their image libraries, like [assets.visitbritain.org/](https://assets.visitbritain.org/)
- **Design elements** - Choose a simple, common and neat font such as Verdana or Tahoma. Use this font throughout the whole brochure – don't overdo it and mix fonts as this can make your brochure look messy and crowded. Based on your previous distribution decisions select your brochure size. Consider the weight, colour and texture of your brochure, ensuring it will stand up to being displayed in racks.
- **Brand image** - Your brochure should align to your brand of how you want to look and feel in the market place. It is what you stand for and your product personality. Brand your product and your supporting marketing material so your customers know and trust what you stand for and deliver.
- **Product location** - Incorporate a map to show your Vineyards location. Include distances to major transportation gateways and iconic attractions to aid visitors in planning and increase SEO search.
- **Consider if you will include prices** - Pricing details may restrict the shelf life of your brochure. Make sure you clearly state validity dates and any terms and conditions. Consider using inserts for rates or directing consumers to your website for further details. Consider using a "from" price to illustrate a lead in. This can give a longer shelf life to your product and allows for price variations.
- **Accreditations, awards & endorsements** - Include these; ensure, however, that the awards are recent.
- **Proof-read & market test** - make sure that you carefully proofread a draft of the brochure before it goes to print. Perhaps do some market testing of the brochure as your customers may pick up something that you have omitted or that may be confusing or non-appealing. Remember that your brochure can be created as a PDF, and may actually not need printing. This is a way to save on print costs, and will also mean it can live online for distributors to download if they need it.

### What brochure opportunities can trade distribution partners offer?

Distribution trade partners, such as overseas wholesalers, may offer your business the chance to participate in their brochure, normally for a set fee. The advantage of participating in distribution partner brochures is additional exposure and extended distribution.

The participation cost traditionally covers the production and distribution costs, and is a cost of doing marketing, hence should be considered as part of your marketing plan and activities.

Before committing, ensure you have reviewed the quality of the production (including the overall content), how your product will be promoted and positioned (ensuring you get to review a proof before printing) and the exact distribution locations and quantities. Consider, does this align with your target markets and brand positioning? Also consider what estimates can be made on your return on investment, i.e., review the current level of bookings provided by the partner and jointly assess what additional bookings may result from your participation in their brochure.

### 3. Digital Marketing

#### What is digital marketing?

Digital marketing (also known as eMarketing, online marketing or internet marketing) is a type of marketing that focuses on the electronic environment and incorporates the following:

- Online advertising.
- Search engine marketing and Search engine optimisation.
- Social media marketing and user generated content.
- Videos, podcasting and videocasting.
- The use of mobile phones to search the internet.
- Geo search maps.
- Website promotions.
- Email and viral campaigns.

#### Some of the benefits of promoting your product online include:

- Access to a global audience of potential new customers.
- Low cost of entry.
- Cost effectiveness compared to traditional forms of marketing.
- The ability to measure and analyse results from marketing activities.
- Automated processing of enquiries and bookings.

#### How to market effectively via your website

It is important to maintain an online presence for your product. Your website should reflect the personality of your business and clearly communicate your experience and unique selling proposition (USP) to market your product effectively.

Points to consider when developing your website:

- Ensure the site is quick to load and easy to use.
- Secure a domain name that is easy to remember and if possible, keep it simple.
- Use a search engine optimisation (SEO) service to improve consumers' ability to find your website.
- Provide clear navigation paths and group information in a way that is relevant to consumers.
- Use clear and simple copy - consider language barriers.
- Provide accurate, high quality and up-to-date information.
- Use geo search maps to assist the consumer to find your location.
- Set up links to social networking sites.
- Use a blog and social media channels to develop a two-way rapport with your customers and communicate with them positively and regularly.
- Include video, video-casts/podcasts and images on your website.
- Show clear validity dates on your rates.
- Provide links to your site from major tourism organisations, dedicated travel websites and complementary product sites in your region.
- Provide an interactive way for consumers to discuss/review your product – user generated feedback.
- Offer simple booking processes and secure payment technology so users feel comfortable entering their payment details.

## Are you active in social media?

Social media is an umbrella term used to describe online technologies that facilitate interaction and exchange of information online. Social media is an entire online environment built on people's contributions and interactions, connecting groups of people together.

Businesses are using social media as a tool to reach customers and to build or maintain their reputation. As social media continues to grow, the ability to reach more consumers globally has also increased.

One of the greatest benefits of social media is its immediacy – updates provide real time information to anyone interested in your product. For example, smaller and quicker updates that aren't enough for a media or trade release could be used for updating your social media networks. In all instances, social media posts should inspire and contribute to the community, not spam them with unwanted advertisements. Remember on social media channels you are competing against people's family, friends, other brands they like, news organisations etc. It is a crowded world, with there being 4.75 billion posts created on Facebook every day! So make sure what you are putting out there is interesting and something that your audience would actually want to see.

It is also important to be wary of the real possibility social media users may use this platform to complain or discredit your product; a commitment must be made to invest the time required to stay on top of content, as well as customer feedback.

Here are some of the more popular networking sites and ways you can incorporate them into your tourism business:



### Facebook

Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites. With over 2.98 billion active users worldwide, Facebook's fastest growing demographic is the 65 and over age bracket. A free platform, it can be used to provide updates on your product as well as interact with clients and obtain feedback. However, to fully utilise the platform, it is recommended to try and create a budget for promotion and advertising.

