

Fuelling excitement and countering compromise: for Fáilte Ireland There's No Place Like TV

1) Background & Objectives

The summer of 2020 was like no other. On 8 June Ireland was set to re-open after sustained lockdowns, with intercounty travel and leisure businesses set to open. All industries were hurt by restrictions but perhaps none more so than the tourism and hospitality sector, and considering it contributes approximately €18bn to the Irish economy, Fáilte Ireland had a monumental task to support the sector and the economy. We needed to get people moving, to holiday around Ireland. The Irish love of global travel has taken us to all corners of the world and Ireland as a holiday destination can often feel like a compromise, with limited other options there was a feeling that holidaymakers were being forced to accept Ireland. We had to overcome this limiting belief and demonstrate that Ireland could offer incredible experiences – we had to increase motivation and excitement for Ireland as a destination.

Our campaign *Make A Break For It* was built to capture the giddy excitement of and the build up to being able to get away, and TV was a crucial element to inspire and excite the nation. However, we still needed to:

- Counter the compromise – make Ireland appeal, be **desirable**
- Demonstrate experiences that are **exceptional**, not just 'acceptable'
- Create curiosity – build anticipation and a sense of needing to **explore** more

2) The Strategy

As humans, we're naturally curious; we want to seek out new experiences. We can also be naturally risk-averse and hunger for recommendations from others. Personal experiences of friends and family often influence our holiday decision-making and during the pandemic influencers also had a growing voice in encouraging action. According to GroupM Media Tracker, the number of adults who agreed that they tend to buy products that are of interest to them and promoted by an influencer was 22% in early 2020.

During lockdown TV and video content viewing really came into its own. According to GroupM Media Tracking Research, TV viewing was up 13PP in 2020 vs 2019 while watching players was up 10PP on the same period. Once again video content proved its power as our window to the world. Combining this reach power with influencer content was the perfect solution to help us showcase others exploring Ireland and the exceptional experiences to be had on our doorstep.

Ad Funded Programming presented a unique opportunity. It was a vehicle with the time and potential for depth of content that would allow us to illustrate why there is NO PLACE LIKE HOME. RTE, our national broadcaster was the right partner for Fáilte Ireland, and Kathryn Thomas is a well-known travel presenter with family adventure high on her agenda. Our plan was to use Kathryn and other well-known faces to encourage the public to make a break for it by:

- Telling stories that explore the hidden, and not so hidden, Ireland; including stories of the landscape

- Remind us of the many unique ways that holidaying at home can make us happy, stay well, and have fun - with the main emphasis on our great outdoors, and
- Provide up-to-the minute post-lockdown travel information.

3) The Plan

Move at speed: You will remember decisions to open the country were happening with limited notice, so we had to produce and film during lockdown and do it in record time! The average AFP takes eight months – we had six weeks, making it Ireland’s fastest ever AFP production.

Be inspiring: Each half hour programme was packed with inspirational and informative ideas for short breaks in Ireland, with up-to-the-minute insights into how tourism was adapting to ensure that holidaying at home would be safe and a great experience in unpredictable times.

