“Modern Olympics is not merely a sporting event. It is also a platform to showcase the destination. London has presented its great culture and heritage, splendid countryside and the inspiring sporting events in front of the world by capitalising on the opportunity.”

China, CCTV

“You have shown the world the best of British hospitality.”

Jacques Rogge, IOC President

“Can we have London hosting all future Games?”

Sweden, Svenska Dagbladet
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“From the moment the bid was won, our intention was not just to promote the few weeks of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, but to make full use of the opportunities to promote Britain.”

Sandie Dawe, Chief Executive of VisitBritain
VisitBritain has always believed that hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games would provide an unprecedented opportunity for us to put Britain centre stage and highlight the whole country as an attractive place to visit.

The London 2012 Games gave us an unparalleled chance to show the rest of the world the best that Britain has to offer visitors from overseas. We knew it could be an excellent catalyst for tourism marketing and development.

From the moment the bid was won, our intention was not just to promote the few weeks of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, but to make full use of the opportunities to promote Britain before, during and after Games-time, to reach new customers in emerging markets and to refresh Britain’s appeal in established markets.

After in-depth research, consultations, workshops and fact-finding missions we formulated a strategy with three objectives: economic benefit, image and welcome.

To achieve these objectives we worked closely with UK destinations and the tourism industry, with the international travel trade, with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), the Cabinet Office, government bodies and agencies, National Olympic Committees and with a Top Olympic Partner (TOP).

By creating match-funding partnerships we have been able to launch our most ambitious marketing programme: a four-year initiative to attract visitors to the UK over the period 2011–2015.

Using London 2012 as a springboard, our ambition is to attract 40 million visitors annually by 2020.

Our £100 million public/private tactical marketing campaign and £25 million image campaign promotes Britain in an eye-catching and dynamic way using seven themes: culture, heritage, sport, music, countryside, food and shopping. Highlights have included VisitBritain’s first global TV campaign in 10 years and a rolling programme of special consumer offers to entice people to travel to Britain.
“Britain will be on the front page of every single newspaper of every single country in the world for three weeks. And not just the front pages, but the back pages, the middle pages and the supplements. There are not many other opportunities which guarantee you such exposure five years in advance.”

Michael Payne,
Former Marketing Director of the International Olympic Committee
Our Olympic and Paralympic Games Strategy

The London 2012 Games provided an unprecedented opportunity for VisitBritain to promote the wider messages and interests of Britain, to provide and showcase a world class welcome in 2012 and beyond, and to maximise the economic benefits of tourism across the UK.

Our mission was always not just to promote the few weeks of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, but to use the global media attention focused on Britain during these few weeks to attract new customers in emerging markets and to refresh our appeal in established markets.

For seven years we worked to make full use of our experience, insights and international network to add value to the outcomes of not only the Games but also the Cultural Olympiad, the Olympic Torch Relay, Live Sites and Pre-Games Training Camps, and to enhance the image of Britain and help secure a lasting tourism legacy from the 2012 Games.

Even before the bid was won, it was clear to us that hosting a global event like the Olympic and Paralympic Games would provide an excellent catalyst for tourism marketing and development, but only if this advantage was fully optimised.

There was no existing model for optimum tourism promotion by an Olympics’ host nation, but there was an enormous amount of expertise available to us from personnel involved with tourism in previous Games. So we consulted with tourism experts from past host cities and organised fact-finding missions to destinations holding global sporting events, even though their diverse geographies and tourism infrastructures meant there was no direct comparison for London and Britain.

From as early as 2003, we commissioned various research projects, forecasts and reports, and organised workshops to help us understand and identify the tourism opportunities and possible pitfalls of hosting the Games.

By 2005 we had created our own 2012 Games Unit to start to develop our 2012 Games strategy, working in partnership with the tourism bodies in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London, the tourism industry and 2012 stakeholders.

We formulated our strategy for the Games in 2009 after in-depth research, consultation and information gathering. Our aim was to ensure the maximum tourism legacy for the whole of the UK in co-operation with both tourism and non-tourism partners, at home and overseas – recognising that our greatest return would come from visitors motivated as a result of the Games’ exposure rather than from visitors to the Games themselves.

