



Tourism in England's Northwest

# A Strategic Marketing Framework and Action Plan

April 2004

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A strategic marketing framework and action plan**

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## **1. Introduction**

In October 2002, tourism was worth £3.23 billion to the region. The RDA is fully committed to strengthening and promoting the sector and increasing the value of tourism as a contributor to the economy and the quality of life of England's Northwest.

In 2003 the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) published a vision for the region's tourism sector, and a strategic plan to make that vision a reality. This marketing framework is a companion to those two earlier documents and will help direct the immediate efforts of the NWDA, the region's five sub-regional tourist boards (TBs) and the local tourism partnerships that will be so vital to the continued growth and vitality of the sector.

This new, strategic marketing framework will directly affect public investment in the tourism sector. As an area of industry dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and one that delivers so significant an amount of economic and social benefit, public intervention is essential, particularly when it comes to better market intelligence, image promotion and infrastructure development.

Lead by the NWDA, the most important delivery agents within this framework are those five, sub-regional tourist boards that succeeded the two Regional Tourist Boards. For the TBs the challenge will be to resource the actions in this framework with the right skills and expertise needed to bring about a true and tangible growth in tourism. Whilst the NWDA will act as a catalyst and a force for cohesion, individual TBs will be supported in developing their own strategies and plans for marketing, product development and skills. Their role will be pivotal.

The pages which follow provide a clear and well-evidenced guide as TBs create their own, sub-regional destination marketing plans and for the NWDA as it develops some of the region-wide and externally-facing programmes set out in the five-year action plan, which has been drawn up to deliver our Strategy for Tourism. At every stage, partnerships will be key; from the local authorities that matter so much in delivering a quality tourism product at the local level, to other business and industrial sectors in the region that can play a part in improving our regional image and securing an ever-healthier tourism market.

There are some significant challenges. For example, to create secure jobs the seasonal nature of tourism must be addressed. We also need to spread the market beyond half a dozen regional hotspots or 'attack brands' to the 'slipstream brands' that stand ready to take more of our tourism market.

The focus of this framework is primarily on the British domestic market, with a secondary investment in new market development and overseas markets. Business and leisure tourism are key priorities, as is the need to exploit cost-effective and established routes to market, like VisitBritain and England's North

Country. The importance of product quality, infrastructure and skills development is emphasised frequently in the pages that follow, as are the efforts to improve our region's image.

This summary report on our strategic framework is intended as the starting point for those who have a part to play, both within and outside our regional tourism industry, in delivering our Strategy for Tourism. As an ever-stronger partnership focused on effectiveness, growth and sustainability, we can be assured of success in our efforts to create a tourism industry here in England's Northwest that really can win a world-class reputation for quality.

### **Critical success factors**

- A strong and improving understanding of customer behaviour and expectation;
- Evidence of cost-effectiveness in reaching target markets;
- A good understanding of our regional tourism product;
- Clear understanding and agreement on the roles of the NWDA, TBs and local tourism partnerships;
- Evidence of understanding and interpretation of the 'attack' and 'slipstream' brand concepts;
- Active implementation of programmes like Regional Gems, Winning Themes and Excellent Events, as set out in the Strategy for Tourism;
- A flexible approach;
- Development of a reliable set of performance indicators;
- Regular planning sessions and business reviews; and
- The development of a skilled and adequately resourced tourism infrastructure, which includes the TBs themselves.

## **2. Delivering our marketing strategy for tourism**

In a fast-changing and competitive marketplace it is all too easy to see a duplication of effort and spend; everyone trying to do everything. Effective delivery will depend on all those who have a part to play – and in particular our Tourist Boards (TBs) – being clear about their objectives and working through strong, robust and transparent partnerships. The new framework for tourism marketing in England's Northwest makes clear the roles to be played by different organisations at the national, regional, sub-regional and local levels. It answers that most fundamental of questions: who does what?

### **Northwest Development Agency**

The NWDA sets the strategic regional context for tourism in the region and part-funds the TBs under service level agreements. The Agency conducts market research into relevant consumer trends and attitudes and co-ordinates elements of tourism business planning for the region. The NWDA will monitor tourism business performance, encourage consistent measures for marketing effectiveness, hold regular market seminars and conduct business planning and review activities.

