

The Practical Conclusion

Dealing with mostly SME's with limited expertise of how the internet can be used as a marketing tool we have concluded what tools would help and professionalize the North Iceland tourism companies in general. The research shows that webpages, social media, data and content are factors that need to be worked on. The next step was creating toolkits that would benefit SME's with 1-4 employees. The three toolkits are; Webpage Toolkit, Social Media Toolkit, Internet marketing Data Toolkit and the Timeline.

The market in general is mostly SME's and many of them have a very low employee count and the knowledge is sometimes very limited. Research shows that 47.12% of the North Iceland tourism companies only have 1-2 employees and 24.04% have 3-5 employees. Only 34% of 47% that use marketing data from their internet media also use it in Marketing. This tells us that our tools need to be very basic and easy to use. For the content part what needs to be developed is something that everyone can benefit from. This is when the Timeline was formed.

Webpage toolkit

Most of the North Iceland tourism companies have webpages so that is not a real issue. How people use their webpages and what content is being showcased is something that can be worked on. Some of the basic things in online services have not been fulfilled on most of the webpages that have been tested. The solution for most we consider to be guidance in what the customer might want to know after visiting a webpage. To help SME's with this problem a basic toolkit is formed with criteria from the webpage analysis that is shown in the report.

How to use the toolkit

The Webpage toolkit works like a checkbox. Go through the kit one box by one and mark what is good and what is bad. Some things might be irrelevant and there are check boxes for that also. The toolkit has 4 categories; Interactivity, Navigation, Functionality and Site Marketing Characteristics. To get the most out of the toolkit two or more people should go through it. Some boxes are more technical than others, it can be helpful using a search engine for better understanding of what is being asked about. When all aspects of the toolkit have been updated your webpage should be on another level service wise.

<i>Page 1/4 Interactivity</i>						
Webpage Toolkit	Yes:	No:	Dose not apply:	Should Be:	If Ok:	If needs work:
Phone Number Listed (Is your phone number listed on your webpage)				Yes		
Address Listed (Is your address listed on your webpage)				Yes		
E-mail Hyperlink (Is your email hyperlinked on your webpage, this means that your email can be clicked on and then the visitors email program will open)				Yes		
Online Information Request Form (Can people send anonymous requests on your webpage)				Yes		
E-mail Listed (Is your email in general listed on your webpage)				Yes		
Online comment form (Can people give feedback on your webpage)				Yes		
				Total:		

<i>Page 2/4 Navigation</i>						
Webpage Toolkit	Yes:	No:	Dose not apply:	Should Be:	If Ok:	If needs work:
Links to Other Pages on Website (This can shorten the time for costumers to see different things that are relevant on your webpage)				Yes		

Consistent Navigation (is the navigation/menu always visible?)				Yes		
Links to Other Sites (Are there links to other webpages that could help your costumers in selecting you)				Yes		
Ease of Navigation (Is it always easy to travel around your website)				Yes		
Index Page (A front page with easy navigation to other pages on your webpage, also should include the basic information)				Yes		
Search Capabilities (Is it possible to search within your webpage)				Yes		
				Total:		

<i>Page 3/4 Functionality</i>						
Webpage Toolkit	Yes:	No:	Dose not apply:	Should Be:	If Ok:	If needs work:
Favicon (The icon that is shown on the left side of the address bar)				Yes		
Video (Do you have video that shows your product)				Yes		
Download Facilities (Is there a place on your webpage that abeles users to download content that they would need, could be a logo or an itinerary)				Yes		
What's New? (Can people see what new products you are offering)				Yes		
Responsive Design (Is your webpage smart device ready, you can try this by visiting your webpage by phone or on a tablet)				Yes		
English (Is your webpage in English)				Yes		
Flash Animation (Flash Animation does not show on all devices, this can be a problem)				No		
				Total:		