Our strategic objectives:

Economic benefit
Image
Welcome

The creation of an integrated global marketing & 2012 Games strategy in autumn 2009 was the pre-cursor to our four-year GREAT Britain You’re Invited marketing programme.
“Britain in 2012 will offer more than just sport. It will offer a fantastic opportunity... we want to extend an invitation to the world to take a fresh look at what we have to offer.”

Rt Hon David Cameron MP,
Prime Minister, September 2011
Run up to the Games

Our strategy was not to market the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games as such, but to take advantage of worldwide media attention to promote Britain to new and existing audiences around the world.

From 2008 we started to produce a series of Games-related features and information, redeveloped our online media centre and created a database of footage and images for the media to use free-of-charge.

National Olympic Committees were a valuable partner for our media promotions including competitions and special events. For example, in the US, our Britain Bound promotion brought potential US medal-winners to the UK. The athletes visited destinations in Britain and reported on their visits via blogs and tweets.

The Vancouver Winter Olympic Games allowed us to grow significant relationships with media – by hosting a media reception for 300 press and broadcast outlets, including NBC, USA Today and the Daily Telegraph as well as joining London & Partners (then Visit London) to hold targeted meetings in Vancouver with accredited and unaccredited media and rights-holding broadcasters.

In 2011 we began writing guidelines for commenting on negative stories from a tourism perspective, learning from the issues that had arisen for previous host destinations as well as from our own media intelligence on the potentially negative stories, such as tourism displacement and hotel pricing, that might arise.

We compiled a comprehensive destination PR information database which included key messages and sound bites, information on Games logistics, 2012 venues, story ideas, facts and figures, itineraries and details of interviewees representing every part of Britain.

In March 2012 our VIP tour to Britain for 35 top international journalists from around the world, allowed them to get a sneak preview of the 2012 highlights across the country.

We worked with international broadcasters to secure additional coverage of Britain with programmes on countryside, heritage, food, arts and the music scene. And in February and March 2012, we offered broadcasters a collection of 32 short films and scripts that we had made with BBC Motion Gallery. These destination films featured 2012 Games locations and historic and cultural places and events such as Stonehenge, Trooping the Colour, the Edinburgh Festivals and Much Wenlock.

Media

PR has always been an important focus for us – we host or facilitate visits for around 1,000 overseas journalists every year. From 2007 on, we used the Games as a main theme for visiting media.

As early as 2006 we consulted with the communication teams in the tourism offices of Vancouver and Sydney to learn about media needs before and during the Games and the support that these tourist offices gave them.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) was an important partner in optimising the media potential of major milestones such as the launch of the 2012 branding, 1,000 Days To Go, the launch of ticket sales, the topping out of Olympic Park venues and the London Prepares series of test events.

During the Olympic Games in Beijing 2008 we began setting up working relationships with international media, and in many of our markets we held ‘handover events’ with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). At the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games we held a media reception attended by 300 press and broadcast outlets.
Consumer marketing

The Games provided the catalyst for our ambitious marketing programme, operating on two levels: building the aspiration to travel to Britain and increasing the number of people visiting the UK.

In January 2011, the Prime Minister launched our £100 million public/private partnership to attract visitors to the UK over the four years from 2011-2015.

Shortly after, we launched our first global TV ad in 10 years. A series of advertisements and short films featured celebrities – Dame Judi Dench, Dev Patel, Jamie Oliver, Rupert Everett and Twiggy – offering a warm and personal invitation to potential visitors. We agreed a global deal with the BBC through which the TV advertisements were played on BBC World, BBC America and bbc.com as well as BBC’s international iPlayer. One of our partners, Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum, donated TV ad slots giving us airtime across the Americas and Asia. The short films are promoted on visitbritain.com and visitbritain.tv and sites such as YouTube.

In January 2011, the Prime Minister launched our £100 million public/private partnership to attract visitors to the UK over the four years from 2011-2015.