If you are a business owner you can set up a dedicated Facebook page that represents your business - this is a place to house all the pertinent information about your company, as well as the more fun, daily updates. You can update information regularly and easily, and the fresher your content, the more you will engage people.



### Instagram

Instagram is a media platform that can be used to help grow awareness of your business, attract new customers and build relationships. It's a fun and quirky way to communicate your business offering through a series of pictures, Stories (exist for 24 hours and then disappear) as well as video products, such as Reels (up to 90 second video clips and will remain on your profile). There are a range of filters that can be used to enhance photos and it allows you to share snapshots of your product and region in real-time. It is possibly now the most used social platform in the travel vertical and is the home of travel influencers as well as travel brands.



### X

X is a popular social networking service. It enables people to send short 280 character messages to Twitter using a web or phone interface. If people are interested in a user's messages (called posts) they may decide to follow this user and therefore be informed every time they write a new post. As a tourism business you can use X to keep up with industry news, build industry contacts, monitor your online reputation and easily share quirky facts and updates about your business in real time.



## TikTok

TikTok is a social media platform focused on video content. TikTok currently has over 1.2 billion active users each month. The platform hosts a variety of short to medium length user created videos, with a host of genres such as trends, travel, entertainment and more. Typically videos featured on TikTok range from 15 seconds to 10 minutes and can be used to create content to promote your business and build a relationship with your followers. Hash-tags can be used to attract people who are interested in your product and visiting your local destination. It is great platform to widen your reach..



## YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing site with over 2.7 billion active monthly users and is the second largest search engine in the world after Google. You can create quality short videos about your product or tour that showcase the kind of experience that your guests can have. Videos that work best are those that are not overly commercial and show the highlights or quirky parts of your product offering in a captivating and visual way. Use keywords in your video title to help people find your videos through search.



## Pinterest

Pinterest is an online virtual pinboard where users can create their own boards and share beautiful images they love such as travel destinations. There are 463 million active Pinterest users, the majority of which are female. You can set up a business page to visually represent your product and/or region by creating your own themed boards and pinning high quality photos from a range of sources.



## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business-to-business social networking site with over 930 million users. Users create an account, which allows them to create their own profile with their full work history and connect with other profiles. LinkedIn is great for networking with colleagues and leaders in the tourism industry and for staff recruitment. It is a good idea to create a business page that covers basic information about your business. If your customers spend time on LinkedIn then you are able to spend time building relationships and connecting with people. An excellent way to connect with businesses within your region



## Google Business Profile

Google My Business is a free tool that can help you manage the information that people see when they search Google for your business or the products and services that you offer. It acts as a dashboard for your business online and interacts with others Google tools such as maps, analytics, and Google+ (the social network created by Google).

### Social media can vary globally – China case study

It is important to do your research specific to the country you are targeting, as social media channels can vary per country, for example let's look at China.

China has the most internet users in the world and is one of the most engaged countries on social media. One out of five global internet users is from China and over 98% of urban Chinese internet users visit social media sites regularly. Being online in urban China generally means that you use social.

So, not surprisingly the internet has become an extremely influential medium in China – but the Chinese internet is different. Many popular western social media websites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are not available to Chinese internet users due to the “Great Firewall of China” (government internet censorship).

Therefore, local Chinese equivalents of these platforms rule the digital space, and the number of websites and platforms is staggering and growing. Social media, media advocacy and word-of-mouth are becoming more powerful sources of information to assist Chinese travellers with planning and purchasing travel.

England as a destination has a presence on China's social media platforms through the activities of VisitBritain/VisitEngland.

The use of social networking and blogs has implications for the tourism industry and the way that the Chinese consumer searches for information. Reading blogs and forums is becoming more commonplace, and information and reviews on destinations are becoming more accessible, providing Chinese consumers with a way to compare travel options. It is therefore worthwhile considering the use of Chinese social media to promote your business.

Any tourism business looking to reach Chinese consumers needs to leverage the internet and social media landscape in China.



# Pricing for distribution



## 1. What are the pricing considerations?

Your price is the cost to consumers at various points in the distribution chain. It includes the price that consumers pay when they buy direct from you, the commission and net rate structures offered for intermediaries and the rates for children or students. It also includes your booking terms and conditions.

A product must be priced consistently, accurately and competitively to be successful in the market place. This requires a clear understanding of each individual cost component, including commissions and their impact on the total price of the product. Getting your pricing right is a key requirement for success.

The gross or retail rate of a product is the amount that the consumer pays and should be consistent across all distribution channels. Rate integrity is vital in maintaining good business partnerships.

### The price should be set according to:

1. Your competitors' pricing.
2. The level that your target market is prepared to pay.
3. The cost of distribution (i.e. commissions) built into the overall price.
4. Fixed and variable costs.
5. Seasonality.
6. Your profit margin.
7. Sustainability. The price should be set at a rate that can be maintained over a long-term period, and does not change drastically season to season. If prices are set to gain entry to a market, this needs to be made clear to distributors.

