



Royal
Botanic Garden
Edinburgh



STRATEGIC ANALYSIS:

Dissecting RBGE Content

Alex Piwtoratsky

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document serves as a strategic analysis for the [Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh \(RBGE\)](#). As a national treasure of Scotland, this unique location boasts a Living Collection that is nearly 350 years old, drawing in thousands of tourists every year to its four gardens.

To assist RBGE with their strategic business goals and plans for the future, consultant Bernard Marr crafted an evaluation of their current strategy and content. By referencing Marr's work and pulling observations from a content audit, this report will align business goals and vision to define a central content strategy that will provide RBGE with clarity and a strong sense of direction. This document will be broken down into 3 sections:

1. Strategic Alignment Summary

2. Substance

3. Content Compass

- Core Strategy Statement
- Messaging Framework

Key Findings and Recommendations:

The RBGE has a plethora of content to choose from to serve to its audiences. While the website does a good job aligning to the goals of the Scottish Government, the social media content leaves something to be desired. To assist with this issue, some of these recommendations could be implemented to ensure future content is valuable to users:

- Conduct user research and create personas for social media to define audiences to aid content creation
- Align content to the pillars of education, sustainability, and community
- Consider slight website modifications to heighten searchability, readability and user confidence

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

SUMMARY

Business Goals:

As identified by Bernard Marr, [the RBGE uses a specific strategic framework](#), centered around performance management approach, to facilitate the execution of their content. Because the RBGE is a charity and a Non Departmental Public Body, they are supported by the Scottish Government's Environment and Forestry Directorate. This means that the business goals for the RBGE directly correlate to the key National Outcomes set by the Scottish Government. The RBGE aims to measure the impacts (key effects the gardens have on society) and activities (the primary work of the research botanic gardens) sections identified by Marr. Below, are three of the most important business goals to the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh:

- 1. Raising public awareness about the environment through education, particularly to youths**
- 2. Demonstrating and promoting the importance of environmental sustainability and biodiversity**
- 3. Contributing to the Scottish economy through revenue from tourism and local events**

Content Objectives:

This table demonstrates how content can support the business goals of the RBGE. Each of the unique content objectives listed below allow the Garden to serve valuable and targeted content to its desired audiences. These objectives are not limited to the RBGE website, as they extend into other areas like the official social media channels, printed documentation, and various areas of earned media. Content objectives are to serve as guidelines and should flex with organization as the business goals shift.

BUSINESS GOALS	CONTENT OBJECTIVES
Raising public awareness about the environment through education, particularly to youths	<p>Demonstrate the importance of maintaining the environment for posterity.</p> <p>Highlight ways for kids to get involved with their communities like community gardens and activities at school</p>
Demonstrating and promoting the importance of environmental sustainability and biodiversity	<p>Share easily-digestible information such as quick facts and statistics supporting sustainable practices.</p> <p>Compile a selection of the latest conservation efforts and document them via video to use on the website, social media, and on-site</p>
Contributing to the Scottish economy through revenue from tourism and local events	<p>Feature stories/examples of positive visits and events at the RBGE locations</p> <p>Present materials on how to visit or book an event at the RBGE; promote a special discount offer to those who commit</p>