Consumer marketing campaigns are run by the NWDA where economies of scale and possible consumer impact warrant a regional approach. These campaigns will be supplemented in the future by regional 'image' campaigns, which will include a significant tourism component. Other public-facing promotions that may be run by the NWDA include selected day visitor campaigns, thematic campaigns and special interest or activity-based campaigns.

Business-facing activities to be conducted by the NWDA focus on support for a new Regional Conference Bidding Unit. Its role will include the establishment of an inventory of regional conference facilities and a conference development resource that gathers market data and works with potential conference ambassadors to build the region's conference trade. There will also be a Regional Business Tourism Strategy that will set out the priorities and actions to support this sector.

### **The Northwest Tourism Forum**

The Forum will promote the exchange of information and views encouraging the widest participation by the region's tourism sector in the delivery of the Regional Tourism Strategy.

The Forum will act as the voice of businesses and other organisations that make up the tourism sector in the region. It will seek information on, and respond to, the concerns of the tourism sector. The Forum also acts as a strategic monitoring body with respect to the Regional Tourism Strategy, providing a forum within which the region's TBs can discuss and co-ordinate their work.

## **Regional Marketing Forum**

The Regional Marketing Forum comprises a cross-sectoral group of marketing professionals from across the region. It provides strategic direction and specialist knowledge for the 'image of the region' programme.

## **Tourism Marketing Experts Group**

Business planning, regional strategy and the implementation of cross-regional activities, such as themed marketing campaigns, will be conducted by a group of marketing experts drawn from each TB and from within the NWDA.

## **VisitBritain**

Britain's national tourist office will continue in pole position when it comes to the international marketing of Britain, the stimulating of English domestic tourism, and the provision of routes to international markets for tourism businesses.

## **England's North Country (ENC)**

Funded by a partnership that includes Manchester Airport, ENC is charged with the international marketing of England's Northwest, Northumbria, Yorkshire and the Isle of Man. ENC's track record is well established and is based on bringing together the appropriate product for international promotion.

## **Tourist Boards (TBs)**

TBs are the primary delivery agents of the regional tourism strategy. As the 'owners' of our region's 'attack' brands and the focal point for the majority of the region's tourism activity, TBs are perfectly placed to apply their strong local knowledge and marketing experience to deliver the strategic actions required to bring about real growth in our tourism sector.

Their role will be to act as brand guardians for their area. They will be responsible for tactical marketing that in particular uses their 'attack' brands and our region's 'winning themes' to attract new business. Beyond their 'attack' brands, they will also have a responsibility for identifying and promoting their 'slipstream' brands. For both 'attack' and 'slipstream' brands, they will identify product and skills development opportunities where needs arise.

TBs will act as the main point of contact for the tourism industry in their area, helping to disseminate market intelligence and consumer trends data to businesses in the sector and providing a strategic overview of all the issues that affect tourism in their area. They will oversee visitor information services, local industry development and the need for product or infrastructure development in their areas.

TBs will also provide a channel for all private sector marketing resources, helping to ensure that synergy and consistency are established with region-wide, generic promotions conducted under the England's Northwest brand.

Events, trade exhibitions and consumer-facing events will all be the responsibility of TBs if appropriate, and, where suitable, they should attend such events in partnership with other TBs under an 'England's Northwest' umbrella. Partnership working with other TBs should also include the identification of common target markets, such as specialist or activity-based groups.

### **Local authorities**

The statutory duties of local authorities include the maintenance of infrastructure, as well as local developments and planning issues. However, when it comes to non-statutory duties such as tourism marketing and development, their levels of activity vary across the region. Under this framework, they continue to have these responsibilities, but also have a significant strategic input into TB tourism strategies, marketing campaigns and local area promotions. They are also important in the running of tourist information centres in some areas.

### **Tourism businesses**

Tourism businesses are predominantly focussed on running their business and providing a quality service to their customers. The activities of the organisations detailed above use public funds to plug a gap that the tourism industry itself cannot fill, namely strategic direction, wider promotion and sector development. Whilst tourism businesses should be extensively consulted and involved in these activities, their direct responsibilities under this framework include attracting visitors to their product or attraction, meeting visitor expectations for quality and product, and supporting TB marketing campaigns, where appropriate.

### **Local tourism partnerships**

The organic formation of local partnerships is to be encouraged under this framework as they provide a vital link between TBs and local businesses. With regard to slipstream brands in particular, they can be a very useful agent for marketing promotion. In addition, they have a role for wider local promotions, input into TB strategies, and the implementation of TB strategy at a grass roots level.

