

# Scottish Agritourism Monitor Farm Programme

## July Virtual Meetings Report

Meeting 1 – Roles in a Business  
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Meeting 2 – Measuring Digital Marketing Impact  
Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020



The Agritourism sector has faced many changes over the last six months, with the Covid-19 pandemic imposing strict lockdown restrictions to comply with the Government's rulings, which resulted in the cancellation of any upcoming Scottish Agritourism Monitor Farm (SAMFP) meetings.

Despite the challenges, the programme is still progressing and has switched from the face to face monthly meetings to fortnightly meetings, lasting two hours via Zoom.

With the Scottish Government announcing the reopening of tourism businesses at the beginning of July, numbers that were attending the virtual meetings decreased slightly. This was due to many of the attendees working with reduced staff and new rules and regulations and therefore have limited time to attend the meetings. Nevertheless, both July meetings have still been well attended and have provided a variety of knowledge, advice and support to agritourism businesses across Scotland.

Virtual meetings have also been held in July with the East Central Community Group and the West Central Community Group, with businesses focusing on their individual business plans.

## MEETING ONE SUMMARY – 13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020

**Topic: Roles in a Business** (with programme facilitator, Caroline Millar)

Attendees of the meeting were asked if they had concerns about the number of tasks they have to undertake on a daily basis and what their main worries were. Below are some of the main comments from the discussion;

- Always feeling like you are on duty and never getting the chance to step away. You always have 'work in your pocket'
- There is always jobs to be done on a farming enterprise. On the farm if you don't get the job done it will be there tomorrow whereas the tourism/B&B side of the business, it is priority and if a job needs done, it will take priority
- Interruptions – farm, family, calls, messages. Always feeling like you have to answer enquires etc. straight away
- Lists being too long and making you feel overwhelmed. Constantly 'firefighting' e.g. something urgent comes up and you never get to the end of your list
- Me! – I am a sole trader, so I have to do everything own my own (no family, business partner involved) so all the jobs have to be prioritised by me
- Trying to adapt the business to the new normal during Covid-19. It has almost been like setting up and launching a new business
- Trying to establish what you are good at and what you need to focus on more e.g. the tasks you are good at you tend to prioritise but maybe you should prioritise the trickier tasks
- The amount of admin tasks which always get put on the back burner
- Trying to decide what should be passed on/outsourced to save time
- WWOOF\* have seen a benefit to using them over the years, especially when you are juggling kids etc. with a business
- Not actually wanting to sit and do the strategic jobs. Would rather be outside and hands on
- Utilising casual/contract workers and also volunteers, especially at seasonal times of the year

\* Utilising [www.wwoof.org.uk](http://www.wwoof.org.uk) or a similar organisation can help with season staffing. You list a profile and volunteers list their profiles and then you can email each other through the system to see if you can get a good match. You provide bed and board for return of work.

### Top Takeaways:

1. Communication is key
  - With business partners/staff
  - External including funders etc. - make sure you are up to date with any opportunities that could benefit your business
  - Network/influencers - they can help promote your business
2. Training & development
  - Yourself - don't be afraid to learn something new and seek training. Running a business can open up make avenues of work that you may not feel experienced enough in, so training can help with this
  - Others in your team – this will not only help the business but make your staff feel valued and invested in
3. Strategy & future planning
  - Creative ideas/R&D – always keep thinking to the future and looking at opportunities to progress your business or try something different, even if it may not work
  - Trends/international outlook
  - Business planning
4. Financial management
  - Monitoring performance (P&L, cashflow) – use a straightforward system that suits you e.g. Xero.co.uk
  - Forecast v budget v actual – a very good exercise to keep up to date, especially if you may need to borrow and seek a loan
  - Processing monthly – keep up to date with payments etc. but make sure you are not putting your own business under pressure
  - Purchasing – always be aware that you may need to make unnecessary purchasing if something breaks etc. Plan for this
5. Marketing & sales management
  - Brand assets
  - Campaigns
  - Strategic marketing (brand review/marketing plan revisit)
  - Daily/weekly/monthly tasks
6. HR management internal/contractor
  - Appraisals/reviews
  - Staff training/records
  - Staff meetings/communications
  - Contracts/pensions etc.

[Full presentation from meeting available here](#)

## MEETING TWO SUMMARY – 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020

**Topic: Measuring Digital Marketing Impact** (with Lesley Wood from [LMW Consulting](#))



Google analytics is a free analytics tool that gives website owners in-depth data in relation to their website and/or app performance; [www.analytics.google.com](http://www.analytics.google.com).

Other alternatives include; Google Search Console and Data Studio.

Google analytics along with other online monitor tools can help you establish how digital marketing is impacting on your business.

Is the money you have invested into your website and other digital platforms actually resulting in meaningful business profit? If not, what is the issue?

It might be worth your business investing in an external resource to help monitor the analytics of your digital marketing. However, it is important that someone within your team has some basic understanding of how it works.

- Your local authority may be able to offer resources/support to understand your analytics.
- Don't be afraid to get an independent report carried out to review your website/digital platforms. Sites such as Fiverr.com can arrange for someone to review your site and give an independent user report, comparing it to competitors. You will need to provide them with a brief about the research you require but could be beneficial to your business.