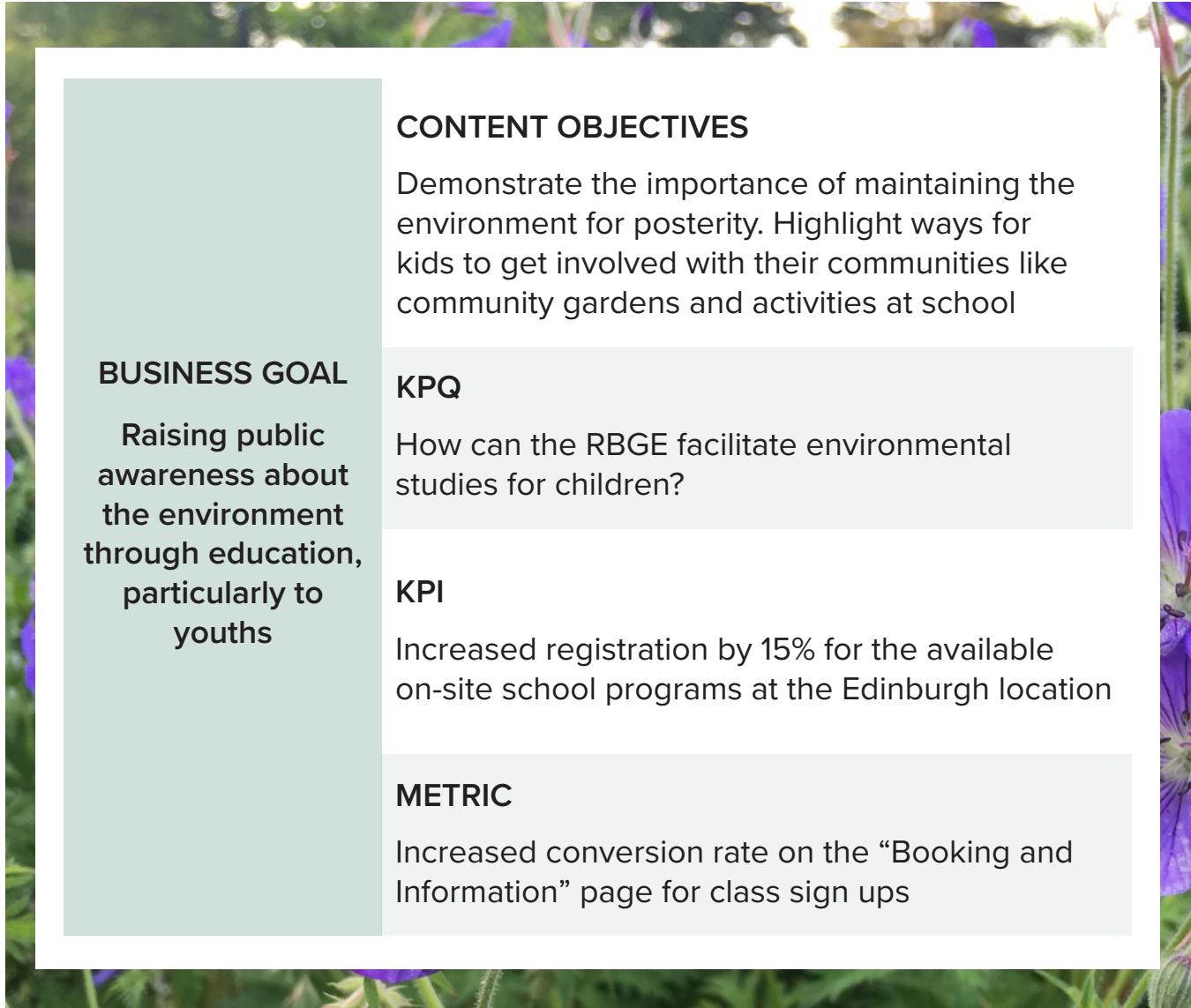
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

After outlining potential content objectives for the RBGE, we must know how to measure them in order to ascertain whether or not they are successful. To do this, we should ask ourselves a Key Performance Question (KPQ) for each goal we wish to measure; in this case we will be drawing from the goals in the table above. From there, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be chosen. These KPIs will be the definitive way for the RBGE to see if their content is creating their desired results. The desired results could be anything from increased visitation to heightened engagement from a certain audience. The quantitative/qualitative data from those KPIs are called metrics. When reporting to stakeholders, most would want to see the metrics first as those are the hard, definitive answers as to whether or not their content is resonating.

For more information about KPIs, see the infographic from Visually in the Appendix (Fig. 1). Let's break down the business goals identified above into KPQs, KPIs, and metrics to get an idea of how the RBGE can position and create content for maximum impact.