### **3. Our strategic marketing priorities**

This framework aims to increase the contribution that tourism makes to the economy of England's Northwest.

Ten strategic priorities have been identified. Each priority has a specific set of early actions, some of which will be delivered by the NWDA. Others, including tactical marketing activities that deliver short-term business gain, will be led by TBs and their partners. A series of success measures have been identified that will be used to assess the effectiveness of delivery.

#### **Strategic priorities**

- Understanding our markets;
- Growing tourism;
- Extending the season;
- Increasing the regional spread of tourism;
- Making it easier for visitors;
- Improving our region's image
- Adding value to the industry;
- Best practice in marketing;
- Ensuring stakeholder benefit; and
- Improving quality.

#### **3.1 Understanding our markets**

In order to see a high value return on investment, getting through to the right target markets will be essential. Of the four types of tourism usually cited (business, education, visiting friends or relatives and leisure), it is the leisure and business markets, in particular conference trade or meetings, that are the primary focus of our strategic framework.

Within the leisure market we intend to focus our market research, product development and promotional activities on a tightly defined series of markets. These include: domestic city breaks of one or two nights throughout the year; domestic rural relaxation breaks of between two and four nights; domestic self catering of up to two weeks in duration; special interest or activity breaks for domestic markets; overseas independent touring markets, including group tours; and European city breaks from overseas markets.

This is a prudent mix of traditional, steady markets that can help plug gaps in seasonal trade and market segments which have significant potential for growth. These markets directly address our wider strategic objectives. Domestic short breaks, for example, spread our market both seasonally and geographically; special interest groups, such as climbers, help address seasonality as they happily turn out year-round; conference trade similarly helps us reduce seasonal 'dips' in our market.

### **3.2 Growing our tourism industry**

Our overriding aim under this objective is to increase the visitor spend within the region, in particular by capitalising on the ability of our 'attack' brands to attract visitors to the region. We will aim to maintain existing markets, and encourage repeat business amongst groups such as day visitors. This investment in, and strengthening of, our more traditional markets will be balanced by a cautious but forward-thinking examination of developing and new markets.

These new markets may lie primarily in the domestic arena, including special interests or activity tourism, and conference trade. Equally they may lie overseas, where through marketing channels such as the web, an initial marketing outlay need not be prohibitive.

### **3.3 A healthy business, throughout the year**

In rural Cumbria tourism businesses can hit a deep trough during the winter months; the same period in the centre of Manchester will see hotels fully booked and restaurants doing a roaring trade, although these be short on numbers in August or at the weekend. A clear and strategic challenge for tourism businesses is to plug the severe, seasonal gaps that can appear in their core markets, all year round.

Reducing seasonality is vital if we are seeking to secure a sustainable tourism economy based around full-time employment and a steady cash flow. Thankfully, some market trends look set to turn in tourism's favour. Conference business is witnessing a significant growth. Employees are being given greater levels of flexibility over when they take their holidays. School holidays still dictate a good deal of tourist activity, but more people are taking short breaks throughout the year, particularly in pursuit of relaxation, sports, or special interests.

### **3.4 Spreading the value of tourism**

This framework strongly endorses calls to direct the economic benefits of tourism more widely across the region so that all areas can achieve their tourism potential. At the core of this strategic objective is the 'slipstream' brand approach outlined previously in both the Tourism Vision and Strategy.

The 'attack' brands, in the form of our best-known regional destinations- Liverpool, Manchester, the Lake District and Chester - continue to offer the best opportunity to attract visitors from outside the region. Blackpool is described as a 'Development Brand' in the regional tourism strategy. Through the current master-planning process, it clearly has the potential to become Europe's 'No 1' Resort once more. To this end, an 'attack brand' approach will be used by Blackpool in appropriate markets. TB brochures and websites, local tourist partnership marketing and Tourist Information Centres all offer

clear opportunities to take visitors who have been attracted to the region by an 'attack' brand and direct them out to 'slipstream' brands in the towns or villages where there is clear tourism potential still to be realised.

### **3.5 Easy to find, book and enjoy**

While shifting holiday patterns and a tendency towards more short breaks may hold out the prospect of a renewed market for many aspects of the regional tourism industry, changing expectations and demands also pose challenges when trying to attract a potential visitor's attention, particularly when competing with cut-price packages and no-frills airlines.