## 2. What is the 'cost of distribution'?

If you plan to sell your product through the distribution system, you will need to factor commission levels into your price structure. Commissions are a cost of distribution and the fee paid to the inbound tour operator, wholesaler, online and retail agent to market, distribute and sell your product. This is their income, paying for their operation and the services they provide.

### Distribution costs can be either:

- |  |           |  |
|--|-----------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You the operator, making a percentage commission repayment to the distributor.</li> </ul> | <b>OR</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The distributor paying you a net rate, an agreed rate that already has the commission removed.</li> </ul> |
|--|-----------|--|

Each level of the distribution system receives a different rate of commission. If the price of your product does not allow for these levels of payment, you will find it very difficult to market your product through a tour operator, wholesaler, DMC, online channel or retail agent. Within distribution, you will find that a wholesaler will sell your product to a DMC, who will package that product with others and sell this package to a retail agent. The retail agent will then sell this to the customer. Therefore, the wholesaler will charge you, the supplier, more commission as they need to then pay commission to the DMC, who pays commission to the retail agent.

### Why should I factor in the cost of distribution?

If you plan to sell your product through the travel distribution system, you will need to factor commissions and net rates into your pricing structure. These are the cost of distributing and selling your product internationally.

Cost of distribution is a cost of doing business in the international market place. If you can get your pricing right, you should view it as an opportunity to market and distribute your business to an international audience that you might not have otherwise been able to achieve.

### But I can't afford to pay commission!

But can you afford to turn sales away, and do you have the budget and time to be able to market your product across the globe without being part of the distribution network?

### This issue needs to be addressed from 2 different perspectives:

1. How you incorporate the right amount of commission in your prices.
2. How much money you make if you pay commission on a sale.

### How do I price to incorporate distribution costs?

The price of your product is made up of the following cost components:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed costs or overheads – light, power, marketing, telephone, admin wages etc.</li> <li>• Variable costs – the costs associated with supplying the service – e.g. laundry, cleaning, inclusions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profit margin – the amount that will contribute to your end of year profit.</li> <li>• Cost of distribution – an allowance to be able to pay commission to distributors.</li> <li>• VAT – if you are VAT registered.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

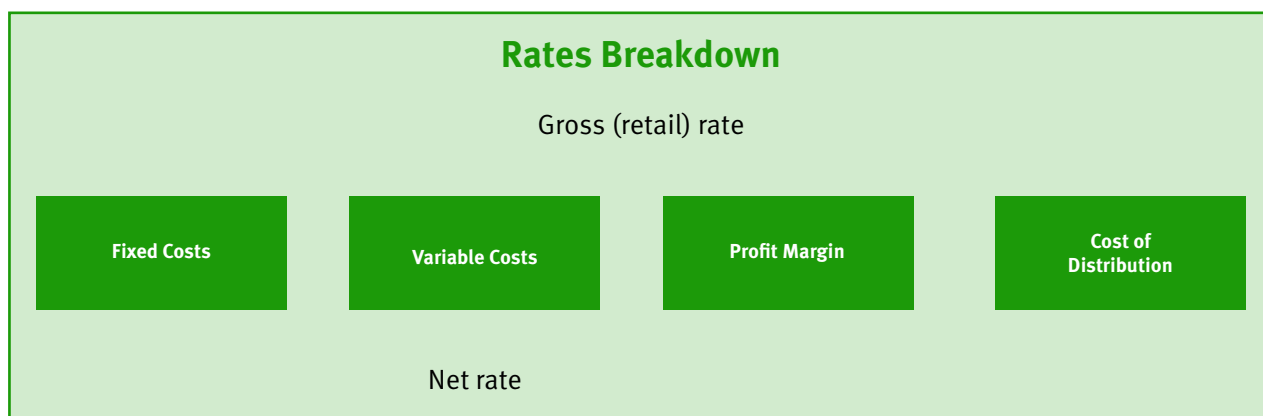
The sum total of all the above costs is your market price or gross price. From this gross price you can calculate the net price by deducting the specific level of commission offered to the partner in the distribution chain. It is important not to just add the commission on top of your publicly displayed market price, as the customer should pay the same price if they book direct, via an international travel agent or via the internet, for example. Consumers will not purchase the product from a distributor in advance if they know they can purchase it directly from you at a reduced price. Distributors will not promote and market your product if they know the consumer is not going to buy from them.

## How do I price my products for distribution system partners?

When dealing with the travel distribution system, you must understand the difference between net and gross (or retail) rates and 'protect your rates' by providing the correct rates to each level of the distribution system.

It is important to understand that commission levels will vary across the entire distribution landscape, so it is best to work on a case by case basis.

Rates should be clearly marked as either gross (retail) or net.



**Figure 14:** Rates breakdown

The margin is referred to as a percentage of the final price, rather than as an addition to the net rate.

## ✓ Do

- Get the price right for the market and compare it with prices offered by your competitors.
- Build a totally consistent rate schedule Guarantee your rates for 1 April to 31 March. Price guarantees may need to be valid for up to 18 months.
- Ensure that your price will generate sufficient profitability and turnover Ensure that the validity date and all booking terms and conditions are clearly stated on all correspondence related to pricing.
- Ensure that you identify any seasonality in your product (i.e. high season, low season, and days of operation and clearly identify the corresponding rate alterations.
- Ensure you know who you have distributed rates to so you can update them.
- Ensure your prices are sustainable in the long term.