<i>Page 4/4 Site Marketing Characteristics</i>						
Webpage Toolkit	Yes:	No:	Dose not apply:	Should Be:	If Ok:	If needs work:
Photos of Facilities (Photos that show what your are selling)				Yes		
Images High Quality (Do your images seem out of focus)				Yes		
Description of Product and Services (describe what you are selling)				Yes		
Location Map of the Company (Map that shows where you are located)				Yes		
Online Payment (A way to pay for services online, this makes the selling part more easy)				Yes		
Tagline (If you look at the header of your browser you should see a description. This is a part of search engine optimization)				Yes		
Online Reservation (Is it possible to order online)				Yes		
Reservation by E-mail (Can people send a email to buy your product)				Yes		
Links to Tourist Information (Are there links to more information about tourism in your area)				Yes		
Availability of Price Info (Are prices shown on your webpage)				Yes		
Safe Payment Statement (If you have a online payment option this will help people trust you)				Yes		

Links to Your Social Media (If you have social media here you should advertise it)				Yes		
				Total:		

The accomplishment

When this toolkit has been used you will have an outcome that tells you what needs work and what is ok. The next step would be to go through the list and fix the things that need work.

Some things can be sorted out quite easy; photos, text, links and more. Things like tagline, favicon, responsive design and online payment would probably need a professional to fix or add on. This tool is to improve your customers experience on your webpage and should help both service wise and your online selling.

Social Media Toolkit

Most companies have a presence on social media. The problem seems to be knowledge of what social media actually is and how it can be used as a tool to help businesses. While dealing with public profiles on the internet there are things that seem quite simple but are not always as good as they could be. Acting on social media can be a difficult thing to do if normally companies have only answers to questions but don't ask them. The real truth behind Web 2.0 and social media is to socialize. You can be involved on social media on different scales but you need to understand what voice should be out there presenting your company and what you can do to manage the world of social media. To work on this we decided to make a small tool that is divided into two categories. The categories are "Public Profile Integration" and "Social Media Strategy".

How to use the Toolkit

In the toolkit there are questions that you need to ask yourself and fill in the answer. The toolkit also guides people in understanding social media. Read through the toolkit once then look at your profiles and see what can and has been done, then take a look at the kit and try to find things to improve to get a better understanding of what is being presented.

1/2 Public Profile Integration

To gain a more professional profile on the internet social media is a key aspect. Social Media is everything where it's possible to socialize. Examples of social media are; Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+, Trip Advisor and more. Some websites even offer social plugins where both everyone can communicate on a platform and the company with their readers. To make a strong image on social media have a plan and stick to it. Here we have a list that can be used to check if everything is in order.

1. Use the same name for all media, company name or brand name.
2. Use the same picture/logo for all your profiles,
3. Remember to link to your website, list your phone number and email.
4. Most of the media offer a unique user URL, use the same one on all media.
5. Remember to direct people to your social media from your website

2/2 Social Media Strategy

The efficient way to use social media is to bring a voice to the public. This can be hard at times but to simplify things a strategy is a key aspect in having a constant appearance. Take these notes in consideration to organize your social media strategy.

- Have a strategy, it can be guidelines of how to react and how not react on social media.
- On social media you are on a personal level and that means a robot or a standard message is not the answer to save time.
- To save time schedule time to each and every one in the company that can answer questions and share stories.
- Use the right staff to answer the right questions. If someone asks a hotel on social media if rooms are available the booking manager should answer not the marketing manager.
- Socialize with things that are relevant to your business. Don't just talk about your self, use other things like events in the area of your business. This way you can intergrade your brand with another brand.

Internet Marketing Data Toolkit

The amount of marketing data on the internet is big. We will focus on the data that is already in place from media that is owned by companies. Today many programs are offered on the

internet to help people analyse data, Google Analytics is the most used program yet .We will use webpages (Google Analytics, 2013) and Facebook for examples to help out in how to get the data and what it can be useful for.

How to use the Toolkit

To get your analytics software in place it would be a good idea to have professional set up an account for you and start looking at your data. This tool is a guideline of what information can be analysed. It shows the basic figures that help companies see who is watching them and how they found them. In this tool we only talk about free software that is commonly used and integrated analytics on social media (Facebook Insights, 2013). You should go over the list and fill up the check boxes, this involves finding information and then setting a goal and seeing if you have reach it in a period of 3 months. This tool requires some computer experience.