We ran a series of stunts in 10 cities around the world using 3D artwork to mark the start of industry offers to consumers. Working with 10 major commercial partners, these special offers featured in a print and online media campaign.

In November 2011 additional funding for a GREAT Britain image campaign was announced by the Prime Minister as part of a wider initiative to promote Britain as a GREAT place to visit and in which to study, do business and invest – working closely with Cabinet Office at No 10 and the other government agencies and departments that promote Britain abroad – such as the FCO, UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) and the British Council.

The first phase of our £25 million tourism awareness campaign launched in January 2012, covering 14 cities in nine countries: Paris, Berlin, New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paolo, Melbourne, Sydney, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Mumbai and Delhi. The campaign focused on the GREAT Britain themes of heritage, culture and countryside and used digital media, print, cinema, television and outdoor media, (posters and screens). For the launches we partnered with the FCO.

The GREAT Britain branding was embedded in all of our marketing activity and as part of our tactical promotions, we asked the British public to invite their friends and relatives here in 2012. The ‘Sharing is GREAT Britain’ creative was used in a press promotion with the Daily Mirror, overseas campaigns with Expedia, in digital promotions on our Love UK Facebook page and website, visitbritain.com. A toolkit was also created for our UK industry partners’ use to invite their previous visitors.

Over the course of 2011 and 2012 we signed up a whole host of additional overseas celebrities and sporting ambassadors, including Luke Evans and Matt Smith and culminating with golfer Colin Montgomerie, tennis player Boris Becker and boxer Lennox Lewis.

To evaluate the success of our programme, we measure intention to visit, visitor numbers and visitor spend. We also plan to calculate the additional tax revenues and job creation as a result of our activity.

Digital

The relatively recent evolution and adoption of smart technology meant that London 2012 would be the first summer Games to embrace fully the world of social media. We have long been at the forefront of digital and social media, with access to 60 million people through our channels and wanted to capitalise on the high levels of trust and engagement we have built with potential visitors.
We covered all the major milestone dates and Games-related activities through Twitter feeds and our Love UK page on Facebook, which we launched in 2007. By May 2012 it had become the seventh-largest UK brand on the site and the fifth fastest-growing Facebook page in the world.

We also launched a VisitBritain blog, visitbritainsuperblog.com, the first of its kind, bringing together a team of experienced journalists, travel writers and social media professionals representing 14 countries. This ‘superblog’ had a section dedicated to the 2012 Games which included blogs on events, attractions, places and accommodation. Four of our superbloggers followed and reported on the Olympic Torch Relay, also extending their reach through Twitter and Facebook.

**Olympic marketing**

Studies from previous Games showed that we would be able to extend our reach through partnering with official Olympic sponsors, both globally and in local markets.

Of particular note is our partnership with Samsung Electronics, Top Olympic Partner. Our aim was to optimise Samsung’s worldwide customer reach to promote Britain both as the host of the 2012 Games and as a world-class tourist destination.

Our Best of Britain Android app was developed in 2011 for Samsung smartphones and upgraded in June 2012 to include Games-time city information and David Beckham’s top ten places to visit in Britain.

**International travel trade**

A major part of our role has been to engage the international travel trade. We highlighted three main objectives:

- To inspire operators to sell British product to their clients throughout 2012 and beyond
- To mitigate against any potential ‘stay-away’ phenomenon such as that experienced by hosts of other major international events
- To provide Authorised Ticket Resellers for the Games with product and inspirational ideas to add value to their programmes

Through our overseas network, we collected market intelligence, and in 2009 formed a working group alongside London & Partners (then Visit London), the European Tour Operators Association and UKinbound, to monitor and lessen potential visitor displacement.

This group co-ordinated reassuring and inspirational messages for the travel trade, encouraging them to continue to sell Britain coinciding with their planning cycles.

We also used the successful bid for the 2012 Games as a launch pad to support bids for other major events, including the successful bid for the Rugby World Cup in 2015.

**Engaging the UK industry**

To take full advantage of the tourism opportunities presented by the London 2012 Games, we worked in partnership with destinations and tourism businesses throughout the UK – spreading awareness of the economic benefits for tourism, providing information on the business opportunities that the Games offered and encouraging the industry to improve the visitor experience and provide a world-class welcome.