## Don't

- Just add the cost of commission for the different distributor channels on top of your public pricing. This will immediately ensure the inbound market will not do business with you as they will be priced out of the market.
- Distribute rates intended for wholesalers, DMCs and tour operators to retail agents. This will either increase your commission payments or dispense with one level of the distribution system for your product.
- Consider commissions as a 'discount' as they are part of the cost of doing business. Intermediaries' have to promote your product and pay their costs in selling and packaging your product.
- Try to set different rates for local and overseas visitors unless there is a variation in the product offering.

## Tools to help

Pricing is not easy but it is critical to get it right. The above information gives you the background for what you need to consider.

To help you actually price your wine tourism products we have designed two spreadsheets. The first is a simple single experience pricing calculator. The second is an advanced pricing calculator allowing for sales forecasting and multiple products. You will find both in the Toolkit.

Sales Method	Commission Level	Explanation
<b>Inbound Tour Operator (ITO)</b>	25-30%	A nett rate is paid to you once a sale is made, equal to your gross rate less a 25-30% margin agreed with the ITO.
<b>Wholesaler</b>	20%	A nett rate is paid to you once a sale is made, equal to your gross rate less a 20% margin agreed with the wholesaler.
<b>Retail Travel Agent</b>	10%	A nett rate is paid to you once a sale is made, equal to your gross rate less a 10% margin agreed with the retailer.
<b>Online Travel Agent (OTA)</b>	10-15%	A nett rate is paid to you once a sale is made, equal to your gross rate less a 10-15% margin agreed with the OTA.





### 3. Rates agreements

#### What specific information do I need to include in my rate agreement?

In order to make your product easy to sell for your distribution partners, when setting your rates, keep it as simple as possible. If your product is seasonal, or if you have chosen to use mid-week and weekend rates, keep the number of seasons or price categories to a minimum. Having too many rate periods is confusing for agents, makes your product more difficult to sell and may mean that your product is less likely to be featured in distributors' programs.

This doesn't mean that 'specials' can't be offered throughout the year. When offering special rates or packages ensure that they are structured to include all levels of distribution and that the validity and terms and conditions are clearly stated.

To protect your business, it is important to clearly state all the booking terms and conditions with your rates. It is preferable that the terms and conditions are on one page, attached to your rates. The more information that you provide on your rates agreement the easier it will be for your distribution partner to load your product efficiently into their system ready for sale.

You may also be asked to complete risk assessment or SLAs as part of the rate agreement, to ensure that this complies with distributor regulations or insurance policies. Make sure that this fits with your own liability and insurance policy.

This is to be used as a guide only. You should seek professional legal advice for your own business, especially to ensure all your terms and conditions are covered to protect your business.

#### Rates agreement – what to include?

- **Rate validity dates:** Rates for the international market need to be valid 1 April – 31 March and need to be guaranteed and final.
- **Gross (retail) and net rates:** List both the gross (retail) and net rates and the commission level percentage. Be clear – are your rates per person, per room, per vehicle? Use tour codes where possible.
- **VAT:** Clearly indicate if rates are VAT inclusive or exclusive and any further additional charges that may apply.
- **Contact details:** Include address, phone, fax, mobile, email and website. Include specific contact details for bookings, marketing and accounts.
- **Cancellation conditions:** Explain cancellation charges based on the time cancellation occurs prior to travel. Ensure your cancellation conditions are in line with industry standards as well as meeting your operational needs.
- **Termination policy:** Explain obligations on both sides in case either side needs to end the contractual obligations.
- **Amendment charges:** Explain amendment charges based on the time amendments occur prior to travel. Ensure your amendment charges are in line with industry standards as well as meeting your operational needs.
- **Child/Infant:** Advise age ranges and then provide actual rates on your rate sheet. For example – Infant is under 2 years, child is 2 to 12 years inclusive. If you also offer discounts, such as a Seniors Discount, please also list this and the identification required.
- **Group conditions:** For example, how many days prior to the tour or accommodation booking do you require a group rooming list? What is the minimum number required to access group rates if provided?

Distributing your experience

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Revenue			
Group Size	2	8	16
Price per person	£27.50	£27.50	£27.50
Total Revenue	£55.00	£55.00	£55.00

Variable Costs			
Wine/Food pairings per person	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50
Other consumables	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00
Total variable costs per person	£9.50	£9.50	£9.50

Fixed Costs			
Guide (1.5hrs)	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00
Total Fixed Costs	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Direct Sales			
Commission level	0%	0%	0%
Volume of sales	2	4	4
Direct distribution cost	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Direct sale revenue	£55.00	£110.00	£110.00

Tour Operator			
Commission level	20%	20%	20%
Volume of sales	0	2	4
TO distribution cost	£0.00	£11.00	£22.00
TO sale revenue	£0.00	£44.00	£88.00

Destination Management Company			
Commission level	25%	25%	25%
Volume of sales	0	0	2
DMC distribution cost	£0.00	£0.00	£13.75
DMC sale revenue	£0.00	£0.00	£41.25

Online Ticketing Agent			
Commission level	30%	30%	30%
Volume of sales	0	2	6
OTA distribution cost	£0.00	£16.50	£49.50
OTA sale revenue	£0.00	£38.50	£115.50

