



THE ENGLISH
RIVIERA
TORQUAY PAIGNTON BRIXHAM

MARKETING PLAN
1999/2000

ENGLISH RIVIERA TOURIST BOARD MARKETING PLAN 1999/2000

Marketing plans of recent years have focussed on maintaining existing and traditional markets and developing new sources of additional business. Although there is still evidence of decline, nationally, in traditional markets, holiday-taking at the British seaside still represents 40% of all domestic holiday taking, 42% of nights and 45% of all spending. The uncertainty of recent years, with the World Cup and poor weather in 1998 and the Eclipse in 1999, will be continued in 2000, Millennium Year. The fundamental objectives remain, however, the same.

1. Key Strategic Objectives:

- 1.1 Maintain and develop core business.
- 1.2 Develop new sources of year-round business, particularly in period April-June.

2. Maintaining and Developing Core Business

- 2.1 Core business is the traditional and established Riviera holiday-maker. Although this market is in slow decline, the English Riviera has held on to Market share and should continue to do so. Relaxation, the resort experience, the variety and quality of a Riviera holiday, the Riviera branding are all important factors in attracting and keeping core business. Research (summer 1996) has indicated high levels of satisfaction among these visitors. The core visitor is a regular visitor to the English Riviera and/or other UK resorts. This is either their main and/or an additional holiday, sometimes visiting more than once per year.
- 2.2 An analysis of 10,500 guide respondents' post codes gives a clear profile of the geographical and household profile of the core visitor (further details will be circulated at the Sub-Committee).
- 2.3 Year-round visitor research is being conducted (for the first time outside the main summer season) to provide further information into our core business.
- 2.4 Maintaining and developing this core business means:-
 - i) keeping existing and repeat visitors; and
 - ii) attracting new business from similar geographical and household types.

3. Promoting to Core Visitors

- 3.1 The core visitor is the main target, both of The Riviera Guide and the promotion supporting its distribution, and the promotion undertaken separately by the Bay's commercial sector, in media direct mail, Teletext and other activities.
- 3.2 Central to attracting and keeping core business is the 188-page Riviera Guide.
- 3.3 The Guide is funded by the financial contribution of Guide advertisers, mostly accommodation suppliers. Design and content will be revised and up-dated, with new photography and copy. The introduction will be "themed" (rather divided by town section). Themes will be:
 - Coast and Country
 - Family Fun
 - Heritage
 - Event and Entertainment
 - The Year Round Resort

An enlarged information section on each town will be included before the accommodation listings.

- 3.4 Research will be undertaken in June to provide further guidance on content and design. Focus groups will be held among Guide recipients who have i) visited or booked using the guide or ii) received the Guide but not booked.

4. Advertising

- 4.1 The overall advertising budget will be £250,000 (as in financial year 1998/1999).
- 4.2 There will be a promotional campaign of around £140,000 to promote and distribute the guide. Traditional national media advertising (brochure panels) and inserts will continue to be used. Advertising opportunities involving a mix of English Riviera and private sector funding, such as national media “advertorials” are to be considered.
- 4.3 A Direct Marketing campaign is also envisaged in late October, January and May, targeting up to 2 million households in core postcode areas.
- 4.4 The use of Teletext for special offers, and as a medium for carrying up-to-date messages is to be further explored.
- 4.5 The objective of the campaign is to produce 150,000 direct Guide requests.

5. Relationship Marketing

- 5.1 The role of relationship marketing (maintaining and developing repeat business) is largely undertaken by the accommodation sector, through their mailings to known customers and potential. In order to encourage and support this business a series of themed fliers will be produced. These will be provided to accommodation providers for their own use. Themes to include Festivals/Events, Family ideas, Day tours, Activities and so on. The English Riviera Tourist Board will also maintain a data-base of enquirers for possible use by the accommodation sector.

6. Travel Exhibitions

- 6.1 Attendance at up to four exhibitions is planned. A (highly attractive) new display was produced in time for the 1999 season.

7. Public Relations/Media Development

- 7.1 The Tourist Board will undertake a much more proactive role in developing media visits, stories and contacts. This will involve the occasional use of PR consultants to provide key contacts and ideas. A Press Pack, regular press releases, the new Riviera Video (see below), competitions and the Internet will be tools in media development, with the regular hosting of media contacts.

8. Tour Operators/Travel Trade

- 8.1 The concept of a joint promotion, funded through advertising in the Group Organisers Handbook, which was introduced in 1998, will continue to be developed. This fund covers not only the production of the Handbook, but three Newsletters per year, advertising in trade press and participation at trade workshops and events, and joint promotions with selected tour operators

9. Other Publications

Camping and Caravanning (self-funding)
Riviera Scene (self-funding)
Riviera Mini-Guides (cost ca £1000)

10. Research

10.1 A year-round survey of visitors in the Bay has been commissioned. Approximately 1,200 visitors will take part in the survey over 12 months. Comparisons with earlier (1996) main surveys can then be made, with new information about visitors in other months also available (for the first time).

