



Julie Kidman – Director Great Escape, Bay of Islands

Summary

The 'DGIT Do It' Marketing Grant Programme gives tourism operators the chance to win one of two \$3000 grants for a customised digital marketing campaign aimed at expanding their domestic market. The grant is provided by Tourism Industry Aotearoa, in partnership with digital marketing agency Tomahawk and the Domestic Tourism Working Group.

Great Escape was one of the winners in 2018. Read their case study to find out how their social media campaign went, how they're using DGIT now and their recommendation to others.

The business

Great Escape is a yacht charter and sailing school based in the beautiful Bay of Islands. Competent sailors can bareboat charter, while less experienced customers can learn to sail and then set sail by themselves.

The ratio of visitors is 60% domestic, 40% international (with a strong percentage of the international sailors from Australia). Great Escape also benefit from a large number of repeat sailors, mostly domestic.

The social media campaign

Great Escape used the marketing grant to launch a new product, Fun Flotillas, which is a weekend escape suitable for sailors of all abilities.

The team at Tomahawk first worked with Julie at Great Escape to better understand what was included in the new product and who would be suitable for the sailing experience, along with creating personas for those audiences. Thanks to the DGIT results, it was already clear which demographics should be targeted!

For any great campaign to succeed, one of the secret ingredients is a clear and compelling landing page on a website. Julie and her team responded by creating a new landing page and making recommended changes to the website layout so the booking button was easily available.

To ensure they triggered the first stage of the travel lifecycle, Tomahawk set up a social media campaign, creating the dream of a weekend at sea. Taking advantage of the effective Facebook targeting, they used a combination of still images and slide shows to showcase what was on offer for the Fun Flotillas weekend. This campaign ran across both Facebook and Instagram, targeting those living in the upper North Island, and interested in sailing and the outdoors.



To target those intentionally searching for sailing experience in New Zealand, Tomahawk also set up a Google Search campaign to reach those living in the upper North Island from Waikato to Cape Reinga. The campaign resulted in an average click through rate of 7.87%. The audience for this campaign was smaller, more targeted and well qualified so although the result number is small, the value to Great Escape was big.

The awareness of the new brand was a great result with an impressive 47,000 people seeing the campaign and just over 2000 people clicking through to the website to find out more.

The social media campaign had more than 50 post reactions and comments as well as loads of shares, leading to the campaign organically reaching more people.

The campaign ran for six weeks.

Julie believes the campaign offered solid value for brand awareness, and to launch and promote their new product offering, Fun Flotillas. She is looking forward to exploring more paid digital marketing with their other products and to promoting Fun Flotillas for a second year.

Ongoing use of DGiT

Great Escape continue to use the DGiT tool a couple of times a year for business planning, to help develop marketing campaigns, specifically looking at channels and timing. They also use the accommodation budget indicators to help with pricing.

DGiT also helps with the language they use when promoting their activities. For example, 100% of yachties are also interested in food/wine (20%) so Great Escape includes information on anchoring near to local wineries.

What would you say to others who have never used DGiT?

“It’s easy to use and it adds value and has relevance for the wider tourism industry.

Have a play with it. It’s a fantastic tool, there for us to use and it's free!!”