

CONSUMER TESTING REPORT

KENT PILOT REGION REPORT 2023 T4.2.2



INTRODUCTION

The Kent Regional Best Practice Guide presents findings on the effectiveness of the delivery for off-season experiential tourism, marketing and distribution (T4.1.3) for the Interreg EXPERIENCE project.

EXPERIENCE is a €24.5m project co-funded by the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme, which committed €17m from the European Regional Development Fund. It is led by Norfolk County Council (NCC) and ran from September 2019 to June 2023. EXPERIENCE is a major project to boost visitor numbers in the off-peak season through an innovative tourism strategy. New autumn and winter experiences will attract 11,309,368 new visitors to the six project pilot areas across England and France: Norfolk, Kent, Cornwall, Pas-de-Calais, Compiègne and Brittany (Baie de Morlaix and Côtes d'Armor).

Marketing and distribution within the Kent Pilot region was delivered in the following priority areas

1. Market testing with trade and distribution channels (T4.2.1)
2. Consumer testing campaigns (T4.2.2)
3. Consumer perception study (T4.2.2)
4. Digital Lab testing (T4.2.3)
5. Targeted consumer campaigns (T4.3.1)
6. Destination and business photography (T4.3.1)
7. Online pre-visit inspirational and trip-planning platforms (T4.3.2)
8. Travel trade and B2B distribution (T4.3.3)



MARKET TESTING

B2C PRODUCT TESTING

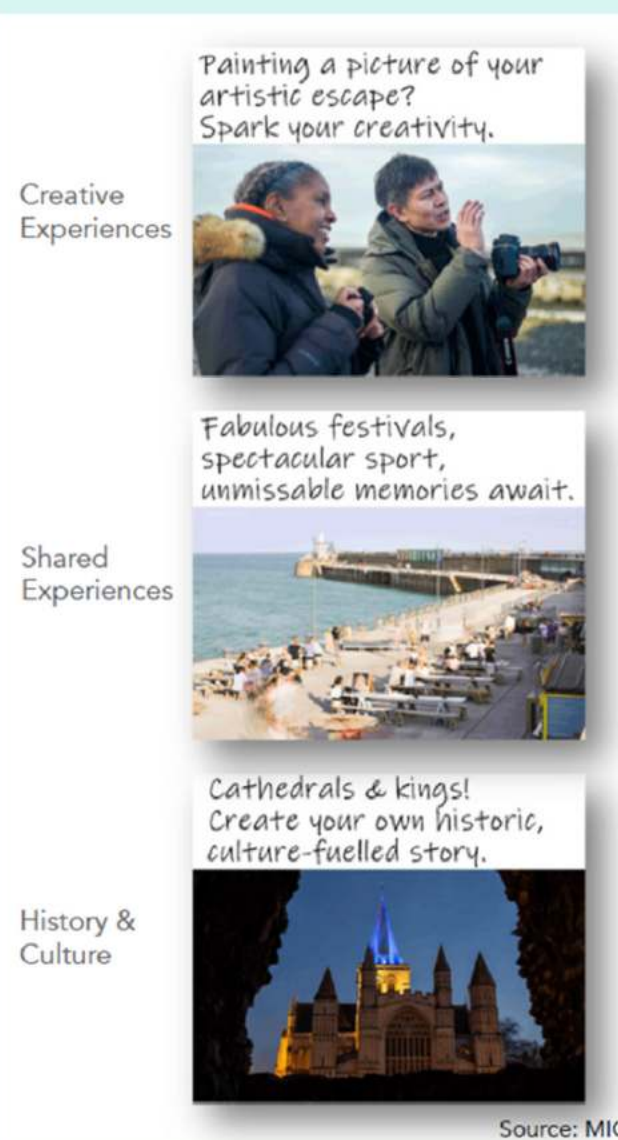
Both Visit Kent and Kent Downs conducted product testing with consumers in the Kent Pilot Region.

Visit Kent ran a consumer campaign built around an A/B testing model in order to determine audience preferences and motivations, overlaid with data accrued from a YouGov Survey designed to create insights to inform future Experience content creation and promotional activity for use by Visit Kent and stakeholders. The A/B testing campaign was also supplemented by a YouGov brand Survey.



Kent Downs carried out a number of activities, which included an audience research programme, lead generation campaign, keywords and search trends and experience theme research to understand audience behaviour, preferences and motivations. In addition we commissioned a YouGov Survey to gain insights into their intentions to travel for leisure, to visit Kent as a tourist, which activities they're likely to do and the role sustainable tourism plays in their decision making

About the campaign activity



- **Ads across 8 themes**
- **2.5 hr drive radius, April 2021**
- **10.7M impressions/9K clicks**
- **Testing audience response to**
 - **Theme**
 - **Message**
 - **Ad format**
- **YouGov Survey**

MARKET TESTING

CONSUMER TESTING INSIGHTS

The following pages, provide an overview of the insights gained through the consumer testing programme and the development of the following outputs;

- Fabricca Experience Research Report (Visit Kent)
- Fabricca Expereince Research Reports (Kent Downs, Find Your Space)
- Keywords and trends report
- EXPERIENCE Competitor Analysis
- Fabricca Lead Generation Campaign



Key takeaways

1

Creative Experiences and Shared Experiences achieved the highest CTRs at 0.1% each, followed by History & Culture at 0.09%.