### Top Google Analytic Takeaways:

1. Bounce rate - people leaving your website without looking at a second page – **aim to have a figure below 40%.**
2. Customer personas - who comes to your website? Are you offering a service that meets the right personas?
3. User experience – remember if they enjoy using your platform, they will recommend it and return to use it themselves. Make sure your sites are user friendly.
4. Where are the issues? You can always fix these.
5. Marketing efforts - did your search optimisation efforts or social media bring your customers? Do your research and find out.
6. Sales assistance – are your digital platforms helping sell your product?
7. Patterns/habits - are you doing better this month, than last (or year)? If so, why might this be? Is it down to more focus on digital marketing?

### Where does the footfall to your site come from?

**Organic** – this means they have googled different word/phrases related to your business (e.g. 'holiday cottages near Loch Lomond')

**Direct** – they typed your website name/address into the search engine

**Referral** – they got a URL to your site from a different site (e.g. Visit Scotland)

**Social** – clicking on your website link from the 'about you section' on your social channels

[Full presentation from the meeting available here](#)

### MEETING ATTENDEES

No.	First Name	Surname	Business	Website	13th July	29th July
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	Ailsa	Currie	Bellevue Farm Holiday Cottages & Farm Tours	<a href="http://www.bellevue-arran.co.uk">www.bellevue-arran.co.uk</a>	√	
	Alison	Younger	Old Leckie Farm	<a href="http://www.oldleckie.co.uk">www.oldleckie.co.uk</a>	√	
	Anne	Lennox	Lennox of Lomond	<a href="http://www.shemoreonlochlomond.com">www.shemoreonlochlomond.com</a>	√	√
	Ashley	MacGregor	Burnhead Bothies	<a href="http://www.burnheadbothies.com">www.burnheadbothies.com</a>	√	
	Bobby	Lennox	Lennox of Lomond	<a href="http://www.shemoreonlochlomond.com">www.shemoreonlochlomond.com</a>	√	√
	Chris	Scott-Park	Portnellan Farm LLP	<a href="http://www.portnellanfarm.co.uk">www.portnellanfarm.co.uk</a>		√
	David	MacTaggart	Hallrule Farms	hallrulefarms.com		√
	Eric	Linklater	Carfrae Farm	<a href="http://www.carfraefarm.com">www.carfraefarm.com</a>	√	
	Fiona	Grant	Avielochan Cottages	<a href="http://www.avielochancottages.co.uk">www.avielochancottages.co.uk</a>	√	
	Fiona	Scott	The Mill at Fearn Farm	<a href="http://www.fearnfarm.com">www.fearnfarm.com</a>	√	√
	Fiona	McKay				√
	Geraldine	Hamilton	Crosswoodhill Farm Holiday Cottages	<a href="http://www.crosswoodhill.co.uk">www.crosswoodhill.co.uk</a>		√
	Gordon	Murray	Craigmaddie Muir	<a href="http://www.craigmaddiemuir.co.uk">www.craigmaddiemuir.co.uk</a>		√
	Jasmine	Jackson	Jacksons at Jedburgh	<a href="http://www.jacksonsatjedburgh.co.uk">www.jacksonsatjedburgh.co.uk</a>	√	
	Jenny	Baird	Greenford farm	N/A	√	
	Jenny	Cowan	Eastside	<a href="https://www.eastsidecottages.co.uk">https://www.eastsidecottages.co.uk</a>		√
	Jo	McNicol	DRIFT.	<a href="http://www.castletonevents.weebly.com">www.castletonevents.weebly.com</a>	√	√
	Kay	Wilson	Lennox of Lomond	<a href="http://www.shemoreonlochlomond.com">www.shemoreonlochlomond.com</a>	√	√
	Lauren	Neill	Cononsyth Farms	N/A	√	
	Liz	Phillips	Cowden Holiday Let	<a href="http://www.exclusivelyliz.com">www.exclusivelyliz.com</a>		√
	Louise	Nicoll	Newton Farm Holidays & Tours	<a href="http://www.newtonfarmholidays">www.newtonfarmholidays</a>		√
	Nikki	Storarr	Ardross Farm Shop	<a href="http://www.ardrossfarm.co.uk">www.ardrossfarm.co.uk</a>		√
	Rhona	Neil	Smahame	<a href="https://www.smahame.com/">https://www.smahame.com/</a>		√
	Sacha	Grierson	Hugh Grierson organic	<a href="http://www.hughgrierson.co.uk">www.hughgrierson.co.uk</a>	√	
	Sally	Williams	R & A Wilson Ltd	N/A		√
	Sarah	Restall	E M Farming	N/A	√	√
	Sheila	Bannerman	Old Manse Farm	N/A	√	√
	Shona	Duncan	Duncan Family Farms	<a href="http://www.duncanfamilyfarms.co.uk">www.duncanfamilyfarms.co.uk</a>	√	√
	Sophie	Thompson	Newton Farm Holidays	<a href="https://newtonfarmholidays.co.uk">https://newtonfarmholidays.co.uk</a>		√
	Trudi	Cuteo	Carfrae Farm	<a href="http://www.carfraefarm.com">www.carfraefarm.com</a>	√	
	Tom	Bowser	Argaty Red Kites	<a href="http://www.argatyredkites.co.uk">www.argatyredkites.co.uk</a>	√	√
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>