A dedicated resource, the Tourism 2012 Games website was created with LOCOG’s Nations and Regions Group to help UK tourism businesses understand the opportunities that the Games could bring and offer tools such as advice on brand protection. Our monthly newsletters reached more than 11,000 businesses.

Our monthly newsletters reached more than **11,000 businesses**.

In partnership with London & Partners (then Visit London) and with support from LOCOG we drew up the 2009 Event Industry Fair Pricing and Practice Charter to counter price inflation and inappropriate trading practices around the Games.

We also held a series of conferences and events designed to keep the industry abreast of the opportunities leading up to the 2012 Games, including the VisitBritain facilitated Olympic Torch Relay workshop with LOCOG and the UK’s national and regional tourism organisations.

Our staff also accompanied Jeremy Hunt MP, the then Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, on his Olympic-themed tourism tour of England in the autumn/winter of 2011/12 to highlight tourism opportunities.
Welcome

An important part of our strategy involved working with partners across Government and the tourism and hospitality sectors to improve the visitor experience throughout the customer journey.

With this in mind, the Welcome to Britain Steering Group was formed in 2007 under VisitBritain leadership, bringing together government bodies and agencies such as the UK Border Agency and UK Trade and Investment, airlines such as British Airways, and inbound organisations such as UKinbound and the Tourism Alliance who have expertise on welcome issues. The aim was to drive improvements in all areas, ensuring that Britain would provide a world-class welcome to visitors in 2012 and beyond.

Fifteen visa application centres across the world have been GREAT Britain branded.

A number of improvements to the UK visa regime have been made. Visa application guidance is now available in Chinese, Hindi, Turkish, Thai, Arabic and Russian. Online application facilities have been made available worldwide and processing times have improved.

Beginning in 2009 we audited the welcome that visitors receive at 15 UK airports to develop programmes to build on practice.

Integrating welcome into our four-year marketing programme, we reflected it in the form of an invitation: GREAT Britain, You’re invited. Our TV advert features globally-known celebrities issuing a warm personal invitation.

We worked closely with the Government, the UK Border Agency, airports and the Airports Operators Association to ensure that GREAT Britain images welcomed visitors on their arrival at a number of airports in Britain in 2012.

Fifteen visa application centres across the world have been GREAT Britain branded, helping to offer potential visitors a warm welcome at the point of application.

We also supported the national tourist boards in their progress on welcome in their countries and building customer service skills.

Relations with London 2012

It was always clear that a good relationship with the Organising Committee would be essential to advance our agenda around the Games. By building this relationship early it also became clear to London 2012 and LOCOG that the national tourism agency could add value to their ambition – especially in areas beyond their direct control – specifically through our overseas network and influence across the tourism industry.

We were a member of the Nations and Regions Group (NRG) set up by LOCOG, responsible for bringing about the UK-wide benefits of the Games. Our joint pre-Games training camp website allowed National Olympic Committees and national federations to identify locations for their teams to train before the Games.

In 2010 together with the Tourism Alliance, we led consultations with LOCOG’s legal team, which resulted in the publication of Brand Protection: Information for the Tourism Sector. This helped tourism businesses understand the extent to which they could refer to the Games in their marketing.

The same year we were granted the licence to use the London 2012 ‘Host Country’ logo creative for corporate purposes. Use of this logo acted as a calling card when talking to potential broadcast and sponsor partners in the Olympic orbit, demonstrating our status as an officially recognised member of the wider Games family.

Relations with Olympic Committees

We established firm and fruitful links with many National Olympic Committees around the world, working closely with British Embassies and High Commissions, the FCO, UKTI and the British Council. Our series of joint events to introduce Britain and our plans for the 2012 Games, enabled us to secure the co-operation of Committee executives, sponsors, local media and Olympic athletes in extending the reach of the Britain message.
Overseas we worked with National Olympic Committees on promotions including competitions, special events and Britain-branded media events. In the USA, for example, our Britain Bound promotion brought potential US medal-winners to the UK. The athletes visited destinations in Britain and reported on their visits via blogs and tweets.