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Total Revenue			
Total group size	2	8	16
Total sales	£55.00	£220.00	£440.00
Total distribution costs	£0.00	£27.50	£85.25
Net sales revenue	£55.00	£192.50	£354.75
Total variable costs	£19.00	£76.00	£152.00
Total fixed costs	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00
Profit	£11.00	£91.50	£177.75
Profit margin	20%	42%	40%

### 3. Rates agreements

#### What specific information do I need to include in my rate agreement?

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To protect your business, it is important to clearly state all the booking terms and conditions with your rates. It is preferable that the terms and conditions are on one page, attached to your rates. The more information that you provide on your rates agreement the easier it will be for your distribution partner to load your product efficiently into their system ready for sale.

You may also be asked to complete risk assessment or SLAs as part of the rate agreement, to ensure that this complies with distributor regulations or insurance policies. Make sure that this fits with your own liability and insurance policy.

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- **VAT:** Clearly indicate if rates are VAT inclusive or exclusive and any further additional charges that may apply.
- **Contact details:** Include address, phone, fax, mobile, email and website. Include specific contact details for bookings, marketing and accounts.
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- **Termination policy:** Explain obligations on both sides in case either side needs to end the contractual obligations.
- **Amendment charges:** Explain amendment charges based on the time amendments occur prior to travel. Ensure your amendment charges are in line with industry standards as well as meeting your operational needs.
- **Child/Infant:** Advise age ranges and then provide actual rates on your rate sheet. For example – Infant is under 2 years, child is 2 to 12 years inclusive. If you also offer discounts, such as a Seniors Discount, please also list this and the identification required.
- **Group conditions:** For example, how many days prior to the tour or accommodation booking do you require a group rooming list? What is the minimum number required to access group rates if provided?

- **Free of charge (FOC) policy:** Stipulate that this applies to groups only and advise how many rooms need to be booked or how many passengers on tour. For example, it is usually 1 FOC for every 15 paying passengers or 1 FOC room for every 10 rooms booked.
- **Inclusions & exclusions:** For example, meals or room inclusions i.e. breakfast, newspaper.
- **Minimum night stays:** Ensure these are listed, if they are only over peak periods list the specific peak period dates.
- **Minimum and maximum guest capacity on tours:** Also advise any minimum numbers to make a booking.
- **Any block out periods / seasonal rates / days not operating:** These need to be advised at the time of contracting, not after the rate agreement has been issued.
- **Bedding configuration:** Also include maximum capacity per rooms and any additional bedding charges (e.g. rollaway bed).
- **Departure times, dates and points:** Also include any specific details to assist your customers in finding your tour departure (e.g. include a map).
- **Payment policy & banking details:** Include when the payment is due for each booking and how payments should be made. Also state that if a trade distribution partner is going to be on an account basis (for example invoiced every 30 days) that they need to complete a credit application form and a credit check will be undertaken.
- **Any special conditions:** For example, if photography is not allowed on tour or that the tour may not operate in certain weather conditions, or if it is an all-weather activity. Be careful to cover inclusions on your tour, for example guests will have the opportunity to spot whales, however sightings cannot be guaranteed.
- **Any additional information of relevance:** For example, check in/check out times, what passengers need to bring on tour, if passengers need to arrive at a set time prior to departure, what they need to wear (e.g. long trousers for safety), what level of fitness they may require etc.
- **Damages and responsibilities:** This clearly needs to state who is responsible for any damages. You may also include that you recommend that all passengers have travel insurance.



An aerial photograph of a vineyard with several rows of grapevines. The leaves are a vibrant yellow-green, indicating they are ripe for harvest. Several people, presumably workers, are scattered throughout the vineyard, some standing and some crouching, engaged in harvesting. The ground between the rows is green grass. A large blue rectangular box is overlaid on the top left portion of the image, containing white text.

# Building an inbound wine tourism plan

## 1. Guidelines to building your plan

Review and finalise your interactive wine tourism plan using the research, tools and templates presented throughout this program.

By deciding to target inbound visitors to purchase your experiences, you are, in effect, exporting your product. The key to success is to match the right product to the right market, providing an optimum return on investment.

A detailed inbound wine tourism plan should be developed to provide a blueprint for your marketing activities in exporting your product to each market.

This should be based on the working inbound tourism plan that you have been using throughout the program.

An effective plan will help evaluate your strengths and weaknesses when entering the inbound market.

### Points to consider include:

- The products that you will export.
- Your target markets.
- Timeframe.
- Marketing strategies.

Your plan and all the related activities should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure you continue to receive a return on your time and investment.

### What should your inbound plan include?

- **Overall inbound objective** – What is it that your organisation wants to accomplish from inbound tourism?
- **Market selection** – What are the specific markets and segments that are most likely to use your product?  
What are the factors, internally and externally, that will affect your business and servicing of identified markets?
- **Experiences** – What specifically are you selling?
- **Customer Journey** – What is the customers pathway to your door?
- **Targeting** – Are the objectives for each target market or tribe or group measurable, achievable, time-specific, non-ambiguous and flexible?
- **Unique value proposition** – What about you will appeal to your customers in a unique way?
- **Visitor activation** – How are you getting customers to take an interest and to buy your product?
- **Tourism distribution** – What is the best combination of the four Ps (Product, Price, Place & Promotion) for each of your target markets?
- **Pricing for profit** – How much do you have to spend and how will you allocate resources?
- **Revenue Streams** – What are customer going to pay for?

