

## Comms & Social Media Analysis

### International PR

In-market PR agency Four Communications were appointed to manage in country activity for the duration of Scotland's presence at Expo 2020 Dubai. Set communications objectives and key messaging was agreed before activity began, ensuring coverage of Scotland's purpose at the event – clearly reflecting and promotion of Scotland's trade and investment capabilities and values-led approach in media materials and subsequent resulting coverage.

A strategic approach was taken focused on creating a consistent, engaging drumbeat of newsworthy stories and profiling leading experts and influential voices, all of which served to successfully showcase and celebrate Scotland's capabilities across the Activation themes and evening reception focus areas. Media targets were carefully selected for each priority event from leading news and business publications in the Middle East region to enable Scotland to maintain editorial cut through and impact across the six months.

Minister McKee was the main spokesperson in media releases and was consistently quoted in media coverage with other prominent spokespeople including Scotland's Trade Envoy to the UAE and Global Scot, Nicholas Maclean, Dr. Liz Cameron from the Scottish Chambers, and other relevant partners relating to each priority event. The new Scotland brand marque was launched at the St Andrew's Day reception and subsequently deployed for the duration of the events programme across relevant owned social media channels, as well as those of stakeholders.

In total, there were **95 media articles** achieved throughout Scotland's time at EXPO with **2.8 million online coverage views**. The aggregated 'potential' reach of all international coverage, including monthly audience figures from print and broadcast titles was 1.8 billion.

- **Space Day:** Press release issued announcing Scotland's space strategy. Interview secured with CNN with Daniel Smith, Founder of Astro Agency to discuss Scotland's space credentials. 24 pieces of positive coverage achieved in English- and Arabic-language titles including The National, Emirates News Agency, Mena FN, Zawya and Al Bayan, achieving 1.6M online coverage views in total.
- **St Andrew's Day:** Press release issued about the Chamber of Commerce partnership between Scotland and Dubai, including values-led messaging in line with Brand Scotland St Andrew's Day campaign. Photo release issued covering the collaborative cultural showcase from Scottish and Dubai Pipe Bands at the St Andrew's Day event. 38 pieces of positive coverage achieved with 1M online coverage views.

- **Burns Night:** set up a radio broadcast media interview with the Centre for Robert Burns studies (a key Brand Scotland partner for Burns Night) with leading regional broadcast channel, Dubai Eye – 327K listeners.
- **Digital Health and Wellbeing:** Press releases issued pre and post event and additional media activity to publicise the DHI DigilInventors collaborative initiative for young people in Scotland and the UAE. 9 pieces of coverage achieved with 94.9K combined coverage views.
- **UK National Day:** Scottish cultural showcases livestreamed on social media (Brand Scotland Instagram and Facebook Live), and included in the UK Pavilion's EXPO newsletter.
- **Food and Drink showcase:** Press release issued post-event covering export ambitions and progress, securing 6 pieces of in market coverage with 46.4K online coverage views. In market food and drink contacts were also engaged at the event to create content for social media. Food and drink hampers were also sent to a selection of lifestyle media as a relationship-building strategy.
- **Race to Net Zero:** Interviews with key spokespeople including Minister McKee and Neil Francis pitched well in advance of events, with 3 interview opportunities secured in leading UAE media titles including The National and Gulf News. Media alert issued pre-event, and press release issued post-event including details of the MOU signing. 9 pieces of coverage achieved in total with 111K combined coverage views.
- **Scotland at EXPO summary:** News release issued celebrating Scotland's success at EXPO 2020 Dubai and business ambitions for the future. 8 pieces of coverage achieved with 25.8K combined coverage views.

UAE media were particularly interested in new announcements from Scotland, e.g. the Space Strategy launch, but were also interested in covering Scotland's unique culture. Appetite for interviews with leading spokespeople was strong when there was a new story to tell. 43% of media coverage was achieved in tier 1 media titles which is a strong result considering this was one of the first major media engagement activities from Scotland in the region for T&I and competition for editorial was strong.

## **Domestic PR**

While our primary communications objective for the EXPO 2020 Dubai project was to generate and raise more awareness about Scotland in the Middle East region via media output, we were also able to secure considerable coverage in Scottish domestic media. Similar to our objective for international PR, we aimed to produce content for each of the priority areas for 'Team Scotland' during EXPO 2020.