Relations with Government

We have long been involved in the UK Government’s public diplomacy work alongside partners in the British Council, UKTI and the FCO and our role around the Games offered an additional opportunity to enhance our reputation and visibility across Whitehall.

In 2008 a Public Diplomacy Group was created to focus on the 2012 Games and to ensure that Games-specific issues were addressed and co-ordinated across the network. Among the tangible results of this group’s work was the successful granting of ‘Host Country’ status to these organisations by the IOC. Regular meetings of the group, and its expansion to include interested parties such as the Greater London Authority, initiated economies of scale in work overseas, and a greater shared understanding of VisitBritain’s work by the FCO in London.

In the spirit of sharing knowledge – integral to the Olympic movement – we seized the opportunity to develop emerging markets, particularly future Olympic hosts, Russia and Brazil which offer huge potential for tourism. All this work proved to be an excellent foundation when the cross-governmental GREAT Britain campaign evolved in 2011.

In 2008, in partnership with the FCO, UKTI and the British Council, we produced a Britain: Be part of it toolkit of LOCOG-approved images and artwork linking Britain firmly to 2012.

The images were used in many markets around the world and the toolkit provided the foundations for a worldwide public diplomacy campaign, See Britain Through My Eyes, launched in November 2009.

Our 2010 London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games report for a DCMS Select Committee outlined our vision that the whole UK tourism industry would benefit from the Games.

Internal communications

To optimise the potential of the Games for British tourism, it was clear we would need the support and participation of staff across all departments and offices.

We ensured that all our activity was co-ordinated and communicated across the network, and that good relations were maintained with valuable stakeholders within the Olympic orbit.

Guidelines for staff ensured that all our communications mentioning the Games complied with the IOC guidelines and laws surrounding Olympic brand protection. These were followed by regularly updated lines to take for media-facing staff.

One month before the Games, we orchestrated a full crisis communications exercise so that VisitBritain and TIER (Tourism Industry Emergency Response) were prepared to ensure coherent messaging on the impact on tourism of any crisis during the Games period.

We also held regular staff workshops and seminars to educate and inspire our team around the world.

Our role around the Games offered an additional opportunity to enhance our reputation and visibility across Whitehall.
“The brilliance of the London Games was not all about sport. It was about putting the country on display and they have done just that.”

Steve Simmons, Toronto Sun
Games-time Activities

Games-time presented us with unique and unprecedented challenges. Our strategy was to build on all our preparatory work since 2005 and to take full advantage of worldwide media attention to promote Britain to new and existing audiences around the world.

Seven years of planning culminated in a 27-day window in which to implement programmes through media, digital and travel trade channels. Corporately, the organisation went into a seven-day-a-week operations, our staff worked unusual hours across many different locations and we seconded staff from overseas to support our efforts here.

More than 500 overseas media participated in media tours to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Media

In the lead up to and during the Games we worked with thousands of Olympic broadcast rights holders and non-accredited media from over 100 countries to ensure that their coverage went beyond sport and included destination stories of London and the rest of Britain.

We were a strategic partner for the London Media Centre (LMC) in Westminster, contributing fully to the management and content committees. The Centre was used by over 8,000 journalists, where we operated a Britain information desk to support media interested in reporting on travel and lifestyle stories across the UK, answering questions and assisting them with their editorial and broadcast needs. PR representatives from VisitEngland, VisitScotland, Visit Wales and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board helped us service the media.

The programme at the London Media Centre included more than 200 events with exclusive media briefings, bespoke hospitality events and interviews with VIP celebrity spokespeople.

We hosted 14 GREAT Britain media events, each featuring one of the seven GREAT Britain themes. Guests included Boris Becker, Lennox Lewis, Karan Johar, the Duchess of Northumberland and Premier League footballers. Along with these events in London, more than 500 overseas media participated in media tours to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We had a presence in the media village on the “High Street” at the Olympic Park – the London & Britain Media Information Unit – where we provided editorial content and tools for the accredited media.