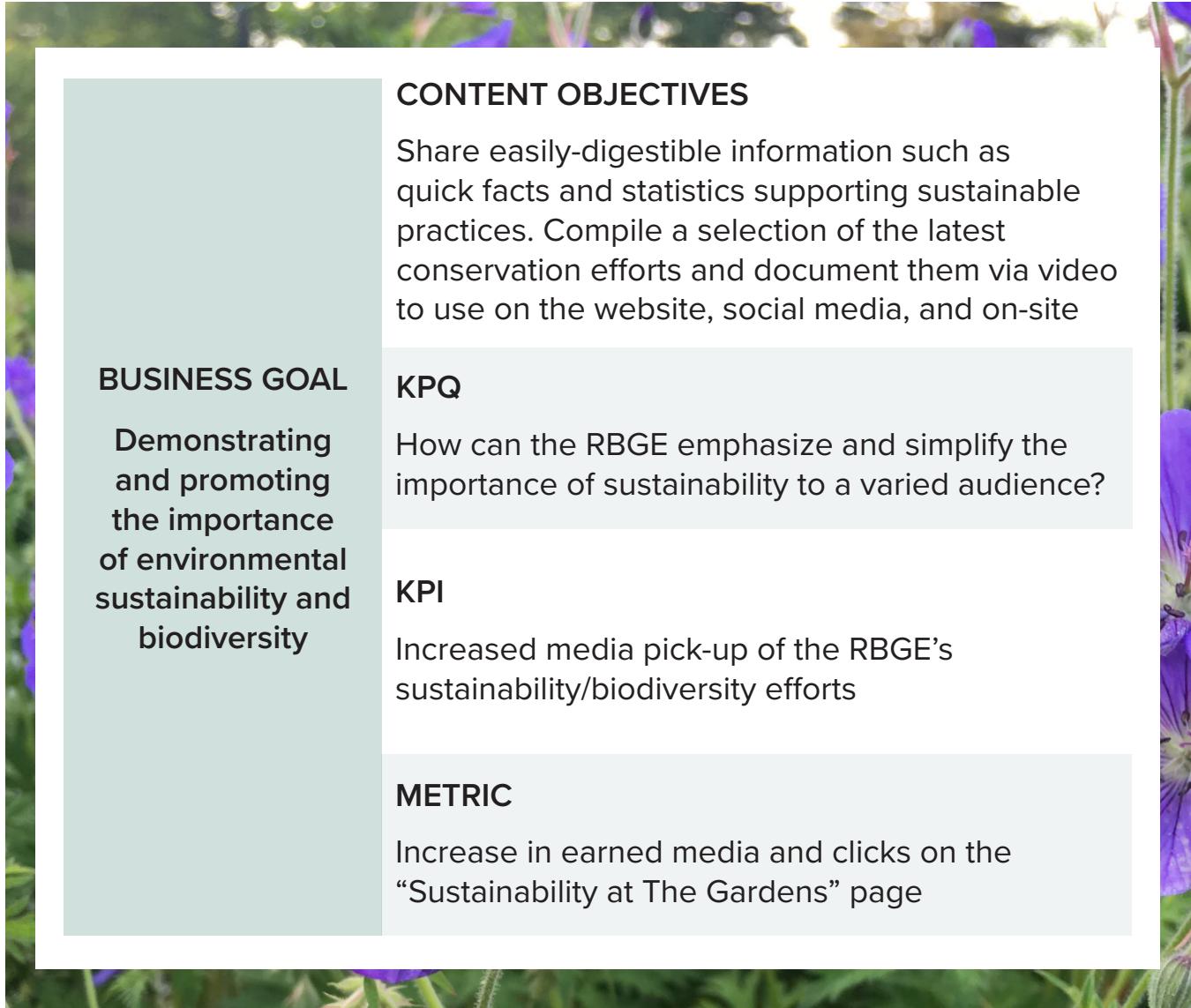


KPI BREAKDOWN #1



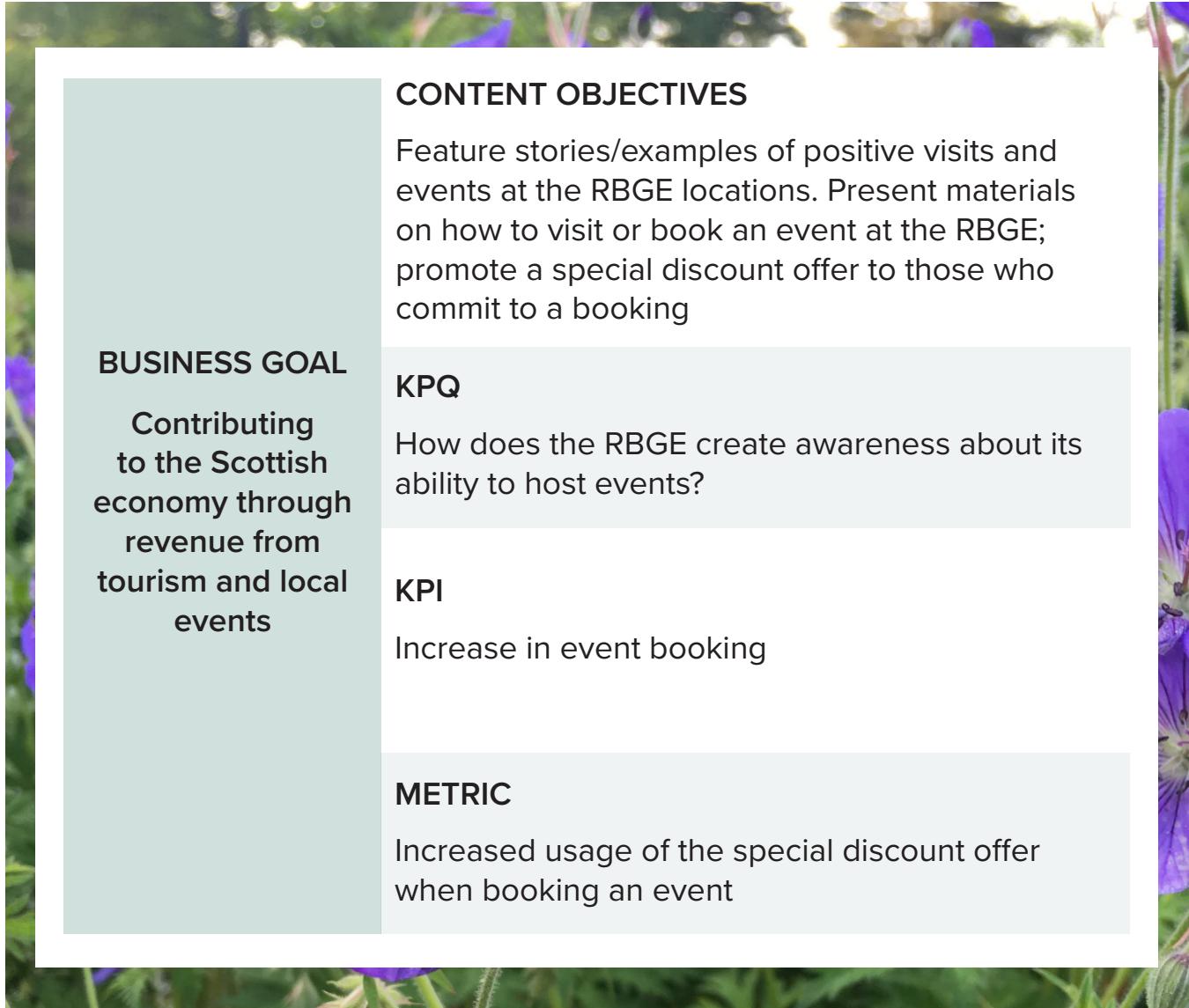
	CONTENT OBJECTIVES <p>Demonstrate the importance of maintaining the environment for posterity. Highlight ways for kids to get involved with their communities like community gardens and activities at school</p>
BUSINESS GOAL <p>Raising public awareness about the environment through education, particularly to youths</p>	KPQ <p>How can the RBGE facilitate environmental studies for children?</p>
	KPI <p>Increased registration by 15% for the available on-site school programs at the Edinburgh location</p>
	METRIC <p>Increased conversion rate on the “Booking and Information” page for class sign ups</p>

KPI BREAKDOWN #2



	CONTENT OBJECTIVES <p>Share easily-digestible information such as quick facts and statistics supporting sustainable practices. Compile a selection of the latest conservation efforts and document them via video to use on the website, social media, and on-site</p>
BUSINESS GOAL <p>Demonstrating and promoting the importance of environmental sustainability and biodiversity</p>	KPQ <p>How can the RBGE emphasize and simplify the importance of sustainability to a varied audience?</p>
	KPI <p>Increased media pick-up of the RBGE's sustainability/biodiversity efforts</p>
	METRIC <p>Increase in earned media and clicks on the “Sustainability at The Gardens” page</p>

KPI BREAKDOWN #3



BUSINESS GOAL <p>Contributing to the Scottish economy through revenue from tourism and local events</p>	CONTENT OBJECTIVES <p>Feature stories/examples of positive visits and events at the RBGE locations. Present materials on how to visit or book an event at the RBGE; promote a special discount offer to those who commit to a booking</p>
	KPQ <p>How does the RBGE create awareness about its ability to host events?</p>
	KPI <p>Increase in event booking</p>
	METRIC <p>Increased usage of the special discount offer when booking an event</p>

User Needs:

According to the framework created by Marr, there are three large audiences that the RBGE needs to cater to:

- **THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT.** Because the Scottish Government is the largest supporter and overarching driver for the Garden, a majority of its content must tie into Business Goal #3. The user needs here are to create content that:

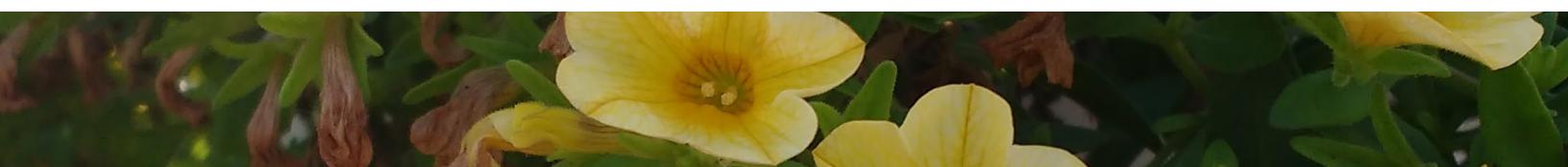
- Solidifies Scotland as an innovator or leader within the conservation/environmental spaces
- Increases revenue and employment opportunities due to tourism
- Heightens Scotland's national identity

- **THE SCOTTISH YOUTH.** As we have seen in Marr's breakdown, children and young people are two of the most important sections within the Scottish Government's National Outcomes. Here, content should tie into Business Goal #1. The user needs for the Scottish youths are:

- Presenting age-appropriate education about the environment and sustainability
- Participation from educational institutions to become involved in available programs, volunteering efforts, and on-site visits

- **THE TOURISTS.** One can argue that the majority of the online and on-site traffic are due to tourists. In order to help the Scottish Government fulfill its goals, content must be created that addresses these user needs:

- Heightens intrigue for the RBGE by featuring “must-sees,” history, & science
- Promotes a community. This can result in multiple visits, memberships, or financial contributions



Social Media:

Like any organization and popular tourist attraction, the RBGE has a presence on a variety of social media platforms. Currently the RBGE has profiles on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

Posts on social media tend to sway more towards casual education (types of plants, did you know, statistics), aesthetic botanical photography, and community events. The content types are assorted images, videos, links, and curated content. While the social media content does somewhat align with the identified business goals, there are some discrepancies - especially on Instagram and YouTube. There is also a definite lack of catering towards the younger audiences that the Scottish Government are trying to focus on. Instead, it seems to cater to parents and middle-aged tourists who are repeat visitors to the grounds. This could be a missed opportunity to spread the RBGE mission.

Below, is a brief look at the RBGE's social media profiles.



FACEBOOK: 77,889 Page Likes | Posting Daily

- Focuses around casual education and community events
- Nice variety of content on the page
- Minimal engagement with commenters



TWITTER: 24.7K Followers | Posting Daily

- Content curation is the backbone for this account with more than 75% of it being user-generated
- Could be more in line with business goals



YOUTUBE: 1.7K Subscribers | Posting Every 2 Months

- Oriented to showcase scientific and conservation content
- Social media account least in line with business goals
- Could use this platform for live-streaming events



INSTAGRAM: 47.2K Followers | Posting Every Other Day

- Super disorganized with its content in subject and in quality - a miss for the business goals
- Stories should be utilized to advertise events

CONTENT COMPASS

What It Is:

A [content compass](#) organizes the direction of the content for an organization and helps to prioritize themes and pillars. The content compass is made up of two aspects, the core strategy statement and the messaging framework.

A core strategy statement, as defined by author Megan Casey, is the summation of how an organization will chose to create and serve content while taking into account the business goals, user needs, and desired audiences. This is the core component to your content compass.

A messaging framework supplements the core strategy statement as it clarifies what your audience should know and believe about your organization. Each piece of content created should be modeled around this framework.

Core Strategy Statement:

The RBGE plays a critical part in helping the Scottish Government achieve their desired national outcomes. By raising awareness and providing education in areas like the environment and sustainability through content on the website and social media platforms, the RBGE can increase tourism and community participation which will then, in turn, positively impact revenue and national identity.

Messaging Framework:

When a user first lands on the site, we want them to feel secure that the content being served to them is scientifically accurate and valuable to their search. After navigating through the site, we want the user to understand the full-scale of offerings provided both online and in person. The user should feel informed, and not overwhelmed by the content presented. Our content drives home that the RBGE is a comfortable learning environment where beauty, research, history, science, and community come together to create on of Scotland's marvels.

SUBSTANCE

Observations on Current Content:

This section will be broken down into two parts, the RBGE website and its various social media profiles. From this, will be able to see how the content strategy is currently being utilized across different platforms.