Converting an interested customer into a customer that books is a key priority within this framework. People looking for information should be able to find it quickly and easily and booking should be made as easy as possible too.

Our regional tourism product should be offered on high quality, accessible websites. These sites should be easy to use but rich with information and with good signage through to other offerings. However, brochures should not be forgotten either; market data shows that 33 per cent of British holidaymakers use the web for holiday planning but only 16 per cent use it to book.

### **3.6 Improving our region's image**

An improved regional image is one of the principal goals in the Regional Economic Strategy and is of fundamental importance as the region works to encourage economic growth, a better quality of life and the enhancement of the region's natural environment. Though tourism promotion may market 'attack' brands externally, promoting and enhancing the region's image is of even wider regional significance.

It is clear that given tourism's role as selling positive images of the region, it can play a part in stressing the wider benefits of living in England's Northwest, such as a better quality of life and access to extensive cultural assets. Tourism promotion can help sell England's Northwest as a positive place in which to live, work and play.

Conversely, the other sectors working to promote the region and communicate beyond the region under the auspices of the Regional Economic Strategy can be factored into tourism promotion, for example by using tourism-related imagery in their externally-facing materials.

Though most visitors will be attracted to the region through one or more of our 'attack' brands, marketing strategies should be adopted that include the 'place' marketing of England's Northwest, reflecting the core brand values that have been established for the region.

### **3.7 Adding value and sharing knowledge**

To bring about lasting and substantial growth, all elements of the tourism industry need to work effectively, together. The closing section of this summary makes clear the roles and responsibilities that are set out within this framework, but there are a series of actions we intend to stimulate to ensure that those supporting tourism work effectively and through productive partnerships. This framework also sets out plans for sharing best practice in marketing between TBs and tourism partnerships across the region.

### **3.8 Best practice in marketing**

The tourism industry is traditionally slow in adopting new marketing techniques and monitoring their effectiveness. Tourist boards will be encouraged to share best marketing practice and encourage its use by stakeholders. Examples of successful marketing activities will be promoted amongst the tourism industry to set benchmarks for future campaigns. Through this, the marketing skill of the tourism industry will be improved and success rates will be raised.

### **3.9 Real benefits for stakeholders**

Tourism has an impressive and positive impact on a large number of stakeholders in businesses and communities across the region. This framework will include actions to ensure that these stakeholders are aware of the new tourism structures in the region, and how NWDA adds value to regional tourism marketing efforts.

### **3.10 Quality matters**

The shifting tourism marketplace has thrown up fresh challenges for the industry and nowhere is this more evident than in the higher levels of quality and service that visitors expect in an increasingly competitive marketplace. To truly compete we need to improve the quality of our tourism product in the region.

This framework seeks to implement this improvement through better communications of market trends and consumer expectations, for example through our proposed programme of market seminars. Participation in national quality assurance schemes will be encouraged: subsidised TB marketing opportunities or product improvement grants will only be made available to those who are part of a recognised, national quality assurance scheme.

## TOURISM MARKETING ACTION PLAN

### OBJECTIVE 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET

Key Activity 1.1 – Identify markets offering greatest potential return on investment and maintain up to date knowledge of market trends, consumer behaviour and attitudes to ENW destinations, including barriers to travel and competitor analysis.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Identify market research needs  Develop market research programme	Consumer perception research to identify most powerful 'winning themes'	NWDA	-	June 2004	Winning themes prioritised by June 2004
	Consumer research to identify perceptions of ENW and its component destinations in relation to their competitors				
	Include tourism dimension in regional image research	NWDA	-	March 2004	Clear understanding of consumer perceptions of ENW
	Investigate scope for developing database of national and international associations (conferences)	MM	TBs	March 2004	Clear understanding of scope and research needs by March 2004
	Investigate scope for developing database of national and international conference organisers	MM	TBs	March 2004	Discussions held with BACD NW
	Agree actions to support regional conference ambassador programme.				Agree appropriate levels of support

