

AR STÒRAS GÀIDHLIG

The economic and social value of Gaelic as an asset
– **Notes for businesses and enterprises**

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COMHARLE NAN EILEAN SIAR



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean



The Islay Columba Centre, Bowmore, Islay

NOTES FOR BUSINESSES
AND ENTERPRISES

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Highlands and Islands Enterprise in partnership with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Creative Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Highland Council, Argyll and Bute Council, and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar commissioned a study: Economic and Social Value of Gaelic as an Asset.

The overarching aim of the study was to consider, evaluate and robustly evidence the current and potential use of Gaelic as an asset to the economy and society of the Highlands and Islands and Scotland as a whole.

The study collected evidence through a range of interviews, focus groups and surveys with businesses and enterprises across Scotland and found evidence of businesses and enterprises using Gaelic as an asset analysing various official data sources.

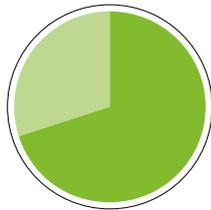
This note sets out some of the findings and results from the study that may be useful for those considering the role of Gaelic in their own business or enterprise.

KEY FINDINGS



MORE THAN HALF

the businesses and enterprises surveyed stated that Gaelic is used, or features, as a key element of their main activities, products or services.

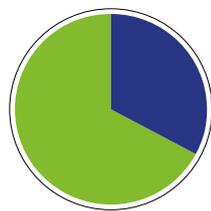


ALMOST 70%

of businesses consulted said that Gaelic is currently an asset to their business.

ALMOST TWO THIRDS

of businesses consulted describe Gaelic as moderately, very, or critically important to the success of their business.



AROUND ONE-THIRD

of businesses and enterprises that regard Gaelic as an asset provided measurement of the value to their business, and for these 34 enterprises, the turnover attributed to the impact of Gaelic is almost **£4million**.

Potential economic value of Gaelic as an asset to the Scottish economy could be in the region of between

£82M AND £149M



Celtic and Scots languages song contest, Eden Court Theatre, Inverness

More than half the businesses and enterprises surveyed stated that Gaelic is used, or features, as a key element of their main activities, products or services.

Almost two-thirds of businesses consulted describe Gaelic as moderately, very, or critically important to the success of their business or enterprise.

Businesses identifying Gaelic as being critically important are most commonly in the creative industries and also those in the heritage and learning sectors.

Almost 70% of businesses consulted said that Gaelic is currently an asset to their main business/enterprise activity, with high representation of these in creative industries, heritage, education/learning and community sectors.

Previous research suggests there is untapped demand for Gaelic goods and services in general. Target markets should not be seen as restricted to those who consider themselves as Gaelic speakers.

Almost 60% of businesses and enterprises already using Gaelic as an asset see additional opportunities to make more use of Gaelic to enhance their business – especially those in creative industries, education/learning, heritage and tourism.

Around one-third of businesses and enterprises that regard Gaelic as an asset provided measurement of the value to their business and, for these 34 enterprises, the turnover attributed to the impact of Gaelic is almost £4million.

Based on a number of key assumptions an assessment of the potential economic value to the wider economy was carried out, estimating the value of Gaelic if the survey results were replicated across key sectors where Gaelic is recognised as an asset.

Applying this approach to three key sectors (creative industries; tourism (including heritage); food and drink) found the potential economic value of Gaelic as an asset to the Scottish economy could be in the region of between £82million and £149million.



Kiltlearn Fiddlers, Eden Court Theatre, Inverness

NOTES FOR BUSINESSES AND ENTERPRISES

KEY BENEFITS TO BUSINESSES AND ENTERPRISES OF USING GAELIC

Over half of businesses surveyed described three major benefits from using Gaelic as an asset: enhances distinctiveness/uniqueness of products and services; enhances customer perceptions of authenticity and provenance of products and services; and increases appeal of products and services to target markets.

The seven aspects that more than 70% of business survey respondents describe as major or moderate benefits of using Gaelic are that it:

- 1 ENHANCES CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS OF AUTHENTICITY AND PROVENANCE.
- 2 ENHANCES THE DISTINCTIVENESS/ UNIQUENESS OF PRODUCTS/SERVICES.
- 3 INCREASES APPEAL OF PRODUCTS/ SERVICES TO TARGET MARKETS.
- 4 ENHANCES OVERALL IMAGE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF AREA.
- 5 INCREASES PROFILE OF PRODUCTS/ SERVICES IN SPECIFIC AREAS.
- 6 GIVES THE ABILITY TO DIFFERENTIATE PRODUCTS/SERVICES FROM THAT OF OTHERS (NON-GAELIC).
- 7 HELPS TO ATTRACT NEW CUSTOMERS IN EXISTING MARKETS.

BUSINESS VIEW

The views of businesses and enterprises who clearly identify these benefits included:

“The use of Gaelic adds requisite authenticity to our trust’s activities.”

HERITAGE SECTOR

“...Recognise that the inclusion of some Gaelic in my promotional material could enhance the authenticity of my work.”

CRAFTS BUSINESS

“It is a distinctive part of our identity that differentiates us from the competition and other businesses in our field.”

ARTS CENTRE

“There are no other [of our type of business] staffed by Gaelic speaking [professional staff] who can offer a service through the medium of Gaelic, so this is our niche in the market.”

CREATIVE INDUSTRY BUSINESS

“Gaelic is not an essential part or requirement of our business however it is an asset in selling our location/a holiday in a uniquely different part of the world.”

ACCOMMODATION BUSINESS

“We see Gaelic as a distinctive part of the village and a way of recognising our history as well as a way of attracting visitors.”

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

“Locals, especially the older ones, like to use their native language. Visitors find it interesting to hear the language being used.”

RETAIL BUSINESS

“For marketing purposes, e.g. some guests like to hear Gaelic spoken.”

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT

“Our guests are not Gaelic speakers, but some of our staff are, and the guests are often interested in hearing Gaelic spoken.”

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT BUSINESS

“It establishes credibility of belonging to island rather than mainland and reinforces cultural heritage and history.”

CRAFTS BUSINESS

“It plays a part in the overall experience that people expect to find here, along with walking and wildlife.”

ACCOMMODATION PROVIDER BUSINESS

“People like to see that the name of [the type of product we produce] is in Gaelic, they don't necessarily understand the language.”

MANUFACTURER

Gaelic Use

Ways in which Gaelic is used by businesses and enterprises are varied, from being the focus of the enterprise to offering an add-on or enhancement to specific aspects of the enterprise.

Common ways in which Gaelic is used include:

As the explicit heart/core of the business - where Gaelic (as a language, as well as Gaelic music, Gaelic heritage, Gaelic events, etc.) is fundamental to the enterprise.

As an inherent/implicit element of the business - where Gaelic (language, culture and heritage) has influenced and inspired the enterprise or business owner.

Being used within the business or product names - including for business names, product or service names, branding, company logos, etc.

Being used to make events, performances, etc. bilingual - i.e. Gaelic language being a key part of events, performances, festivals, etc.

Being used to enhance the experience of the service or product - for visitors (e.g. to museums and heritage sites), customers, etc.

As the language of external communication - where Gaelic is used in communication between staff and customers, staff and suppliers, etc.

Being used in signage for the business - either on its own, or in bilingual signage.

Used in advertising, promotion and marketing - either on its own or bilingually.

As the language of the workplace - where Gaelic is the language of communication between staff within the business.

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