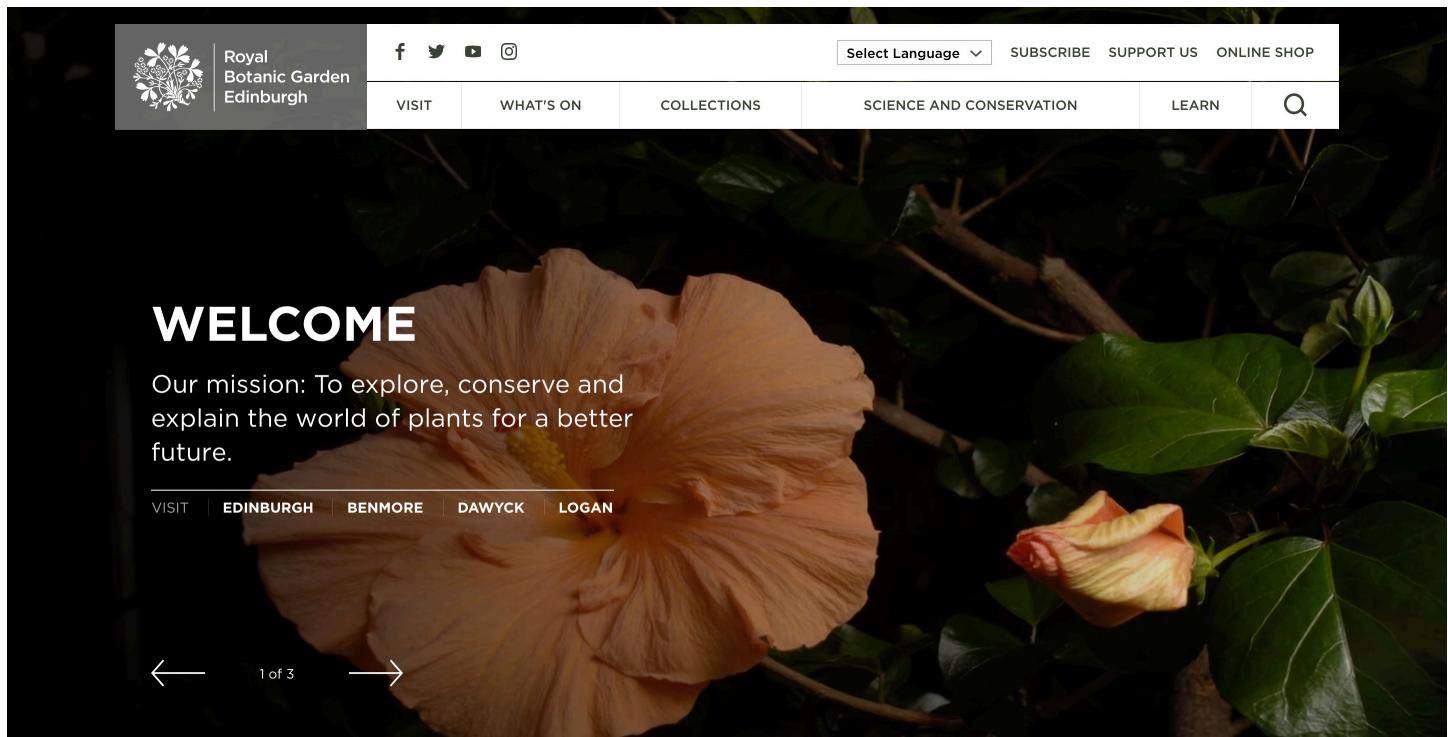


Fig 2: A view of the RBGE's homepage on their website

The Website:

The current RBGE website features a modern design that is scalable, clean, and allows for full-bleed photography of its wonderful Living Collection. As can be seen in the screenshot above, the three business goals are clearly put into the forefront through the verbiage of the welcoming statement and the T1 tabs in the main navigation. The website houses a plentiful amount of content including: current exhibitions, newsletters, blogs, videos, educational programs, local events, and various resource centers that focus on the scientific and conservation efforts happening at the RBGE. Please see below for a better look at the numerous sections of content that are featured on the website.