Webpage Analytics, Google Analytics

Using a webpage analytics program helps you understand what you are doing well, what you can do better, who is watching you and how they found you. Let's start with the number of visitors which is the first thing everybody wants to know. Analytics offers a good way to analyse this and here are the basic things that are lined out:

Audience Overview

- People visits, this means how many single IP addresses have visited your site. This is the same as unique visits.
- Visits, how many visits in total you have had, this means that the same person can visit your webpage more than once and the total will show up in this criteria,
- Page views, how many pages your visitors looked through in total.
- Average visit duration, how long does each visit stay on your page. Depending on what kind of webpage you run this number can tell you a lot about if people are reading and exploring your content. If this number is getting lower you might want to renewing content.
- Language, Country and City, this tells your where your audience is exploring you from, what language they speak and even what city's are looking at you. This can tell you a lot about what language your visitors speak and even where you might want to infiltrate a new marketing campaign.

Audience and Traffic Sources

- All traffic, this tells you traffic is coming from. This can help you determine if you are showing up on search engines and if there are connecting sites that are helping you raise your traffic.
- Keywords tell you what words were used to look for your site on search engines. This can help you see what people are interested in. The big thing about keywords is that more and more companies have begun to hide their customers' cookies so software like Google Analytics can't pick them up. The time is now to use this data while it's still there.

Content

- Here you can see what pages are generating the most visits. This tells you what is important to others on your webpage.
- You can see what search terms are generating traffic and to what content they lead.
- In-Page Analytics shows you what every site link, how many click on each and every one of them. It's also possible to see your webpage in colour's that indicate what areas are being clicked on the most.

Social Media Analytics, Facebook Insights

What the insights on social media do is a lot like the web analytics. What they do better is that they have more information on the people that are using the media. For example things like gender and age can be a good add on for marketing managers. This is something that the basic webpage analytics would not provide. Here you can see what can be gained from social media analytics.

Page overview

- Page likes, tells you how many people like your page and your success in gaining likes.
- Post Reach, the number of impressions that your page has made during a period of time that is usually measured in weeks. This is how you can see if you have been sharing things that have impact on people. This is probably the best way to see how your social strategy is working.

- Engagement, how others are socializing with you, measured in like, comments, shares and general post clicks. These are things that help you get organic growth and are valuable for you market wise.
- Recent Posts, here you can compare what each post has reached to many people and see what the engagement is. Facebook also has a special layout for post analytics with gives you a better understanding and more data to look at.

Page insights

- This page tells you how your page has been evolving. To know if your likes are raising in a general manner of if you have a peak somewhere. This helps you find out what is working and what is not working.
- Ads are a factor that most companies use, here you can see how your ads are helping you in your social marketing campaign. To know if ads are making your page more visible and if they are generating likes, that is an indicator that you have gained something from your investment.

People insights

- Age and Gender, this is when it gets interesting. To know what gender and age people are that watch your every move on social media are basic facts that marketers have used for a long time.
- See if your target group is following you, if you see that most of your followers are much older or younger that gives you a clue. Maybe you are offering something that is interesting to people that you did not know could be in your target group. This also tells you that you need to change something to get to the people that you where going to set your strategy towards.
- Geography and Language, tells what language people speak and where they are from. This is always good knowledge to know what to say and to on social media. If most of your followers are from France you could quote some French people in your posts to raise more attention.