## OBJECTIVE 2 – TOURISM GROWTH

Key Activity 2.1 – Grow visitor spend in the region, capitalising on the strength of the attack brands to attract visitors to the region.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Develop a co-ordinated approach to tourism marketing throughout the region.  Scope opportunities for tourism within other sectoral marketing  Develop regional marketing campaign/s	Each DMO to develop a marketing strategy and action plan	TBs	NWDA	July 2004	DMO strategies produced
	Identify promotional opportunities led by other sectoral teams in relevant markets	NWDA	-	Ongoing	Develop prioritised list of opportunities in appropriate markets/joint actions agreed
	Develop regional campaign plan with TBs (e.g. short breaks, day visitors, special interest)	NWDA	DMO	June 2004	Plan developed and agreed
Develop regional marketing campaign/s	Northwest Fantastic Food book	NWDA		Sept. 2004	Food and Tourism Book published
Ensure TBs deliver regional strategic objectives in local marketing activity	Construct mechanism that enables TBs to bid for funding for marketing campaigns and incorporate into SLA	NWDA	TBs	March 2004	Mechanism agreed with transparent criteria and scoring system
Identify marketing application of themes	Identify forthcoming themes year opportunities	NWDA	TBs	June 2004	Opportunities identified
	Identify collaborative themed marketing opportunities	NWDA	TBs	June 2004	Common themes identified where TBs share product appeal and marketing intentions
Establish collaborative marketing campaigns with VisitBritain and England's North Country	Identify major opportunities with VB & ENC	ENC TBs	NWDA	April 2004	Input into VB campaign
	Decide key messages and fulfilment mechanisms	ENC TBs	NWDA	April 2004	Joint plan with ENC

### OBJECTIVE 3 – SEASONAL SPREAD

Key Activity 3.1 – Increase seasonal spread of tourism, focusing on deepest troughs, to improve local businesses' cash flow and sustainability.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Identify seasonal troughs	TBs identify main seasonal troughs in their areas	TBs		March 2005	Analysis of seasonal peaks and troughs shared through the TMEP
Identify solutions to fill troughs	Develop a strategy to address seasonal troughs (e.g. conference marketing, special interest/niche marketing, events, product development, advice to industry)	NWDA TBs		June 2005	Clear range of creative solutions in seasonal development strategy
Develop sub-regional thematic campaigns		TBs NWDA		2003 - 2006	Themes and special interest markets and matching products identified and prioritised for promotion

## OBJECTIVE 4 – REGIONAL SPREAD

Key Activity 4.1 – Increase tourism throughout the region so that all areas with tourism potential can achieve their potential, using the slipstream branding approach.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Ensure mechanisms are in place to spread tourism throughout the region and provide access to marketing activity for all areas.	TBs identify slipstream brands and provide routes to market (e.g. via brochures, websites)	TBs	Local tourism partnerships, commercial operators	June 2004	Identify slipstream brands Offer marketing opportunities in campaigns, brochures and websites
Support visitors to other parts of ENW	Produce regional magazine distributed through accommodation bedrooms	NWDA	TBs, commercial operators	Pilot Sept. 2004	Establish editorial panel Appoint publisher Pilot issue in Sept. 2004
Develop sub-regional thematic campaigns.	See under Objectives Seasonal Spread				

**OBJECTIVE 5 – MAKING IT EASY**

Key Activity 5.1 – Provide quick and easy access to the information that visitors need to plan and book their break.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Identify visitor servicing needs after arrival and review mechanisms for satisfying them	Develop a regional visitor servicing strategy  Establish VS review group	NWDA TBs & local authorities		July 2004	VS Review group established  Produce a visitor servicing strategy with recommendations for change
Develop a regional tourism web portal	Identify content, links and structure	NWDA	TBs	May 2004	Site content, structure and links agreed  Tourism portal operational
Signpost visitors to local attractions, things to do, see, etc.	See “regional bedroom magazine” under Objective 4 Regional Spread				
Provide marketing input into Northwest ICT strategy	Marketing representation on ICT working group	NWDA	TBs	Ongoing	Market-driven ICT solutions
Disseminate appropriate information to visitors before arrival	Comprehensive SRTB websites  Links from ENW portal to TBs  Links between TBs	TBs  NWDA  TBs	TBs  TBs	Ongoing	SRTB websites developed  Links developed  Online booking