Ten high-profile domestic media articles were secured via comms produced by SE/SDI. These were published in leading media outlets, including Scottish Business Insider, the Press and Journal and the Daily Business. Media coverage was also secured in influential trade publications, including Food and Drink International. Three thought leadership pieces from senior SDI leaders which heavily referenced EXPO 2020 were published on SE's media centre and amplified widely across our domestic social

channels. Alongside this organic SE/SDI content, further domestic coverage was secured by 'Team Scotland' partners during EXPO 2020, including huge coverage about the launch of the Scottish Space Strategy.

Working closely with Team Scotland partners as part of our collaborative approach to EXPO 2020, the following news releases aligned to our priorities were issued by SE/SDI and colleagues:

- 1 October, 2021: To coincide with the opening of EXPO 2020, a joint SG/SE [Scottish success at World Expo](#) news release highlighted that 12 Scottish companies were providing services worth more than £8m to the event.
- 20 October, 2021: News release about the publication of the Scottish Space Strategy at EXPO 2020 widely picked up by the domestic media, including this article on [STV News release on the economic benefits of Scotland's Space industry](#)
- 14 January, 2022: Comms about SE's global trade activities amplified our EXPO 2020 activities, including this news release about [Export opportunities for premium Scottish brands in the Middle East](#). The news release was also covered by the [Press and Journal](#), [Scottish Business Insider](#), [the Daily Business](#), and Food & Drink International
- 1 February, 2022: A [trade opportunities for Scottish Companies thought leadership piece](#) by SE's interim MD International, Neil Francis, about trade opportunities for Scottish firms heavily referenced EXPO 2020
- 15 February, 2022: news release on [Scotland's Food and Drink VIP Reception at Expo](#) was picked up by online and print media including [The Business Connect](#) and the [Press & Journal](#).

Existing SE/SDI communications output was also repurposed to great effect for a Middle East audience and provided to Four Communications to sell into the regional UAE media. This included:

- A [COP26 editorial on Scotland's global commitment to a net zero future](#) by Neil Francis, Interim MD, International, SE for a Taiwan media outlet, CommonWealth
- An article on [Scotland as a world-class location for global low-carbon investment](#) by SE's Director of Global Investment, Mark Hallan for Business Insider
- A thought leadership piece from SE's Director of Global Investment, Mark Hallan about [ScotWind and Scotland's net zero strengths](#)

## Social Media Activity

SDI social:

	Linkedin	Facebook	Twitter
Total Posts	64	69	129
Total Impressions	199,279	6,029	200,220
Total Engagements	4,291	457	4,978
Total shares	569	31	678
Website visits	330	221	945
Average engagement rate per post (Benchmark)	2.11% (2.11%)	3.82 (3.13)	2.66% (2.05%)

- Average engagement rate for EXPO 2020 social posts was higher than benchmark for Twitter and Facebook
- Greatest engagement across channels was for content relating to Space Day
- Space content was also the most shared on all three channels
- Based on engagement rate, the top performing posts were:
  - [LinkedIn](#): 2.12.21 - RTNZ save the date, asset - THINK Hydrogen trade video. Engagement rate 6.57%, 137 Impressions, 2.92% CTR  
 📣 SAVE THE DATE 📣 Scotland's Race to Net Zero Day 1 at [#Expo2020AE](#)  
 Scotland is becoming a leading hydrogen nation and helping others harness its power too. Join us online and in person to find out more:  
 📅 Wednesday 19 January  
 📍 [The UK at Expo 2020 Dubai pavilion](#)  
 📄 Keep up to date with what's happening [SDI's Scotland at Expo web page](#)  
[#ScotlandsNow](#) [#Hydrogen](#)
  - [Facebook](#): 20.10.21 Space Day, asset - THINK space video  
 Engagement rate 13.89%, 78 Impressions  
 It's Scotland's Space Day at [Expo 2020 Dubai](#) 📺  
 Think space. Think our pioneering research, small satellites and data saving the planet. Think big opportunities.  
 Think Scotland. And skyrocket your business 🚀 [SDI's Space industry in Scotland web page](#)  
[#ScotlandsNow](#) [#UKatExpo](#) [#Expo2020](#) 🇬🇧
  - [Twitter](#): 26.2.22 Space Day strategy launch, third party ink  
 Engagement rate 12.85%, 1058 Impressions  
 Scotland will create the world's first space sustainability roadmap thanks to [@ScottishSpaceLC](#), [@theAstroAgency](#) and [@Optimat](#) 📢📢📢📢📢📢