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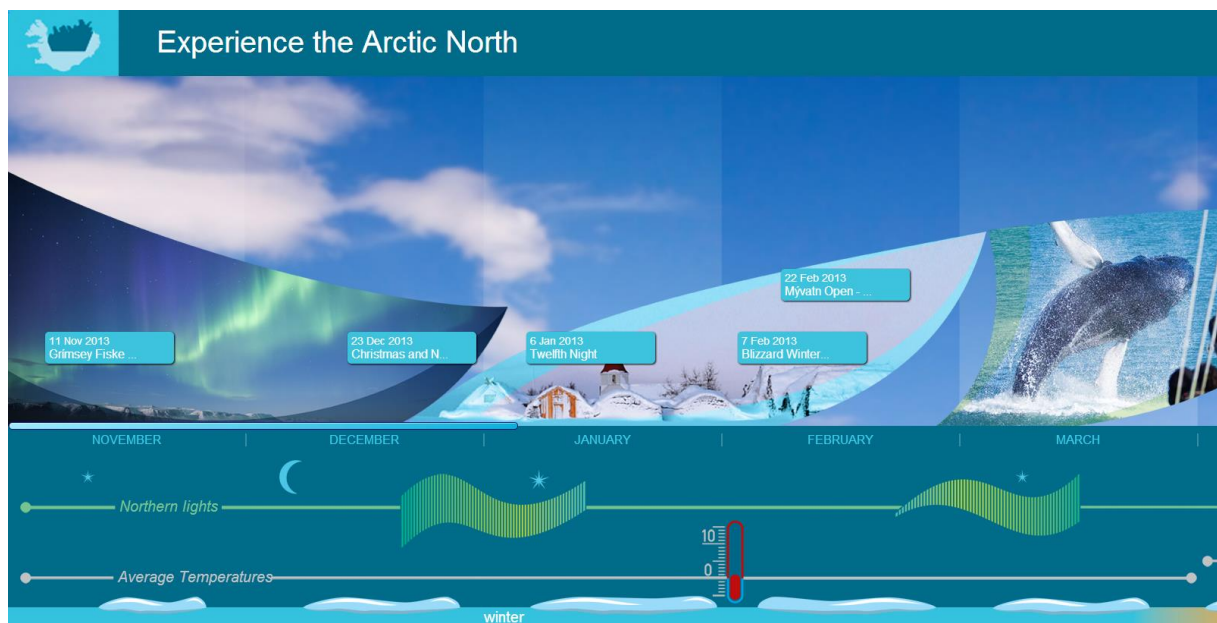
Facebook. *Insights*. Sótt 2. júlí 2013. <https://www.facebook.com/help/www/336893449723054/>

Google Analytics. *Analyze your data*. Sótt 3. júlí 2013.

<https://support.google.com/analytics/?hl=en#topic=1726904>

The Timeline

The Timeline was developed by people in the tourism industry and the North Iceland Marketing Office as a base for content and marketing. The conclusion was to answer common questions about North Iceland and show the diversity of event's around the area. This way the Timeline could answer common questions and spread tourists around the area and throughout the year. Furthermore the Timeline should answer seasonal questions: When the Northern Lights are visible, when the Midnight Sun appears, when there is snow and what the average temperature is which are common questions from travellers.

