

Dursley External Marketing Audit Summary

To complete the view of Dursley from an outsider's perspective, Hidden Britain reviewed the external marketing presence of Dursley. The audit used Hidden Britain's External Marketing Evaluation tool, which is designed to provide a critical, objective view of how the destination would be perceived by a visitor prior to arrival. The tool looks at all aspects of the visitor journey from initial awareness, through decision making to information sourcing and planning a visit. This analysis is intended to complement the standard mystery visitor study which looks at the experience on arrival.

Below is a summary of the findings.

TOTAL SCORE

126 out of possible 290 = 43.5% (Market Town Average = 65.8%)

NB Possible total is 310 but reduced commensurately as some elements not applicable to the site.

1. VISIBILITY AND QUALITY OF INFORMATION FOR SEARCH

Score 18 out of 30

Strengths

- » The main Town Council site appears towards the top of page one of a Google Search for the destination name. When attaching the word "visit" before the destination name, the District Council visitor website appears: www.visittheCotswolds.org.uk.
- » The town also features strongly on page one within other relevant sites such as TripAdvisor, Wikipedia and www.dursleywelcomeswalkers.org.uk.
- » The Vale Business Forum site provides some relevant information on local attractions.

Weaknesses

- » There are no clear links for visitor information on the Town Council's home page. Relevant links are difficult to find towards the foot of a page entitled "Links to Local Information".
- » The profile of the town as a visitor destination is confused by the large number of sites offering related information. We found www.Cotswolds.info, www.DursleyGlos.org.uk (which is more of a local history guide), www.Cotswolds.com and www.visittheCotswolds.org.uk. It is not immediately clear which is the "official" site.

2. DESTINATION WEBSITE (www.Dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk)

There is no dedicated visitor website specifically for Dursley, so we reviewed the Town Council's site and relevant links.

Score 47 out of 90

Strengths

- » The place is clearly referenced in the domain name. However a dedicated "visitDursley" site is required, highlighting visitor content. (Alternatives could be "discover" or "explore").
- » Site is clearly mainly aimed at residents, but there are links from the home page to "Local Information". This page provides relevant links to the Stroud district visitor site, local transport, walking, cycling, accommodation etc.
- » The District Council's site www.visitthecotswolds.org.uk/general.asp?pid=22&pgid=606 provides an attractive page devoted to Dursley with attractive imagery and links to attractions.
- » Site is easily usable in a mobile browser.

Weaknesses

- » The town is currently reliant on a range of third party websites to reach visitors. These present Dursley as part of a wider offer, so there is little dedicated focus on the town itself.
- » There is a marked shortage of strong, high-quality imagery to "sell" the town.
- » There is a lack of appealing, emotive copy and no clear sense of place brand or identity. (The Town Council's crest is not geared towards place marketing).
- » Some links, e.g. "accommodation special offers" and "Dursley info", are broken.
- » The site lacks a dedicated events section targeted at visitors. There is highly relevant content available on linked sites such as www.valevision.org.uk which promotes a "What's on" guide, but at present there is no co-ordinated, comprehensive picture for visitors.
- » We could find no clear opportunity for visitors to engage with the town to answer visitor enquiries. Contact for visitor enquiries appears to be the town clerk's email address, which does not immediately suggest this is the best route for visitors.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

Score 0 out of 20

Weaknesses

- » No evidence of use of other social media (Facebook, Flickr, YouTube etc).

4. PRINT

Score 3 out of 10

Strengths

- » Useful, if rather basic, information to download on public transport and walking
- » Links to third party sites which offer plenty of good quality print available online (see below).

Weaknesses

- » If any other destination marketing publications are available (e.g. visitor guide), these were not evident on the website and not available to download.

5. THIRD PARTY WEBSITES

Score 11 out of 30

Strengths

- » Both the Stroud DC and Cotswolds.com sites reference Dursley on print and maps (e.g. Dursley Town Festival listing) although the town's profile is significantly less than some others.

Weaknesses

- » Key partner sites such as Cotswolds.com do feature a page on Dursley, but there was no link to the town website. The visitor guide has no accommodation listed for Dursley.
- » The town does not feature as strongly as other Cotswold towns on partner sites. There is no mention/link on www.enjoyengland.com.

6. IDENTITY & MESSAGE

Score 41 out of 100

Strengths

- » Partner organisations such as Vale Vision project a picturesque rural backdrop and vibrant community with walking, cycling, farmers market and historic town centre. Good What's On guide.
- » Plenty of positive images of Dursley across multiple different sites online. (e.g. Stroud DC).

Weaknesses

- » There is no clearly articulated, coordinated visitor offer online. Lack of clear, consistent use of colour/fonts, nice images, logo to distinguish Dursley from other Cotswold towns.
- » The website would benefit from a dedicated visitor section, with introductory page to set the scene and directly address the audience.

- » The use of lists of links makes the visitor have to do the work. It is not at all easy to find out about Dursley unless you are prepared to research a variety of partner sites
- » Little consideration of who the visitor audience might be. At present offer is designed primarily for a community audience.
- » Third party providers (e.g. TripAdvisor) and partners are not projecting a consistent image or message about what Dursley has to offer.
- » Potentially strong stories (e.g. JK Rowling connection with Dursley) not being told (but mentioned in Wikipedia).
- » We tested 5 other local sites (Old Spot Inn, Berkeley Castle, Underhill House B&B, Dursley Welcomes Walkers and Prema Arts Cafe). References to Dursley and reciprocal links are not much in evidence. There is a real opportunity to engage businesses to help sell Dursley as a visitor destination in a more proactive way via their sites.

7. OVERALL IMPRESSION OF EXTERNAL MARKETING

BEST

1. Dursley is well represented on search engines. The domain name clearly references the place.
2. There are a variety of partner and third party websites which convey a positive, attractive image.

WORST

1. It is not clear which is the “official” visitor website for the town. The existence of multiple sites with related information makes it hard for the visitor to find a comprehensive source.
2. There is no clearly articulated, coordinated visitor offer online.
3. There is a need for a dedicated visitor page from the Town Council’s website/home page.
4. The town is currently reliant on a range of third party websites to reach visitors. Often these present Dursley as part of a wider offer, so there is little dedicated focus on the town itself.
5. Publications and visitor information is not available to view and download online other than through partner sites.
6. There is no social media presence.
7. A lack of reciprocal weblinks with local tourism businesses and relevant tourism third party sites.