About Us

- What we do
- Our Work Around The World
- Why Our Work Matters
- Organisational Structure
- Working With Us
- [+See all About Us](#)

Support us

- Donate
- Volunteer
- Remember us in your will
- Garden of Tranquillity Appeal

Visit

- Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
- Benmore Botanic Garden
- Dawyck Botanic Garden
- Logan Botanic Garden
- Garden Tours
- [+See all Visit](#)

Venue Hire

- Weddings
- Conference and Meeting Facilities
- Private Events

News

- Articles
- Botanics Stories
- Edinburgh Biomes

Media Centre

- Press Releases
- Blogs
- Media Centre Downloads
- Media and Commercial Photography
- Media Contact

Business Centre

- Consultancy
- Filming and Photography
- Knowledge Exchange
- Licensing
- Image Credits

Contact Us

Fig 3: A view of the RBGE's footer navigation that breaks down content areas

As can be seen above, there are a surplus of areas where content can be pulled from and positioned. While this is great to have, it does make navigation a bit cumbersome for the user. A potential tourist might be overwhelmed by the amount of information that is presented. Finding general information like admission and hours is made difficult because of the amount of pages. Perhaps a device like a [continuous scroll](#) could be used to link related information together so that there are not so many individual pages hanging around. The less clicks, the better!

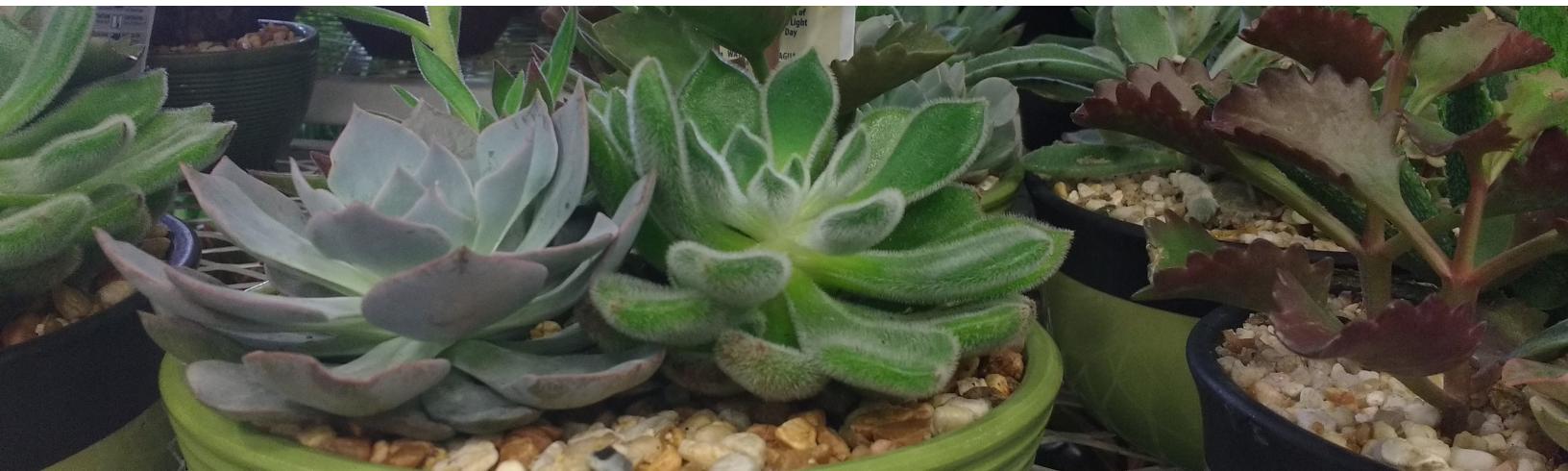
Overall, the website contains a great amount of content and does a fairly decent job of balancing user needs with the identified business goals. While the website could improve from some simplification and more purposeful placement, it does a good job with inviting the user in and having them explore all the organization has to offer.

Recommended Roadmap for Content Efforts:

After reviewing a sizable amount of content from the RBGE, it has been made apparent that there are some discrepancies between the content on the website and the content on social media. While the business goals are clearly emphasized on the website, the social media is a bit more lax when, in reality, it should act as an approachable reflection.

It appears as though the RBGE is having some trouble identifying who their main audience is on each platform. To help, it is recommended to do some user research and persona creation to see if audiences can more accurately be pegged. This directly correlates with successful content creation and would help their efforts immensely. For example, [Instagram skews younger in its users](#). Most likely, the majority of the followers on Instagram are under the age of 35. Aesthetically-pleasing casual education videos and other short-form pieces could prove to perform really well on this platform.