11. Developing New Sources of Year Round Business

11.1 Brand awareness/image building

The Riviera/Palm brand has been successfully used over 15 years, with the campaign evolving over time. This evolution will continue.

11.2 The effectiveness of the (London Underground) poster campaign (relative to the available budget) will be reviewed. Other options, such as TV advertising and direct mail are to be considered. The target market is younger, and more affluent additional holiday takers in geographical areas outside the postcode segments described above, such as the M4 corridor and the South East.

11.3 Resort Holiday image building

A joint campaign with other resorts (and WCTB), designed to raise profile and image of UK resorts is to be discussed with tourism officers from major resorts.

12. Riviera 2000 Video

12.1 A new promotional video is planned (subject to Committee approval) of £21,000. This will be a 9-12 minute production, using a known TV personality, conceived as a commercial/promotional item (rather than a souvenir). As with the Guide the content will be thematic rather than specifically geographical.

12.2 As it is primarily a promotional tool, designed to attract new visitors, distribution of the video will be linked to other promotional activity. It will be a fulfilment item in advertising in addition to or instead of, the Guide in some cases. (The mechanics and cost implications still have to be finalised). It will be offered to group organisers for presentations and used at travel shows and exhibitions.

12.3 It will be of sufficient broadcast quality to offer to TV stations.

13. Internet/Reservation Systems

13.1 The Torbay Council Website is to be fundamentally redesigned by September 1999, with Tourist Board funding to develop the English Riviera pages. A data-base led site, this will develop the thematic content of Guide and Video. The site design will allow regular updating, the additional of news items, press stories, special interest features, and video clips. There will be links to and from all relevant national and international sites.

- 13.2 The Website will be heavily promoted, both by featuring the address in all publicity material and by the use of Internet (banner) advertising.
- 13.3 Accommodation providers, attractions and transport operators will be encouraged to advertise on this site and/or provide links to their own homepages.
- 13.4 There is a strong need for a workable accommodation reservation system, which will deliver both on-line bookings (and revenue to the Tourist Board.) Further evaluation of suitable systems is needed.

14 **Product Development/New Markets**

14.1 **Niche markets**

There is great potential for business from visitors looking for a particular theme, product, activity or interest. Development of these niche markets will require a mix of product and package development, innovative marketing, such as PR, reader trips, direct mail, internet use, advertising in specialist publications, and an effective tourist board/private sector partnership include:

- Weddings
- Gardens and gardening tours
- Heritage
- Activity (walking, sports, cycling, motorcycling)
- Watersports/Fishing
- Birdwatching
- and others...

15. **Agatha Christie's Riviera**

- 15.1 Although promotion of the Agatha Christie connection has continued, with notable successes, particularly internationally, there is still a lack of tangible product. A Visitor Centre, regular guided excursions, film and theatre events, murder/mystery evenings and weekends, talks and bookshops are all needed to enhance the visitor experience. Accommodation providers will be encouraged to package and promote the Agatha Christie connection. Major national tour operators, such as Superbreak, have expressed an interest in highlighting the connection in their brochures.
- 15.2 The recent takeover by Chorion PLC of the Agatha Christie rights will lead, over time, to much enhanced promotion, merchandising and development of the Agatha Christie name.
- 15.3 Opportunities for promotion, as well as established channels, include joint campaigns with publishers, distributors of videos and films and third party marketing (such as on product packaging).

16. **Millennium Festival Season (see Report Strat/41/99)**

- 16.1 The development of the Festival Season concept will be undertaken by the Tourist Board, in co-operation with the Arts/Events Department and in partnership with the commercial sector, arts' interests and the Torbay community.
- 16.2 The aim is to develop a Festival theme each month. Considerable funding will be needed to create, encourage and promote the concept, from Millennium, Lottery, PESCA, sponsorship, commercial sector contribution and Council funds.

17. International Business

- 17.1 The Devon and Cornwall Overseas Marketing consortium, of which Torbay is a contributing and active partner, will continue its core promotional activities in Germany, Holland and Belgium, with some (Internet-led) activity in long-haul markets.
- 17.2 The work undertaken by the ERTB in the Japanese market will continue. This will involve further liaison with London-based tour operators, as well as their Japanese counterparts and BTA.
- 17.3 Ireland is to be considered as a potential market for ERTB activity.
- 17.4 In the absence of a DACOM willingness to work with the international travel trade and tour operators, ERTB will explore links with London-based handling agents and key international operators.

18. Groups/Special Interest Tour Operators

- 18.1 Whilst the market for scheduled/standard tours has declined, there is evidence that the market for closed group tours is increasing. The ERTB will concentrate on Marketing to this sector, identifying and promoting to group organisers, societies, clubs and the educational sector (schools and colleges).