*It will cover economic, legal and environmental issues to evaluate how space can meet global challenges* 🗨️

#ScotlandIsNow [Scottish Space sector creating world first sustainability roadmap](#)

- Best click through rates: for the final [LinkedIn post on Scotland's Space day at Expo 20 Oct](#) (4.2%), the [digital healthcare session](#) promo on 28 Jan (3.98). For Facebook it was the [Race to Net Zero round up](#) video post (12.5%) and for twitter it was the [Sustainable Space Roadmap](#) 3<sup>rd</sup> party news post (2.65%). Benchmarks LI 1.85%, FB 1.79%, Tw 0.35%.
- We had users contacting us on the following days using the EXPO 2020 enquiry form:
  - 9 Sept 2021
    - CRM says it's a new contact with SDI London address and postcode
  - 22 March 2022
    - User from Dubai wanting to attend Scotland's Hydrogen Day and looking to receive the gate pass
  - 4 October 2021
    - User from Bedford left a message to say: "We are working with organisations in Dubai developing synergies and business. I would be grateful to receive further information on Scottish initiatives."

SDI paid social on LinkedIn:

- This campaign was targeting a new market in the Middle East.
- The aim of this campaign was to engage a new target audience and raise awareness of Scotland's commitment to achieve its Net Zero targets.
- 11 day period 14 - 25 March 22.
- Delivered over 1.5m impressions, 16k clicks with an average CTR of 1.05% (forecast of 1%).
- Positive engagement with the creative (Updated SDI Climate video) - video view rate was 49% lower resulting in only 39% of forecast video views being achieved, a total of 234,952.
- Post engagements achieved 66% against forecast for a total of 17,494.
- Engagement was positive: 838 reactions, 14 comments, 52 shares.
- 1,650 new page follows.

Learnings:

- Space day analytics showed that LinkedIn was more of a priority channel, so activity on this channel was increased for subsequent activations, and a reduced focus given to Twitter and Facebook.
- Video is the best performing asset
- LinkedIn is generally best performing channel but Facebook isn't a priority channel

Recommendations:

- More volume didn't lead to more engagement. Recommend we follow our new Gold/Silver/Bronze campaign approach in future, which has a reduced volume.

- Paid social: Carat recommend running more variations of creative in future to not only allow the platform more opportunities to optimise but also to ensure learnings for future campaigns.

### **SDI Website**

- 4 new landing pages created
- Expo 2020 panel was added to the UAE office pages linking to main landing page
- 5 new articles published in Q4 cross cutting the health and net zero themes, one follow on Green Investment article to follow
- 8 Eventbrite pages

Analytics from the event days:

<p><u>Space day – 20th October 2021</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 153 page views</li> <li>• 35.45% bounce rate</li> <li>• Low bounce rate is good</li> </ul> <p>How users get to the 'Scottish space companies' page?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly - 52 pages, 39 users</li> <li>• LinkedIn - 25 page views, 19 users</li> <li>• Google organic - 24 page views, 18 users</li> <li>• SDI social - 13 page views, 13 users</li> <li>• Gov.scot - 5 page views, 2 users</li> </ul> <p>Expo2020 page performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 126 page views</li> <li>• 84.11% bounce rate</li> <li>• High bounce rate, which means the page is not offering what most users are looking for</li> </ul>	<p><u>Digital Health Day - 31st January 2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 125 page views</li> <li>• 32.63% bounce rate</li> <li>• Low bounce rate is good</li> </ul> <p>How users get to the 'Digital Health and Wellness Day' page?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly - 52 pages, 46 users</li> <li>• Twitter - 18 page views, 12 users</li> <li>• Google organic - 15 page views, 10 users</li> <li>• SDI social - 7 page views, 7 users</li> <li>• SDI email - 6 page views, 5 users</li> </ul> <p>Expo2020 page performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 page views</li> <li>• 30.77% bounce rate</li> <li>• Low bounce rate</li> </ul>	<p><u>UK National Day – 10th February 2022</u></p> <p>Overall performance of Expo content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Scotland at Expo 2020' - 20 page views, 52.94% bounce rate</li> <li>• 'Scotland Digital Health and Wellness Day – 9 page views, 16.67% bounce rate</li> <li>• 'Scotland space companies showcasing at Expo' – 4 page views, 50% bounce rate</li> </ul> <p>We didn't drive a lot of traffic to the website this day.</p> <p>Most users came to the Expo page via Google organic.</p>
<p><u>Gulf Foods - 15th February 2022</u></p> <p>Overall performance of Expo content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Scotland at Expo 2020' - 18 page views, 53.85% bounce rate</li> <li>• 'Scotland Digital Health and Wellness Day – 8 page views, 12.5% bounce rate</li> </ul>	<p><u>Net Zero day - 23rd March 2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 483 page views</li> <li>• 89% bounce rate (Mobile – 91%; desktop – 35%)</li> <li>• Bounce rate on mobile was very high</li> </ul> <p>This was the first of the event days when most users did not come from the UK.</p>	<p><u>Net Zero Day and Climate Tech – 23-25th March 2022</u></p> <p>Apart from NetZero Day and Climate Tech, all other event days had most traffic from the UK, who are probably not our target audience.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 'Scotland space companies showcasing at Expo' – 1 page views, 0% bounce rate</li> </ul> <p>We didn't drive a lot of traffic to the website this day.</p> <p>Most users came to the Expo page via Google organic.</p>	<p>Expo2020 page performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 27 page views</li> <li>● 47% bounce rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Around half the users left the SDI website after landing on the Expo2020 page</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Where users come from – 23-25<sup>th</sup> March 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Turkey – 395 users</li> <li>● Egypt – 180 users</li> <li>● United Arab Emirates – 161 users</li> <li>● Saudi Arabia – 87 users</li> <li>● Jordan – 52 users</li> <li>● Israel – 50 users</li> <li>● UK – 36 users</li> </ul> <p>Devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Desktop – 41 users, 39.53% bounce rate</li> <li>● Mobile – 1,081 users, 90.28% bounce rate</li> <li>● Tablet – 2 users, 50% bounce rate</li> </ul>
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Recommendations for web content:

- Although the objective was not for users to submit an enquiry, we had a high number of users getting to the enquiry page but not submitting an enquiry. Unfortunately, there was no actionable insights/feedback from the Hotjar survey. It would be good to investigate further/do user testing to find out if there is anything putting off users from submitting an enquiry
- For future joint campaigns it would be useful to collaborate on what we would all define as 'success' for all our social media, if 'success' is not defined by generating enquiries.
- Re-arranging the page layout on SDI, and looking into the possibility of mobile looking different from desktop; for events that have virtual and in-person attendees, what users are looking for could be very different
- Being clear on social posts if events are online or in person or both
- Having one call to action on each post; reviewing user journey with user testing on 'contact us'– why are users abandoning that page?
- Working out how we can best engage with target audiences for organic posts – We seem to target mostly UK users, who might not be our target audience
- Reviewing the Net Zero page because of the high bounce rate on mobile– audiences who attend Expo in person may find different content helpful from those who attend the event virtually
- The LinkedIn posts promoting Space Day generated the highest number of clicks to the website. If this is what we would deem 'success', it would be good to look at the user journey for future Expo events.



**Scotland at EXPO Twitter channel (@ScotExpo2020):** Throughout the six month campaign period the official Scotland at EXPO channel had a total of 266 posts from the account, 193,500 impressions and 383 link clicks to relevant web pages. The average engagement rate was 1.8% which is considered strong. The platform worked well when announcing speakers for events, news and posting video and photo content from events that could be shared by partners.

**Brand Scotland social media and Scotland.org activity:** A new web page was designed and launched for Scotland's activity at EXPO signposting to events, as well as relevant articles linking to Scotland's activity. EXPO content was shared across Brand Scotland Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels, including livestream content for Scottish cultural showcases at events including the St Andrew's Day reception and UK National Day.

**Partner social engagement:** social guides were drafted for partners and businesses taking part to help amplify social content from the Scotland at Expo channel. These included a guide on planned activity, suggestions on how to support, assets available for sharing, event web links and appropriate hashtags.

**Branding:** The Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland design and multimedia teams created a number of assets for use in the UK Pavilion to support each of Scotland's key days. The looped film included highlights from the Think Different, Think Scotland campaign, Scotland's Year of Stories, the Brand Scotland Study film and the new Scotland is Open film. Room dressing including stage backdrops and lighting helped ensure the new Scotland brand was on full display.

**Scottish Government International Network activity:** Organic social media content for the launch of EXPO and for each activation day was created and shared to the eight SG International Network offices for posting on their respective Twitter channels. Eventbrite registration pages for each activation day were also shared with the offices with the view to sharing with relevant stakeholders, although the time difference sometimes meant these events were not suitable depending on office location.