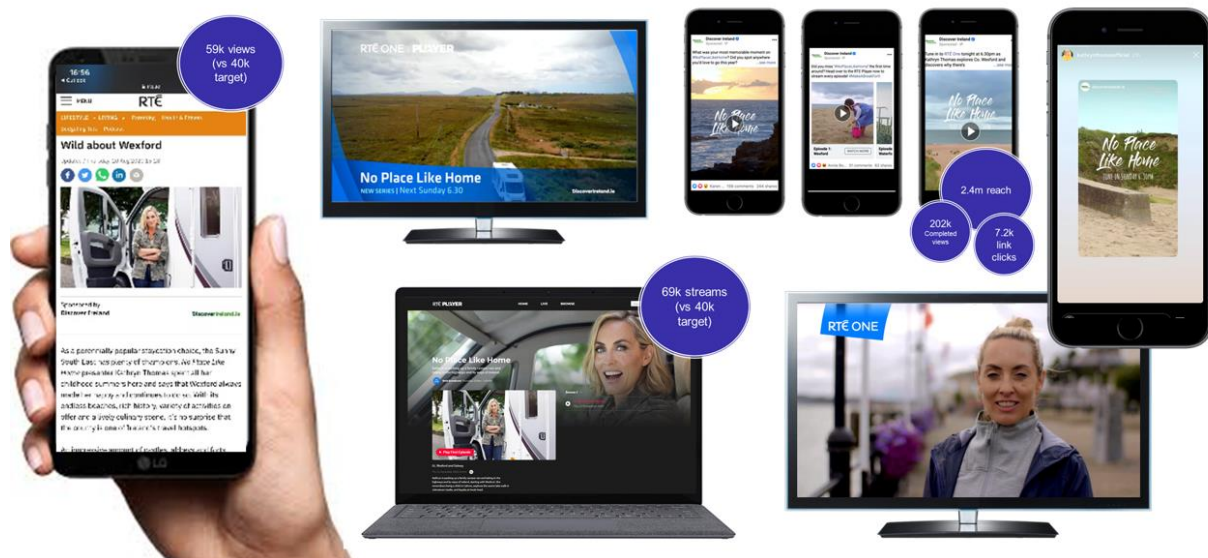
1. Inspiration Kathryn - for four weeks in August, Kathryn Thomas presented NO PLACE LIKE HOME from an idyllic setting in a different part of the country, sharing with us her very own Irish travelogue. Her stories were a mix of places that had a particular family resonance for her (Wexford & Kerry) and places in Ireland she has always wanted to visit (Waterford, East Cork, Mayo, Sligo).
2. Inspiration Others - each week featured different Irish personalities holidaying in a different part of Ireland and was shot in an observational way. Jake Carter and his partner Karen took in the sights of Connemara; Anne Doyle and Aengus Mac Grianna captured the beauty of Donegal; The O’Donovan Bros toured the Shannon; while Pat Shortt and his daughter took a fresh look at Dublin.

Be live: To provide the latest public travel information (local lockdowns were a thing), we needed a live element in the programme. Pulling this off would be Ireland’s first live AFP (spoiler alert – we did!). To emphasise that live feeling Kathryn was accompanied by her special NO PLACE LIKE HOME band and travel journalist to add some spark and gave us the most flexibility to adapt to changing lockdown circumstances.



Get into primetime: Each 30-minute episode aired Sundays at 6.30pm on RTE 1 (after Six One News) - identified as the highest rating early peak slot in August 2019.

Be multi-platform: To reach the widest possible audience we needed to extend our content to as many suitable platforms as possible. While the series was anchored on TV, the content extended across RTÉ TV, RTÉ.ie, RTÉ Radio, and RTÉ and Fáilte Ireland's social channels. Ahead of each episode we seeded out social teasers showcasing this week's locations, supported by RTÉ TV promos and RTÉ social. After airing each episode was hosted on the RTÉ player and a native article went live on RTÉ.ie, with supporting clips from the episode. Summary social clips were seeded out to drive to Fáilte's website so the viewer could find out more about the different areas featured.



4) The Results

The first assessment is of the viewership, as this would impact the extent of any attitudinal or behavioural shifts. *No Place Like Home* generated strong numbers for the timeslot against All Adults:

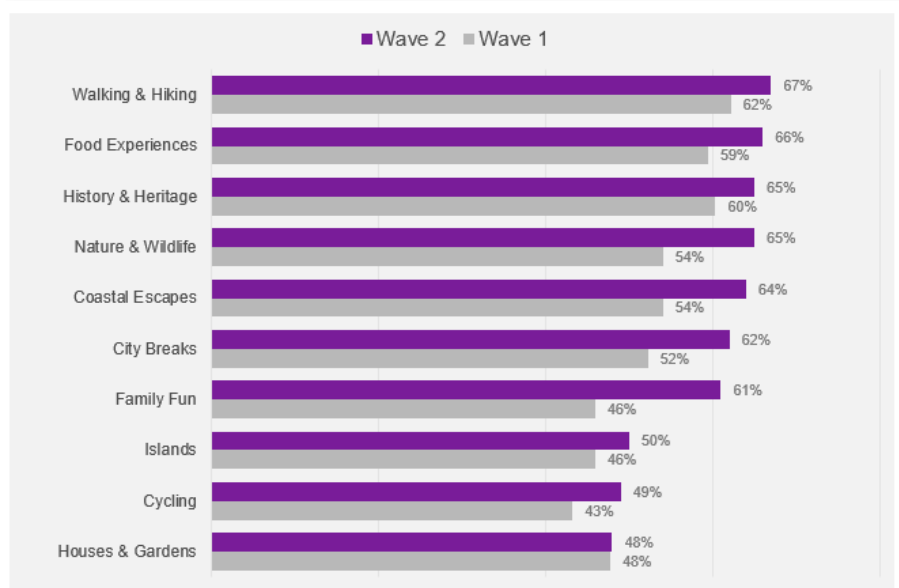
Episodes	Share Of Viewing	('000)
Episode 1	40%	362
Episode 2	43%	386
Episode 3	38%	407
Episode 4	34%	408

Source: Nielsen Live impacts

The *No Place Like Home* AFP was just one element of a multi-media campaign. To assess its performance against campaign objectives, we conducted specific research over two waves (n=400 per wave) to measure the impact of the programme against specific objectives. They were assessed against those who had watched the programme versus those who didn't, as well as how those results shifted over the course of the programme.

Some headline findings demonstrate just how much it helped us meet our objectives:

- Those who watched NPLH are more likely to agree that **Ireland offers a wide range of holiday types**. There was also growth among the viewers who agreed: Wave 1 65%
Wave 2 67%
- Over the course of the programme, **understanding of the top activities** associated with holidays or short breaks in Ireland increased amongst those who watched:



Watched NPLH

Which of the following do you associate with holidays or short breaks in Ireland? Please select all that you think apply, based on your knowledge of Ireland. N=111, 289, 101, 299

- NPLH viewers (86%) were more inclined to agree that they have **learned more about Ireland as a destination** since the outbreak of Covid-18 restricted travel versus those who didn't watch (55%)
- NPLH viewers (71%) are more likely to **find Ireland appealing as a destination** versus non-viewers (60%)
- NPLH viewers (59%) are more inclined to agree that it **easy to find information regarding COVID-19** and travel in Ireland compared to non-viewers (53%).
- NPLH viewers (79%) are likelier to **consider taking a short break** in Ireland compared to non-viewers (72%)
- NPLH viewers (43%) are likelier to **consider taking holiday** in Ireland compared to non-viewers (33%)

Fáilte Ireland also received feedback from businesses featured in the series about the positive impact on their bookings. As an example, The Irish Experience in Wexford (<https://www.theirishexperience.com/>) reported that and as soon as their Kathryn Thomas segment aired, they were inundated with enquiries and bookings. This immediate impact is only achievable where a real experience and credible reaction is captured and powered by TV.

Using Advertiser Funded Programming allowed us to incorporate long form content with clear purpose into an extensive above the line campaign. It gave us time and scope to inspire people putting real people and real experiences at the heart of the story. It delivered all of the KPIs we set out to achieve.

5) Client Involvement

NPLH was the only domestic holiday travel show broadcast in 2020. The series enabled us to have a presence on a key Sunday evening slot for x4 weeks, consistently elevating the home holidays message. Given the very agile Covid environment it was being broadcast in, the 'live' element of each episode gave us the platform to update the public each week on the latest post lock-down advice being issued by Government that impacted tourism and hospitality. This was an important aspect to give a sense of reassurance to the audience that they were equipped with the latest and safest advice around holidaying in Ireland. The series also shared insights to the audience about how the tourism industry was adapting and preparing their product / experience / destination to welcome visitors during really unpredictable times, which again helped in giving comfort that it was safe to travel.

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