Our Media Offers Guide contained over 750 discounted or complimentary offers from a range of businesses, including leading hotels around the UK, visitor attractions and theatres, aimed to encourage international media to explore Britain.

Other tools included, a broadcast location guide, spokespeople from a range of fields, itinerary modules and broadcast quality B-roll and imagery. We also produced guidelines for UK businesses outlining ways in which the press team could help tourism businesses highlight newsworthy information about their products to overseas media.
Digital

For us the starting gun for our Games-time activity was always going to be the start of the Olympic Torch Relay. Our interactive map on visitbritain.com and our Facebook page Love UK, allowed potential visitors to ‘follow the Torch’ as it travelled round the country and our online and Facebook app enabled fans to pass virtual flags around the world and compete for prizes for the most points.

During the Opening Ceremony alone we engaged with over 5 million social media users on Facebook and on Weibo.

From June 2012 content focused on ‘summer of celebration’ and the ‘buzz of Britain’ across all our digital channels: on Twitter, Facebook, visitbritain.tv and our superblog as well as our website.

During the Opening Ceremony alone we engaged with over 5 million social media users on Facebook and on Weibo (China’s microblogging service).

We worked to build functionality and amass content for the years after the event, when we can capitalise on the interest about Britain generated by the Games.

Internal communications

To ensure a co-ordinated approach across VisitBritain, we held a daily operations meeting, attended by VisitEngland and London & Partners. This ensured that we all kept in touch with sentiment and business across the industry and could respond swiftly to challenges as they arose.

Meetings were held every morning, seven days a week during the Olympic period, with staff dialling in from across the global network. During the first week of the Games, the daily meeting became a catalyst for reporting, analysing and responding to the short-term ‘ghost town’ issue that impacted shops, restaurants, theatres and attractions in the capital.
Marketing

With the eyes of the world on Britain, we chose to suspend paid-for-advertising during the Games and focus on PR. Games-time was used predominantly to learn from the creative testing and brand tracking from before the Games, and apply that to preparations for the launch of tactical and image campaigns immediately after the Closing Ceremony of the Paralympic Games.

This activity generated a marketing-in-kind value of approximately £44,000.

Through our partnership with LOCOG and Government, we had access to free media advertising sites at selected Olympic venues. Spectators could see GREAT Britain branding in prominent sites at both the ExCeL and the North Greenwich Arena venues. This activity helped to extend a message of welcome, as well as generating a marketing-in-kind value of approximately £44,000.

International travel trade

We used the London 2012 Games to attract the world’s most influential travel industry leaders to Britain.

Our World Travel Leaders’ Summit (WTLS) during the Games showcased London and Britain’s ability to host major events and unique tourism experiences, to reignite and reinforce interest in the destination among major influencers in the international travel trade and to advocate travel to Britain in 2013 and beyond.

We invited more than 20 influential international and overseas travel operators to Britain, taking them to Wales, Scotland, England and London in a bid to get more of Britain into travel packages and brochures around the world.

The Summit explored the barriers to increasing tourism to Britain from the overseas trade perspective, the opportunities and how these could be addressed. This was followed by an industry networking event which gave UK partners an exclusive opportunity to meet the VIP group and discuss business in 2013 and beyond.

We invited more than 20 influential international and overseas travel operators to Britain.

We then invited the delegates to the Games to see for themselves Britain’s capacity to organise and stage events and high levels of customer service.

The event was supported by British Airways who generously provided the majority of the delegates’ flights and access to their hospitality suite on the Olympic Park.
“We’ve been pushing the message that Britain is a great place to visit, a great place to come and do business. I believe it is working, and there’s no reason to stop so we’re going to keep it going after the Games have finished.”

Rt Hon David Cameron MP, Prime Minister, September 2011
Delivering the Legacy

Marketing and PR post-Games

With Britain’s image and reputation riding high around the world after the Games, we seized the moment to turn viewers into visitors.

Our GREAT Britain campaign has always aimed to use the interest generated by the media exposure before and during the Games to bring lasting economic benefits through increased trade, investment and tourism.