2

The best performing thematic creative was Creative Experiences Informational at just above 0.1% followed by Shared Experiences Inspirational and Informational at just below 0.1% CTR.

3

970x250 was the best performing Ad Format across History & Culture, Outdoor Experiences, Escape The Ordinary and Food & Drink. 300x250 performed best across Creative Experiences and Shared Experiences. 320x50 performed best across Off The Beaten Path and Wellbeing.



YouGov Brand Study

4 questions



4,000 respondents



2,000 control group

(respondents who have not been exposed to campaign ads)

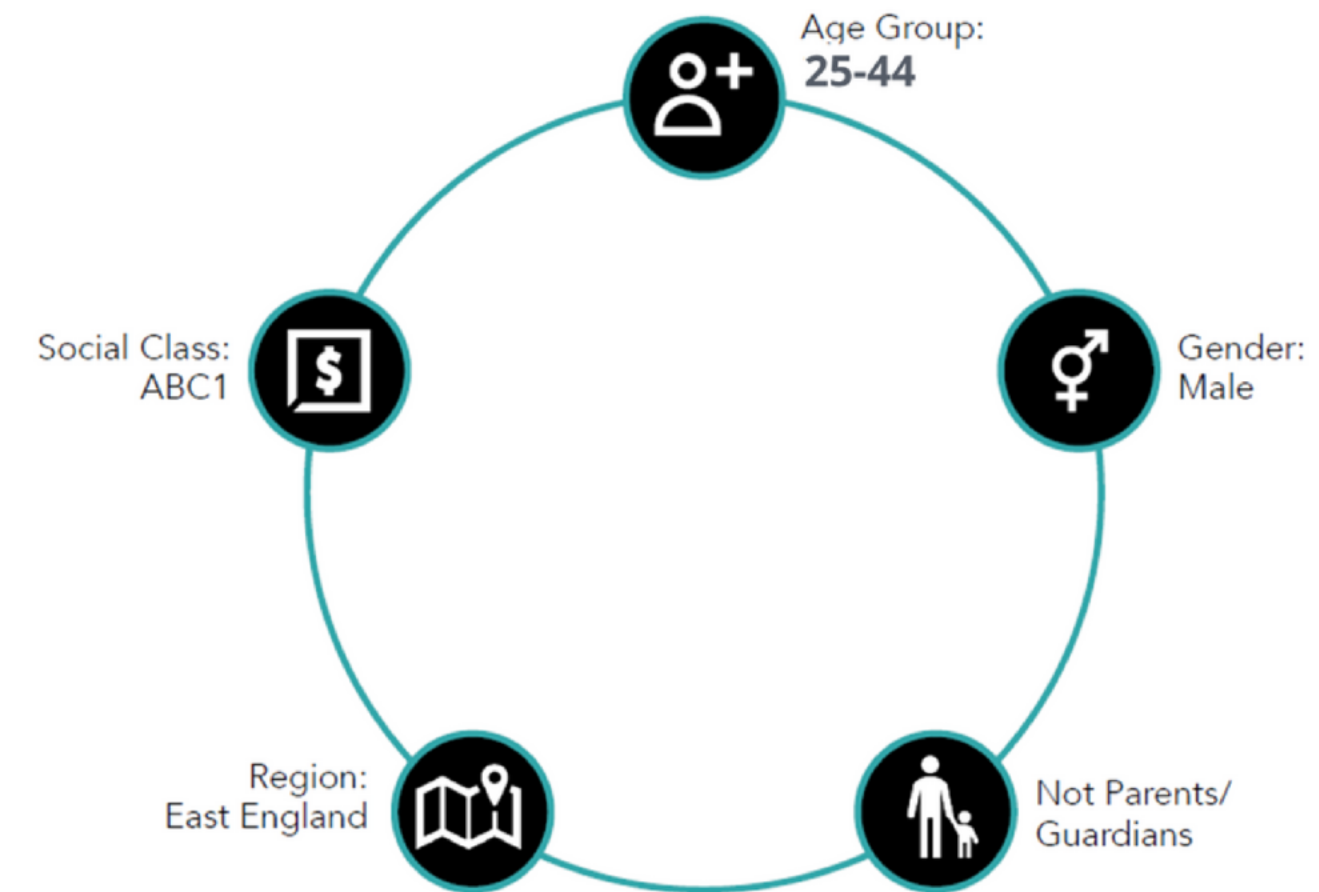
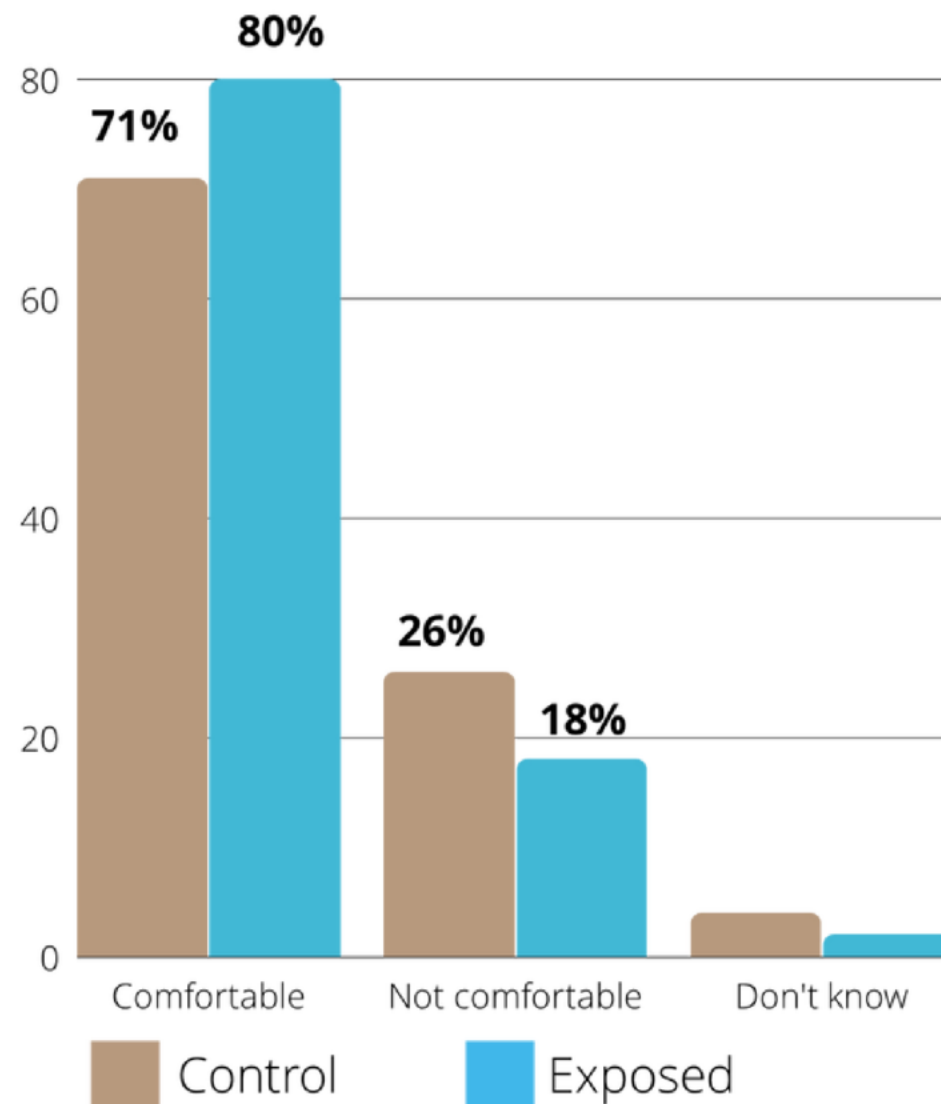


