



Case Study: Newcastle Gateshead Initiative



Newcastle Gateshead Initiative (NGI) contracted Acorn T-Stats in 2011 to design, develop and implement a data hub for the Newcastle-Gateshead area.

Overview

NGI wanted to track the accommodation sector on a daily basis and provide hotels with a system that would enable them to compare operational performance with their peers, and would offer greater scope for data analysis than STR Global. In addition to this, they incorporated the tracking of attractions, events, and their city transport systems.

N has successfully implemented their system through involving businesses at all stages, and ensuring T-Stats gives them something useful back in return for the data they provide themselves.

The system is hosted online, with administrators being able to set up individual user accounts. It also includes a cross tracker analysis tool that provides the ability to compare different trackers (e.g. footfall with visitor expenditure) and a bespoke report generator.

In addition to the key trackers in the system (listed overleaf) a wide range of national trackers for benchmarking purposes are also incorporated, including data from Visit Britain (accommodation occupancy, domestic tourism, and international visitor arrivals), various economic data from the Office of National Statistics, exchange rates, and national airport data from the Civil Aviation Authority.

How it works

How do the team use T-Stats?

NGI use T-Stats on a daily basis to monitor and analyse the visitor economy in the city – it is central to most of their decision making. Due to the daily granularity of their accommodation data and a calendar tracking events on a daily basis, the team can analyse with pinpoint accuracy the impact of individual events on accommodation occupancy and revenues. International airport passenger movements and tracking inbound tourist arrivals enables the team to understand their visitors' origin and target their market campaigns accordingly.

With data being input into the system since 2011, NGI have a strong understanding of how the visitor economy has performed pre, during and post pandemic. They can also use this historic data to forecast for future events.



🌐 : www.t-stats.co.uk
@ : jess@acorntourism.co.uk
☎ : +44 1580 879977

A Selection of NGI's Trackers

Tracker	Description
Accommodation	Daily occupancy data from accommodation providers in the region. Data is entered into the system by the businesses, using secure unique logins.
Airbnb	Monthly occupancy, ADR, Monthly RevPAR and available listings figures uploaded automatically to the T-Stats system via API.
Attraction	Monthly visitor numbers input by attraction businesses, using secure, unique logins.
Events	A daily calendar that runs alongside all trackers where notable events that may have an impact on visitor behaviour can be logged. Event attendance can be tracked but is not essential. Updated by DMO teams.
Metro	Monthly passenger numbers, updated by DMO.
Airport	Monthly inbound visitors by country updated by DMO.
Weather	Maximum and minimum temperatures, and rainfall in mm recorded monthly. Sourced from Met Office and input monthly by Acorn T-Stats.

Managing the system

NGI have a member of the team primarily responsible for monitoring and updating T-Stats as well as ensuring partners are engaging with the system. When it was first established, the team spent additional time familiarising themselves with its functionality and becoming confident in using it for strategic purposes. They also took the time to consult with accommodation partners to be sure stakeholders felt involved in the process from day one.

Testimonials

"NGI is certain of the success of T-Stats due to its instrumental value when updating partners at destination partner events with occupancy and footfall data. In addition, with our newsletter that gets sent out weekly, weekly occupancy is always included. Additionally, the tool is regularly referred to internally when NGI staff are trying to understand context around certain events or post-Covid performance to share with other partners, stakeholders, or simply to inform the organisation."

Elizabeth Laurent,
Research Executive,
NGI

"Suppose our bed stock increased by 25%, we'd have a lot of nervous hoteliers knocking on our door as partners. Having reliable data enables us to prove our case. With T-Stats we can work with them to say, 'Look at the events programme we're putting on, we're anticipating 50,000. We know that'll fill 67% of your bedrooms...'"

"It's about the transport providers, it's about the retail offer, and T-Stats is enabling us to get data from people we've never asked before. The ability to bring both leisure tourism and business tourism into one area is a massive thing - now we can better judge where to deploy our marketing spend. Partners are more likely to come back and challenge us and say, 'We can see from your data that this is happening, what are you going to do about it?..."

Ian Thomas,
Destination Director,
NGI



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