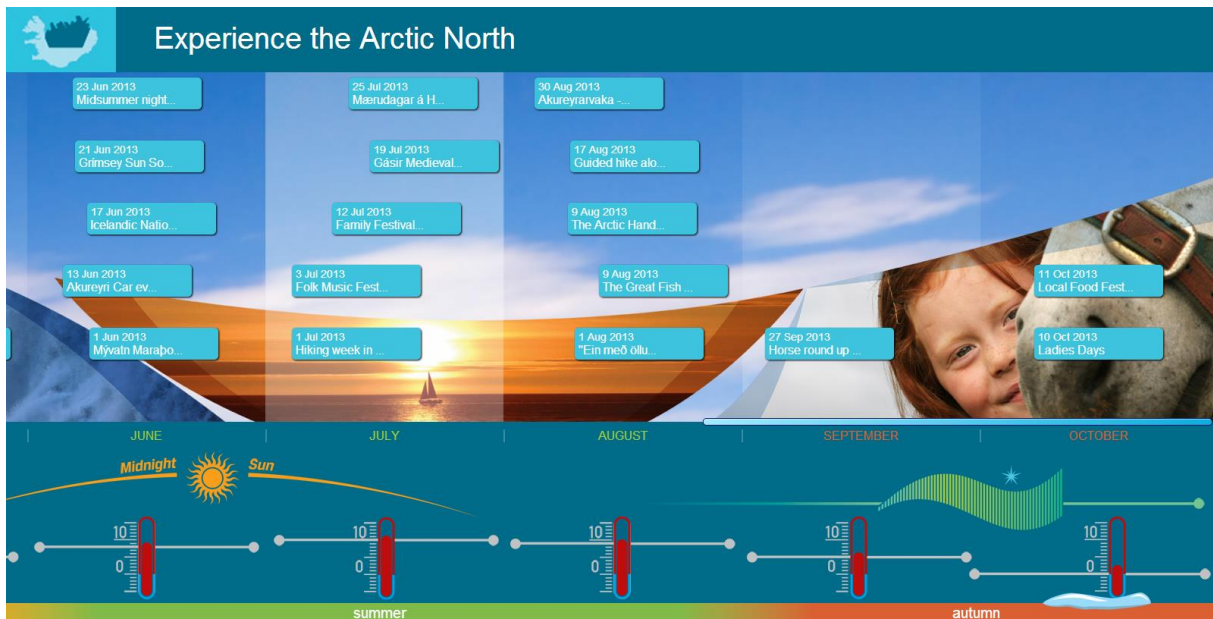


The Timeline showing northern lights, snow, events and the average temperatures.

Making of the Timeline

The Timeline is a smart device webpage that should be accessible on smart phones, tablets and computers. To keep the Timeline updated the North Iceland Marketing Office is the owners and is responsible for it. It is hosted on the webpage www.northiceland.is.

Programming of the Timeline was a six month period with beta testing. Open source software was used so the programming would be easily accessible for others to use.



The Timeline showing midnight sun, average temperatures, northern lights and events and snow.

The criteria for events to get on the Timeline are that the events need to be able to welcome foreign visitors. Every event needs to have information in English, a webpage in English and programs that foreign tourists can be involved in. The events need to be seasonal and biannual to decrease the work needed to update the Timeline.



The Timeline, how events show when clicked on.

How did it Work?

To measure if the Timeline is successful in increasing traffic it's possible to see both the traffic that leads to the webpage and also there are links in every event that leads to the official site of the events that is being promoted in the Timeline. When the Timeline was launched comments from the tourism industry started showing. Today the other marketing offices in Iceland have decided to use the Timeline as part of their marketing tools. To get a better idea how what would be the next steps in development we interviewed marketing managers and general managers from tourism. We performed open interweaves. The aim of the interviews were about the Timeline, how it works, how it works in marketing for their companies, how the Timeline could be developed in the future and then about events on the internet in general. We asked about how they think events are shown on the internet to day and if their companies use events in promotion. We asked them if they think that events attract more tourists to North Iceland and if there is any other solution in showcasing events then the Timeline.

- Everyone was glad that a good solution was found in answering the common questions.
- Some conclusions were made whether the Timeline could be used as a selling or booking webpage.
- The social part was argued and the fact is that the socialized themes of the Timeline are still incomplete and need to be worked on. The Timeline needs to have built in tools so the events and the webpage are shareable on social media. The fact of how hard it is to share the content on the Timeline does not benefit the social sharing part. Companies and visitors need to have a quick simple solution to share the content.
- A way to show services around events no more than one click a way was mentioned and could benefit both the readers of the Timeline and the companies that are based around events.
- The factor that show how the nature is showcasing itself made a good impression to most of the people whom were interviewed.
- How the events generally open when clicked on is something that can be worked on, it could be a good solution to add a video function so the selling of the travel destination of the event could be more efficient.

Further Development

The conclusion for further development is to make the Timeline a well known template for showcasing what areas can offer. In the near future little adjustments will be made regarding

small technical errors and the renewal of content on the Timeline. For version 2.0 Web 2.0 will be on another level. The integration of a service list is a factor that could benefit both the readers and the local companies. To have a service list is a big update and would require a good strategy that would need to be developed with stakeholders in tourism. The first step is to go through the minor bugs and comments that can be used without much programming. The next step would be to secure financing for to work on WEB 2.0. When this is done the strategy can be formed for the WEB 2.0. Step three would be a face where the selling part would be discussed and formed. To determine how users would like the timeline to be developed a small research would benefit the user interface.

Final Conclusion

Overall the Timeline is a tool in bringing content to SME's and helps them sell their location. People in tourism agree that the Timeline is a success and the future holds both an update the Timeline 2.0 if funds will be available. The format is accessible for use and can benefit areas that have both events on a regular basis and natural aspects to showcase.