2,000 exposed group

(respondents who have been exposed to campaign ads)

Assuming that appropriate health and safety measures and social distancing procedures were in place, in light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic...

Q1. Overall, to what extent, if at all, would you feel comfortable travelling around the UK for leisure purposes this year (i.e., in 2021), once travel rules are lifted?



Who are most likely to be comfortable travelling for leisure purposes?

Q3. Which, if any, of the following types of activities would you consider doing/attending in Kent at any point in the future? (Please select all that apply)

Answer	Control	Exposed	Uplift
Health and wellbeing activities	9%	12%	39%
Activities in relation to the local history/ culture	36%	48%	34%
Creative activities (e.g. photography, pottery etc.)	8%	14%	64%
Food and drink activities (e.g. wine tasting, cooking courses etc.)	21%	31%	45%
Walking and other outdoor activities (e.g. cycling)	43%	56%	29%
"Unusual" experiences (e.g. axe throwing, llama walking etc.)	10%	16%	64%
Guided tours and trails	14%	18%	32%
Events and festivals	23%	30%	34%
Pilgrimage, self-fulfilment or spiritual activities	4%	5%	15%

- The activities in green are generating the highest uplift.
- There is a significant market and appeal for local history/culture, outdoor activities and events & festivals.
- Looking specifically at respondents who indicated that are likely to visit Kent, the top three activities they would consider doing are Outdoor activities (72%), Local history/culture (56%), and Food and drink (37%).

MARKET TESTING

B2C PRODUCT TESTING

B2C product testing learnings:

- The Experience Research Report (Find Your Space) was highly detailed and involved, which often led to contradicting results. This approach needs to be simplified if repeated.
- The results from the reports helped us understand which themes audiences were most receptive to, which channels to use to target each audience and when the messaging should adopt an information or inspiration approach.
- Themes that tested well and resonated with our consumer audiences were used as key themes within the Up the Kent Downs campaign. For example, Art and Crafts became 'Draw Downs', health and wellbeing became 'Power Downs', food and drink became 'Chow Downs' and family fun became 'Play Downs'.
- YouGov findings were useful and further reports have already been commissioned
- A/B testing was useful, however our approach was broad with many themes, if we were to do this again we would focus on 1 or 2 key themes with a control over variables



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