**OBJECTIVE 6 – IMAGE**

Key Activity 6.1 – Improve the image of England’s Northwest, using the positive image of regional tourism destinations to enhance perceptions of ENW as a place in which to live and work.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Develop regional marketing campaigns	See ‘Regional Marketing Campaigns’ under Objective 2 Tourism Growth				
Ensure ‘ENW’ runs through all NWDA and TB marketing communications as a ‘geographical locator’	Agree form of words (e.g. “part of ENW” and attack brands?) with TBs	NWDA	TBs	March 2004	Agreement needed on ENW format, usage, positioning and appropriate marketing communications
	Agree positioning and brand hierarchy in TBs	NWDA	TBs		
	Agree appropriate marketing communications in which ENW is featured and how, with TBs	NWDA	TBs		
Ensure ‘ENW’ brand values are reflected in sub-regional comms in order to increase impact and synergy	Develop regional brand values appropriate to tourism from existing ENW brand values	NWDA	TBs	June 2004	Regional tourism brand values developed  Agreement on usage and links with SRTB brand values agreed with TBs
	Agree usage, links and brand architecture with TBs			June 2004	
Use tourism imagery, where appropriate, to enhance image of ENW as a place in which to live and work	Work with marketing colleagues to identify opportunities for using tourism imagery (particularly attack brands and winning themes) in regional image marketing campaign	NWDA		Ongoing	Opportunities identified for using tourism imagery in ENW regional image marketing campaigns

**OBJECTIVE 7 – ADDED VALUE/SYNERGY**

Key Activity 7.1 – Maximise opportunities for synergy and adding value to the regional tourism destinations to enhance perceptions of ENW as a place in which to live and work.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Undertake joint business planning with sub-regional tourism experts throughout the region in order to develop an effective and inclusive tourism marketing plan	Establish a joint business planning process  Identify planning group members and establish group	NWDA	TBs, local tourism partnerships, local authorities, commercial sector	Dec 2003	Business planning process developed and agreed with TBs
Ensure grass roots input into, and implementation of, tourism strategy	TBs establish partnership groups (e.g. based around slipstream brands) to provide grass roots input into TB strategy and to implement it at local level	TBs	Local tourism partnerships, local authorities, commercial sector	June 2004	Sub-TB groups identified and established
Identify areas of mutual interest where joint marketing might be more effective	Identify areas in which TBs share target markets, where the product appeal might have a greater critical mass and consumer appeal (e.g. birdwatching) at a regional level, cross regional themes	NWDA TBs		July 2004 and ongoing	Regional special interest/activity campaigns identified and agreed by TMEP

## OBJECTIVE 7 – ADDED VALUE/SYNERGY

Key Activity 7.1 – Maximise opportunities for synergy and adding value to the regional tourism destinations to enhance perceptions of ENW as a place in which to live and work.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Identify areas of mutual interest where joint/regional marketing might be more effective	Identify areas where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBs share targets markets</li> <li>• The product appeal has greater critical mass and consumer appeal at regional level (eg golf, gardens, birdwatching)</li> <li>• TBs share themed interests (e.g. 'Night Nirvana', 'Family Fun')</li> <li>• Greater distribution can be achieved by working together</li> </ul> Develop shared action plan	TBs	NWDA	June 2004	Areas of mutual interest identified  Regional special interest/activity campaigns identified and agreed by TMEP  Joint action plan developed (within SRTB marketing plans)
Ensure synergy with ENW regional image marketing campaigns	Link TB and NWDA marketing campaigns to ENW regional image campaigns where marketing objectives permit	NWDA	TBs	Ongoing	NWDA and TB campaign timings identified  Opportunities for links explored
Ensure consistency in measuring marketing impact throughout the region	Identify and implement consistent methods of measuring marketing impact/return on investment in TB and NWDA marketing campaigns	NWDA	TBs	Ongoing	Measurement methods identified and agreed by NWDA and TBs
Measure tourism performance and assess its contribution to the region's economy on a regular basis	Identify and implement robust method of measuring tourism performance (e.g. TSA, STEAM, IPS, UKTS, etc)	NWDA	TBs	Ongoing	Measurement method selected  Commission study

**OBJECTIVE 8 – BEST MARKETING PRACTICE**

Key Activity 8.1 – Ensure best marketing practice is applied throughout the region by sharing knowledge of best practice at local, regional, national and international level.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Develop a programme of seminars and informal mechanisms to disseminate market intelligence, trends and best practice in tourism marketing	Run an annual regional conference for TBs, local tourism partnerships, local authorities and commercial operators	NWDA	TBs, local tourism partnerships, local authorities, commercial sector	By December 2004	Conference held
	Hold market seminars 1-2 x per annum for tourism operators	NWDA	TBs, local tourism partnerships, local authorities, commercial sector	By December 2004	Market seminars held
	Include 'Best Practice' as a formal standing agenda item on regular Tourism Marketing Experts Panel meetings' agenda	NWDA	TBs	Ongoing	'Best Practice' included in all TMEP meetings' agendas