Going forward, the pillars of education and sustainability should be emphasized. The current content just lightly touches it, but it could be beneficial to use the social platforms to advertise the availability of the courses, programs, and research happening on-site. Very rarely did any of the posts link to related pages on the website. By appropriately educating the various audiences on social through shareable content that drives back to the website, it can be assumed that more people will visit - directly contributing to the Scottish Government's main goal of creating revenue, achieving dominance in the environmental and conservation spaces, and enhancing the national identity.



APPENDIX

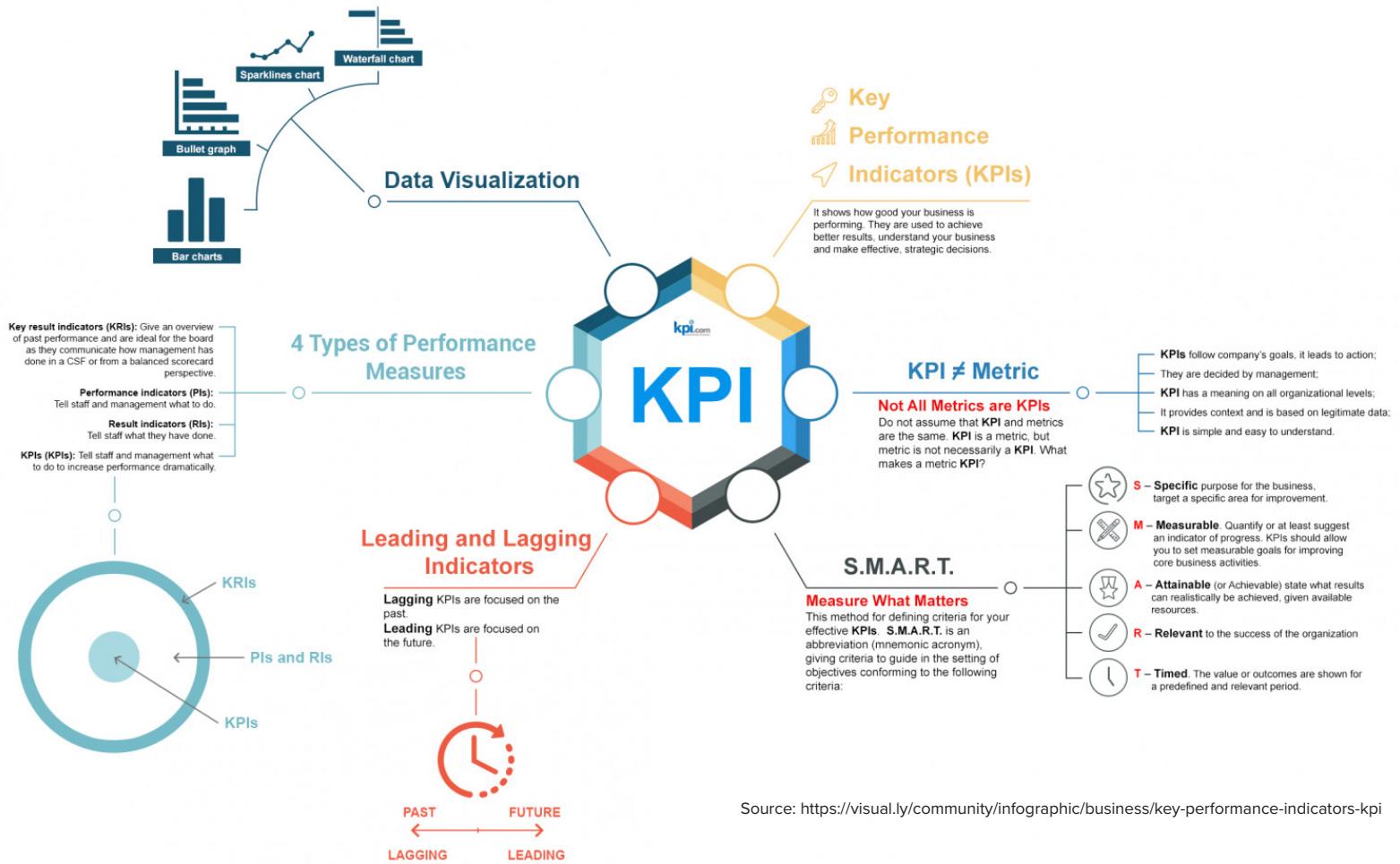


Fig 1: Infographic from Visually describing KPIs