### In addition to the plan, you should have:

- **Strategic action plan** – What are the actions needed to make your strategies work, who will do it and when?
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – How will you measure the performance of your marketing efforts and use this to change your product development, approach to market, pricing, value proposition and customer journey?

### What makes tourism marketing different?

The challenge with tourism marketing is that the principal products are experiences. These are intangibles and much more difficult to market than tangible items such as household appliances. The consumer also needs to travel to the product in order to experience it.

Your tourism marketing message should focus on the whole consumer experience. For the consumer, the travel experience is made up of a number of components including: transportation, accommodation, food, shopping, entertainment, touring and events. It is important to consider this when developing your marketing plan.

### What elements does the export plan draw together?

#### Your marketing budget

There is no rule that specifies how much of your turnover you should allocate to your marketing budget. As a rough guide, most small businesses allocate between 3-10% of their budget to both domestic and international marketing. If possible, it is useful to make comparisons to other similar sized businesses. As domestic tourism is the 'bread and butter' of most tourism operators, most marketing budgets are spent on domestic marketing activities. Therefore, it is important to thoroughly research and plan your targeted international marketing activities to maximise the small portion of your budget allocated to this area.

#### Points to consider in this analysis should include

- Understand the growth of inbound tourism markets and current domestic and outbound trends
- Develop a business plan including a 'SWOT' (analysing your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats)
- Understand what a distributor can provide to you
- Know what you need to do to be able to work with a distributor
- Understand what a distributor can provide to you
- Know what you need to do to be able to work with a distributor
- Understand the steps required to gain distribution
- Set the price for your product to allow for distributor commissions
- Learn how to leverage your product by packaging with other products

#### Your target markets

Identifying and understanding your target markets should be the foundation of your plan. In order to succeed in the international market, it is important to tailor your business and product to your customer's requirements. By understanding how your region and product might appeal to the international market, you can tailor your product, marketing and promotional activities to attract new business.

#### The four elements (P's) of marketing – the modern day approach

You may have heard of the four Ps of marketing, being Price, Product, Place (Distribution) and Promotion, as it has been used as an approach to marketing around the world for decades. However, with the rapid growth and influence of the internet, it has changed the way we engage with our customers and the relationships that have developed. This means we still need to focus on these four Ps but consider them in the light that your customer will seem to know everything about your business (or want to), and they will want to research it for themselves, rather than the old model of being told.

## Product

Product is the combination of ‘goods and services’ that make up the visitor experience, including the standard of your facilities and equipment, the level of service you provide and the quality of your interpretation. An individual product will make up only part of the total travel experience for a consumer. The complete travel experience includes all the elements that a tourist consumes from the time they leave home until they return. This includes transport, accommodation, meals, attractions and activities. These may be purchased independently by the consumer or bundled into a package for sale by a tour operator, DMC or wholesaler.

Instead of just focusing on your actual product in your marketing, focus on the experience, and the solution that it provides. Often a holiday experience will solve a customer’s problem, such as being overtired, needing to feel refreshed, or needing to learn and try new things. Focus on the features of your product that helps them solve these problems. For example, by joining a walking tour of England’s coastal paths you could experience the healing powers of nature, discover breathtaking scenery that revitalises your spirit, try locally sourced fresh seafood, and meet local craftspeople to gain a first-hand insight into England’s arts and crafts scene.

## Price

Your price is the cost to consumers at various points in the distribution chain. It includes the price that consumers pay when they buy direct from you, the commission and net rate structures offered for intermediaries and the rates for children or students. It also includes your booking terms and conditions. A product must be priced consistently, accurately and competitively to be successful in the market place. This requires a clear understanding of each individual cost component, including commissions and their impact on the total price of the product. For further information refer to Section 10 - Pricing: it’s all about balance.

However, in your marketing plan and activities don’t just focus on price, rather, focus on value. Consumers aren’t analysing your price in relation to your production costs and your profit margins. They will be concerned about price, but it relates to how much value they perceive the experience to have. Therefore, in your plan and marketing messages articulate the benefits of your product relative to your prices.

## Place (Distribution)

Distribution is the vital link between your product and the consumer. A distribution strategy considers the ‘place’ your product is sold and the range of different ways a consumer may make a purchase decision. International consumers may buy a wholesale package from a local travel agent before they leave home, or book at their hotel’s tour desk following their arrival. The booking may be channelled through a tour operator or conference organiser. Consumers may have found your product on the internet, in a guide book or received a recommendation from a friend via a social media site.

Less independent travellers are far more likely to go through traditional travel distribution channels. More experienced travellers might organise the bulk of their arrangements once they arrive in England. Therefore, do not overlook distribution points such as tourist information centres, and hotel concierges that your target consumers may approach and factor these into your business and marketing planning. Customers also want to know that your business is accessible, for example, knowing how available you and your team are should something go wrong or need changing. They want to know and see demonstrated that your company is responding to feedback.