We launched a £13.5 million marketing push with airlines, hotel companies and tour operators offering special deals the day after the Games ended. The offers and incentives centre around the seven GREAT Britain tourism themes: culture, heritage, countryside, sport, shopping, music and food.

We extended our partnership with British Airways to include an additional £5 million match-funded brand activity in China, Japan, India and the US and £2.5 million tactical activity in UAE, Canada, Brazil and Russia – running from October 2012 until the end of March 2013.

Our TV commercial was also re-edited with Games content under the theme Memories are GREAT, and featured on visitbritain.tv and travel and lifestyle sites.

We have been continuing to use events and anniversaries, supported by PR, to reinforce the message that the time to visit is now. These include our work with film studios on the James Bond themed campaign to mark 50 years of Bond movies and the release of the latest film, SKYFALL, and the 50th anniversary of the Beatles first single (October 2012) and their first album in 2013.

2012 is also our fifth year of partnership with the Premier League and we continue to use this as a catalyst to drive sports fans to the UK.

£8 million has been committed to running an extended GREAT Britain campaign in China, which will start in the financial year 2013/14. We have been allocated £2 million of this additional funding to target a larger number of Chinese cities, and the Chinese travel trade.

Off the back of the London 2012 Games, the Prime Minister announced on 5 July that the GREAT Britain campaign would continue beyond the Games as part of the Olympics Legacy.

Britain tourism strategy

When the London 2012 Games were over, we launched a consultation on a growth strategy for inbound tourism to Britain. This sets out an ambition for Britain to welcome 40 million visitors by 2020.

The strategy builds on the unparalleled showcasing of Britain around the world during the Games and shows how aligning marketing and Government policy can deliver an economic legacy. Reaching 40 million visitors by 2020 would generate £8.7 billion additional foreign exchange earnings at today’s prices, and support more than 200,000 additional jobs.

The consultation was with the travel industry, the public agencies and multiple government departments that care about tourism and impact on its success. It was designed to identify shared priorities and potential partnerships.

Although international tourism is a growth industry, the global marketplace is getting tougher as other countries recognise the potential of the sector.

The strategy sets out four elements:

- Enhancing Britain’s image by playing to Britain’s strengths – heritage, traditional and contemporary culture – and addressing perceived weaknesses such as natural beauty, food, value and welcome
- Ensuring Britain is ‘on the shelf’ by working with the travel trade to package and sell Britain in relevant markets
- Ensuring that Britain’s strong tourism products can be easily packaged and that the country continues to meet the expectations of new visitors from growth markets
- Making it easier to get here by addressing barriers to growth such as aviation capacity and the visa regime

The consultation also considered wider factors affecting Britain’s competitiveness, including the global population shift to cities, the balance between targeting volume or value, and how to reverse the decline in major source markets such as the USA while also ensuring Britain captures its share of the growth from emerging economies.

The consultation period ended in mid-November and responses are being considered before developing partnerships and prioritising markets and segments.
“Full credit must go to the UK tourism board and their programme to fully capitalise on being the Olympic host. Their GREAT Britain campaign, and how it exploited the Olympic opportunity, will probably deliver the best results of all.”

Michael Payne, former Marketing Director of the International Olympic Committee
Achievements to Date

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games were an unparalleled opportunity to showcase Britain around the world. Billions of TV viewers watched positive coverage of Britain and all the experiences it has to offer: a country that can not only stage a great Games, but can also welcome the world with open arms and host a great party. Initial reports indicate that this international coverage has positively shifted perceptions of Britain, particularly our creativity, heritage and culture, arts and music and welcome.

The pattern for nearly all markets was initial scepticism about the preparedness and security, quickly giving way to delight at the Opening Ceremony, which was universally well received in almost every market.

