

Online Support Toolkit

Making the Most of Your Online Presence

Visit **County Durham**



The rise in the use of people using online tools for information and holiday inspiration continues to increase. It is important that your online presence is up-to-date and that you are visible to potential customers.



Your website



- Make sure that you check and update the content of your website frequently – do your prices and opening times vary throughout the year?
- Read the content as if you were a visitor – would you be able to find out all the answers to queries you may have?
- Highlight your USPs (Unique Selling Points) – why should someone visit you over a competitor?
- Online booking – can be the difference between getting a booking straight away and someone going to a competitor.
- Check that external links from your website work and link to the correct places.
- Embed your social media feed to show that you are proactive in promoting your business.

Imagery

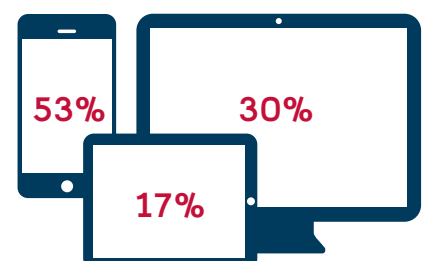
- Use good quality images (VCD website minimum use 950x535 pixels). Ensure that images aren't too large as these can slow a website down. Google will penalise this during a search which could result in your website being lower down the pages in the search returns.
- Alt text descriptions should be used to describe an image on a webpage which is displayed if the image fails to load on a user's screen or to help screen-reading tools describe images to visually impaired readers. For example "a wooden bar with 4 bar stools and a barman standing behind the bar".

Your listing on thisisdurham.com

- VCD Partners are entitled to an enhanced advert which includes text, up to 6 images, a direct link to your website and much more. The VCD Partnership Team are available to help and advise about getting the most out of your enhanced entry.
- Use your extranet access to update your record and information. (you can get this by emailing partners@visitcountydurham.org).
- Ensure that your description has header sections such as 'location' and 'about us'.



Device usage for accessing thisisdurham.com



Search Engine Optimisation

SEO is related to how your website is found using key search terms such as 'hotels in Durham'. To ensure that your website is ranked highly;

1. Make sure that your web copy is clear, concise and compelling.
2. Familiarise yourself with key industry search terms relevant to your business.
3. Insert keywords into your web copy to ensure that they add useful information that is helpful and interesting e.g. location, offer, facilities.

Hints & tips

Google

- Familiarise yourself with Google's priorities to ensure that your website is higher up the pages in searches – low word count and limited imagery means falling down in the rankings with less opportunities for exposure.



- Use short videos as well as photographs to promote your business.



- Use any awards and gradings you have to promote the quality of your business.



- Benchmark against your competitors.



- Keep information up-to-date and factually correct.



- Use additional content from strong sources such as Facebook and Twitter feeds, YouTube videos and TripAdvisor reviews.



- Use Google analytics to analyse in-depth detail about the visitors on your website.



- Ensure your website is mobile friendly.



For more information

- ABTA holiday report - abta.com/sites/default/files/2018-10/Holiday%20Habits%20Report%202018%20011018.pdf
- 15 SEO Statistics for 2019 - impactbnd.com/blog/seo-statistics
- Google support - support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7451184?hl=en
- Google Analytics - analytics.google.com