

Version anglaise

Tourism in Scotland

To many, it's Scotland's most important industry — but it isn't oil or electronics. It isn't even whisky. And like any other business, it needs careful looking after. Scotland's tourism industry employs a massive 193,000 people — that's 8% of the nation's workforce and 15% in the Highlands and Islands. Tourism pays the wages of more people than the oil, gas and whisky industries combined and contributes a cool £4 billion a year to the Scottish economy. Fantastic you say — it's obviously doing very nicely thank you. So let's move on. Well, no — let's not. Because like any business, tourism needs to keep its eye on the ball, to protect its core proposition and remain responsive to changes in demand. Scotland the Great Scotland's core offering, of course, remains as popular today as it has always been — traditional favourites like hill walking and climbing, boating and watersports, skiing, cycling, castle and whisky trails, a packed festival calendar, Highland Games, fishing, pony trekking and golf. Though even here in this last key area, golf — which continues to pull in an impressive £100 million a year — no-one is taking anything for granted. The 'home of golf' may be blessed with over 540 challenging courses, including five of the eight Open Championship courses, but it's still instigating major marketing drives not just within the UK, but in the USA; Germany and Scandinavia where Scottish golf courses, regional golf areas, tour operators and hotels now regularly attend The Swedish Golf Festival. And golf isn't the only area we're taking a proactive approach.