## Promotion

Traditional ways of promotion were limited to 'interruption marketing' whereby the business told the consumer what to believe. Today we need to think entirely differently as the business has the opportunity to be involved at each point in the evaluation and purchase cycle, and the customer wants to make up their own mind. Therefore, the way you outline your promotion strategy needs to consider all the steps in the purchase cycle, what promotional activities you can do along the way that is a combination of activities to cost effectively reach your target market and get them to convert to a sale. For example, ensuring that your company ranks high on an Internet search for research gathering, to featuring often in travel articles. That is, to provide the information as well as the third party endorsement so that the consumer can make up their own mind.

### The promotional mix usually comprises a combination of the following:

- **Advertising** – print, broadcast, direct mail and the internet
- **Public Relations** – media release, media kits, press conferences, media familiarisation trips, interviews and speeches
- **Personal Selling** – trade and consumer events, sales calls, sales missions and staff training
- **Sales Promotions** – competitions and sales incentives
- **Digital marketing** – Online advertising, search engine marketing and optimisation, social networking and user generated content, videos, podcasting



You can use these headings as the template for your plan, and it doesn't have to be a lengthy document. It should be easy to read and reviewed on a regular basis.

### Section 3 Checklist:

	Select the best mix to match your needs.
	Make sure your products are bookable online.
	Make the most of B2B opportunities.
	Develop a plan to expose your product to key media and trade influencers.
	Build partnerships with complementary businesses in your region.
	Promote collectively whenever possible.
	Develop your 'elevator pitch' and review sales calls do's and don'ts.
	Take a consumer-centric approach.
	Design collateral based on distribution channels.
	Engage consumers and trade using relevant digital and social channels.
	Make your website mobile-first.
	The right costing = the right products.
	Business mix is critical.
	Must meet distribution channel standards.
	Your interactive wine tourism plan tool is the basis for your inbound wine tourism plan.
	The tools and templates are there to assist.
	Research and knowing numbers are very important.

# Tourism Talk: Acronyms & glossary



## 1. Tourism Acronyms

You may have noticed that tourism language is very acronym-heavy! Here are some of the more common tourism acronyms and terms to help you:

<b>ABTA</b>	Association of British Travel Agents	<b>GIT</b>	Group inclusive traveller
<b>BIM</b>	Britain & Ireland Marketplace	<b>GSA</b>	General sales agent
<b>BT</b>	Business tourism (Meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions)	<b>IATA</b>	International Air Transport Association
<b>CRS</b>	Computerised reservations system	<b>ICCA</b>	International Congress and Convention Association
<b>CVB</b>	Convention and visitors bureau	<b>ITB</b>	Internationale Tourismus-Börse held every in March in Berlin
<b>DCMS</b>	Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	<b>ITO</b>	Inbound tour operator
<b>DDP</b>	Destination Development , Partnerships	<b>IPS</b>	International Passenger Survey
<b>DMC</b>	Destination management company	<b>LEP</b>	Local Enterprise Partnership
<b>DMO</b>	Destination marketing organisation	<b>LVEP</b>	Local Visitor Economy Partnership
<b>DMP</b>	Destination management plan	<b>MICE</b>	Meetings, incentives, conferences and events
<b>ETOA</b>	European Tour Operator Association	<b>NTO</b>	National Tourist Organisation
<b>FIT</b>	Fully independent traveller	<b>ONS</b>	Office for National Statistics
<b>FOC</b>	Free of charge	<b>OTA</b>	Online travel agent
<b>GALTA</b>	Gay and Lesbian Travel Association	<b>PAX</b>	Passengers
<b>GDS</b>	Global distribution system (same as a CRS) e.g. used by airlines	<b>PR</b>	Public Relations
		<b>UNWTO</b>	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
		<b>USP</b>	Unique selling proposition
		<b>VFR</b>	Visiting friends and relatives
		<b>WTM</b>	World Travel Market

## 2. Wine talk

**Blind tasting**- Tasting and evaluating wine without knowing what it is by masking the bottle or pouring into a black glass.

**Case** -A standard case is a 12 x 750mL bottle case, containing 9 litres of wine.

**Cellar Door** - An area of a wine producer's property for receiving visitors and selling wine. Also referred to as a tasting room or visitor

centre. Some cellar doors are located away from the wine producer's property in an urban environment or may share

premises with other producers in a central location.

**Customer** - A person actively seeking service from your business either directly, through an intermediary or in-line, with intention to pay.

**Consumer** - A person who is consuming your product. The difference between a customer and a consumer. The person who buys the bottle of wine (the customer) may give it as a gift to a friend. The friend who drinks the wine (the consumer) is the one who enjoys its taste and aroma.

**Distributor** - Advertising funded by two or more partners

**Geographical Indication** - Geographic Indication (GI) refers to a designation that identifies the origin of grapes used in winemaking and indicates specific geographical areas known for their wine production. GIs are used to protect the reputation of wines associated with certain regions and to convey information about the wine's characteristics and quality to consumers.