Visitor figures and spend during Games-time

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) International Passenger Survey data for the Olympics period shows that:

- 680,000 visits from overseas to the UK from July to September were primarily due to, or involved attending, an official ticketed event at the Olympic or Paralympic Games
- These overseas visitors spent an average of £1,350 each, a total of over £920 million. This includes any London 2012 tickets bought before or during the visit
- Visits to the UK by overseas visitors in September were 1% higher than a year earlier
- However, the spend was 17% higher than in September 2011
- Visits in the 12 months to September 2012 were around the same level as in the previous 12 months, taking the rolling year tally to 30.7 million
- Spending in the 12 months to September 2012 totalled £18.7 billion, a record high (in nominal terms) and representing annual growth of 5%
- Provisional figures released in early November show that the UK received 23.5 million overseas visitors in the nine months January-September. Spend for the same period, however, was £14.3 billion – a 9% increase on January-September 2011. This is in line with our forecast that the country should expect around 31 million inbound arrivals in 2012, spending around £18 billion

These encouraging numbers mean that by the end of the year we should see evidence that Britain has avoided the traditional displacement effect generally encountered when hosting major events – reports suggest that some recent Olympic host cities experienced a downturn in visitor figures and spend during Games-time.

Visitors spent an average of £1,350 each, a total of around £920 million.

There was a warm response to the friendliness, humour and welcome of the British people and praise for Britain and London’s diversity, inclusivity and vibrancy.

The Games’ venues with tourist attractions as backdrops helped to show Britain at its best. The Paralympic Games received less international media coverage, but focused on the engaging ceremonies, lively atmosphere and excellent organisation.

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Marketing

At the end of financial year 2011/12, the first year of our four-year marketing programme, we had secured 12 major partners and more than £10 million of match-funding in cash and kind, signed up around a dozen celebrities plus a number of Premier League players and US athletes, produced our first global TV ad in 10 years, mounted an ambitious PR stunt (GREATBritain3D), rolled out our GREAT Britain tactical campaign in 21 markets and developed a viral campaign to encourage the British public to invite their friends and family to visit Britain in 2012.

The overall impact of our work overseas was valued at £503 million, with an additional £89 million generated in partner bookings.

We were given an additional £25 million to launch a GREAT image campaign in 14 cities in nine countries – Beijing, Berlin, Delhi, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paolo, Shanghai, Sydney, Tokyo and Toronto – which reached 90 million people.

The initial evaluation of the first phase of the GREAT image advertising found that Britain as a destination saw the greatest increase in unprompted recall of advertising (an index change of 155%) compared with major competitors USA, Australia, France and Italy. ‘Strong likelihood to visit within a year’ also showed greater uplift for Britain following the campaign in the 14 cities than for these major competitors, and was much higher among those who recalled the advertising. If these stated intentions translated into an increase in visits they could potentially generate between £33m and £72m being spent in Britain by visitors from these cities.

Media

During the year April 2011-March 2012 our PR activities generated more than 28,000 individual pieces of TV, radio, print and online coverage, almost 5,000 more than in 2010/11. The advertising value equivalent of this coverage was £3.7 billion, more than twice the £1.5 billion generated in 2010/11.

In China alone we generated more than 2,000 items of media coverage featuring all parts of Great Britain. This coverage is estimated to be worth £200 million, which is eight times our global annual budget.

In addition to the £3.7 billion of coverage we generated in 2011/12, we have secured a further £2 billion in the first six months of 2012/13.

Digital

Our online content has been viewed by nearly a quarter of a billion people so far in 2012.

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Welcome

Initial indications suggest that the Games have had an extremely positive impact on perceptions of welcome overseas. Media coverage focused on the friendliness, humour and welcome of the British people, highlighted by the volunteers, soldiers and British crowds cheering athletes from all countries.

99% of the 100 communications experts from 24 countries surveyed in an independent ECCO survey believe that the Games will encourage more people from their country to visit Britain.
“My perception has been changed because the food was much better and British people were much more friendly and supportive to the Japan team.”

Japan, Nikkan Sports

“The Olympics is but one of a series of otherwise regular spectacles that abound in the land that gave the world cricket, Shakespeare, James Bond and the Queen.”

Australia, Sydney Morning Herald

“It must be said that the British are the friendliest people on earth.”

Germany, Suddeutsche Zeitung

“Amazingly funny and stylish – Britain at its best.”

Sweden, TV4