**OBJECTIVE 9 – STAKEHOLDER BENEFIT**

Key Activity 9.1 – Ensure stakeholders understand the regional tourism structure, respective roles of tourism bodies (e.g. NWDA, TBs), how NWDA adds value to the regional tourism marketing effort and how they can engage cost-effectively in tourism marketing activity					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Ensure Stakeholder understanding of regional tourism structure and roles of various tourism bodies	Run an annual regional conference (see under Objective 8 Best Marketing Practice)	NWDA	TBs	By December 2004	Conference held
Provide cost-effective routes to market for commercial operators and tourism destinations	Offer advertising in TB marketing campaigns (e.g. brochures, websites, etc), and visitor servicing material (e.g. brochures distributed through TLCs, attractions, hotels, etc and websites)	TBs	Local tourism partnerships, slipstream brands, commercial operators	Ongoing	Marketing opportunities communicated to tourism partnerships and commercial operators

**OBJECTIVE 10 –QUALITY – DEVELOPMENT AND ASSURANCE**

Key Activity 10.1 – Improve the quality of ENW’s tourism product and service standards.					
Major Actions	Detailed Actions	Lead Partner	Supporting Partner	Timescale	Milestones and Outputs
Develop a programme to communicate consumer expectations and incentivise tourism operators to improve quality standards	Hold market seminars 1 – 2 x per annum for tourism operators (see under Objective 8 Best Marketing Practice)	TBs	NWDA	TBA	Programme agreed
	Encourage participation in recognised national quality assurance schemes by extending subsidised marketing opportunities (e.g. in brochures, websites, TICs, etc) <u>only</u> to those who are members of recognised quality assurance schemes, where such schemes exist	NWDA	TBs	March 2004	Agree planning with TBs in SLA Communicate policy to appropriate trade
Develop a mechanism for delivering annual Tourism Awards	Agree a timetable for sub regional heats which feed into the Regional Awards for Tourism Excellence	NWDA	TBs	April 2004	Timetable agreed

### **3 Contacts & companion reports**

For more information or guidance, please contact your relevant sub-regional Tourist Board or contact:

**Nick Brooks-Sykes**  
**Head of Tourism Marketing**  
**Northwest Development Agency**  
**Renaissance House**  
**Centre Park**  
**Warrington**  
**WA1 1XB**

Other reports and information to assist in tourism planning and development are available. Downloads available via the NWDA website ([www.nwda.co.uk](http://www.nwda.co.uk)) include:

The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest  
A Tourism Vision for England's Northwest  
State of the Northwest Economy - Summary Report  
Regional Economic Strategy Summary Action Plan 2003 - 2006  
A Tourism Vision for England's Northwest: Green Paper



**The Northwest Development Agency manages all operations from its Headquarters at:**

PO Box 37  
Renaissance House  
Centre Park  
Warrington WA1 1XB  
Tel: +44 (0)1925 400 100  
Fax: +44 (0)1925 400 400  
e-mail: [information@nwda.co.uk](mailto:information@nwda.co.uk)

**In addition, there are five area offices for the implementation of local activities as follows:**

**Greater Manchester**

Giants Basin  
Potato Wharf  
Castlefield  
Manchester M3 4NB  
Tel: +44 (0)161 817 7400  
Fax: +44 (0)161 831 7051

**Cumbria**

Gillan Way  
Penrith 40 Business Park  
Penrith  
Cumbria CA11 9BP  
Tel: +44 (0)1768 867 294  
Fax: +44 (0)1768 895 477

**Merseyside**

Station House  
Mercury Court  
Tithebarn Street  
Liverpool L2 2QP  
Tel: +44 (0)1925 400 100  
Fax: +44 (0)151 236 3731

**Lancashire**

13 Winckley Street  
Preston  
Lancashire PR1 2AA  
Tel: +44 (0)1772 206 000  
Fax: +44 (0)1772 200 049

**Cheshire**

Brew House  
Wilderspool Park  
Greenalls Avenue  
Warrington WA4 6HL  
Tel: +44 (0)1925 644 220  
Fax: +44 (0)1925 644 222

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