**Horizontal Wine Tasting** -A tasting method of wine tasting where you sample multiple wines from the same vintage (year) but produced by different wineries

**Margin** - The difference between wine sale price and cost of production, often expressed as wine sales price - wine costs as a percentage of the wine sales price

**Master of wine** - Awarded to a person who has achieved a qualification through the Institute of Masters of Wine (IMW). The MW program is one of the most rigorous and respected wine education programs globally

**On -Premise**- A facility that sells wine where wine is consumed on site such as a bar, tavern or restaurant.

**Off-Premise** - A facility that sells sealed, packaged wine for consumption off site.

**Retailer** - A business with direct customer contact, the final intermediary between the producer/trader and the customer.

**Trader** - A company that buys finished (and often packaged) wine, brands it and sells to their own customers.

**Vertical Tasting** - Vertical tasting: Sample consecutive years of one wine to understand its evolution and characteristics.

**Vintage** - Refers to the process of picking grapes and creating a finished wine in a single specified year.

**Wholesaler**- An intermediary between producers and retailers, typically storing wine and sometimes transporting it between producers or traders and distributors or retailers.

**Wine Club**- A membership club with specific benefits and wine purchase commitment terms.

**Wine Flight** A series of wines presented to a consumer as an experience to evaluate different attributes such as vintage, style and variety.

**Wine Producer** A company that holds a producer's license to make and sell wine.

**Wine Tasting** A sensory evaluation of wine typically conducted at a cellar door or other licensed facility or event.

**Wine & Spirits Education Trust (WSET)** Provides globally recognised education and qualifications in wines, spirits and sake for professionals and enthusiasts.

## 2. Tourism Glossary

**Agent** - A person or company that sells your product on your behalf, including ITOs, wholesalers and retail **agents**

**Aggregator** - A website that search for deals across multiple websites and shows you the results in one place

**Allotment** - A pre-negotiated number of seats/ rooms/ vehicles held by a wholesaler or inbound tour operator for sale

**Business tourism** - Incorporates visitors travelling for conventions, conferences, seminars, workshops, symposiums, incentives, exhibitions and special events

**Commission** - The fee paid to agents for them to market, distribute and sell your product

**Co-operative advertising** - Advertising funded by two or more partners

**Distressed inventory** - Product whose potential to be sold at a normal cost will soon pass

**Distribution** - The channels or places through which a consumer may purchase your product

**Ecotourism** - Ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation

**Export tourism** - International tourist traffic coming into a country, with foreign currency contributing to the export economy

**Educational visits** - Hosted trips which provide the opportunity to experience your product first hand and improve attendee product knowledge

**Free sell** - A room, seat or vehicle provided by an operator to a wholesaler or inbound tour operator in unrestricted quantities until otherwise indicated, so a booking may be confirmed immediately to a client

**Frontline staff** - The agents that deal directly with consumers including retail agents and reservations staff

**Fully independent travellers (FIT)** - Travellers who plan their own travel arrangements. There are a number of types of FIT including visiting friends and relatives, and partially packaged travel

**Gateway** - A major air, land or sea entry point to a region or country

**General sales agent** - Offer representation and marketing of your product in international markets. They may also provide a booking service

**Gross rate** - The price that consumers pay for your product. Also retail rate, rack rate or door rate

**Group inclusive travellers (GIT)** - Travellers who purchase the bulk of their holiday arrangements before leaving home, also referred to as package travellers

**Inbound tourism** - International tourist traffic coming into a country. Also referred to as export tourism

**Incentive travel** - Incentive travel is a trip offered as a prize or reward, for top performing employees or sales agents

**Industry** - All businesses that are involved in tourism including distribution agents and product suppliers

**Intermediary** - Any dealer who acts as a link in the chain of distribution between a product and its customers. In the tourism industry, travel agents, tour operators etc. are considered the intermediaries (distributors)

**Long haul travel** - International travel to a destination, generally more than 5 hours from the point of origin, i.e. England is a long haul destination for travellers from USA and Australia

**Meeting and incentive planners** - Organise and manage all aspects of meetings, incentives and events

**Net rate** - The gross rate less the commission amount. The amount that you receive from the agent

**Online distribution** - Using the internet and web portals to distribute or promote your product to consumers

**Online travel agent** - Allows consumers to check live availability and pricing then book travel products in real time through the OTA website

**Operator** - The owner and/or manager of the tourism product

**Outbound tourism** - Residents travelling out of their country to an international destination

**Product manager** - Responsible for identifying and selecting the products and suppliers that a tour operator or wholesaler will sell

**Retail travel agent** - The link to the consumer, retail agents allow travellers to book travel products either through a wholesaler, a tour operator, or direct with the supplier

**Sales calls** - Face to face meetings with agents. Purposes may include; to update and educate them on your product, negotiate inclusion in their programs, negotiate rates etc.

**Short haul travel** - International travel to a destination, generally less than a few hours from the point of origin, i.e. England is a short haul destination for travellers from France, Germany etc.

**Tour operator** - An agent that specialises in developing programs and itineraries for distributors

**Trade shows** - Events held both in England and overseas which act as a forum for product suppliers to meet with agents

**Travel distribution system** - A global network of independent businesses which allow international consumers to research and book travel

**Travel trade** - A collective term for the agents that make up the distribution system, including tour operators, wholesalers, retail and online agents

**Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)** - Visitors whose main purpose is to visit with friends and relatives

**Wholesaler** - Contract supplier product. They are B2B and act as a silent partner. They will sell these products via travel agents, tour operators, coach operators and other third parties





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