Horses of Iceland: Strategic Marketing and Promotion

Stakeholders in the Icelandic horse community developed a strategic marketing plan to increase the awareness, and strengthen the image of the Icelandic horse in international markets. The objective is to make more people aware of the good qualities of the Icelandic horse, all over the world. The focus will not only be on the horse itself, but also on services, and horse related products, with the aim to enlarge the Icelandic horse community and to have more profitable businesses in this industry.

The project started in 2015 with workshops in Iceland and interviews with people in the Icelandic horse community in many other countries; to review and gather insights for the strategy process, and to build the brand of the Icelandic horse. People in the Icelandic horse community took active part, both in the workshops and in giving valuable input. Data, statistics, reports and research on the subjects were reviewed, and all of this was used by the marketing consultant to develop the brand strategy - the vision, positioning statement, brand pillars and character.

The Icelandic horse brings you closer to nature

The brand The Icelandic horse should be understood in broad context and as a common denominator for all the diverse activities related to the Icelandic horse and the community of riders the world over.

An activation plan for the strategy has been developed for the next four years. Target groups and areas have been established, and emphasis in activities and communication has been defined. Web, digital and social media are vital in the plan, with the website horsesoficeland.is, and hashtag #horsesoficeland in the social media. In the year 2016, the focus will be on building the brand and increasing awareness amongst the Icelandic horse community and people travelling to Iceland. Through an international “Day of the Icelandic Horse”, which will be held on May 1st, members of the Icelandic horse community the world over will be encouraged to take someone along for a ride on their fantastic horses and share their experiences on social media. Clubs, municipalities, and countries are encouraged to make great use of this day to portray the wonderful qualities on the Icelandic horse – spending quality time with friends and families - bringing you closer to nature!

This project is co funded by the industry and Icelandic Government. The Government will contribute ISK 25 million per year for four years and ISK 25 million or more will come from the people in the Icelandic horse community and industry. It is now up to all of us to make the most of this great opportunity and give the Icelandic horse the international attention it deserves!

We invite people to join forces and invest in this big opportunity. Participation in this projects guarantees great benefits:

- **Your participation and your contribution is beneficial to the project and sharing ideas will mean better results. The people participating in the project can have input and will be invited to join meetings three to four times a year to discuss the marketing strategy and activities.**
- **The opportunity to influence and shape marketing procedures.**
- **Receive information about all marketing procedures and results from market research, as well as training in various areas of expertise.**
- **Network with other participants.**
• Visibility and information about the participant on various platforms; i.e. logo and link on the projects’ website, visibility at events, being part of information material used for press and media packages with direct email contact.
• The possibility to connect marketing procedures with various events, such as Landsmót and the World Championships where the project will be presented.
• Permission to feature the project (The Icelandic Horse – brings you closer to nature) on one’s website with direct link to project’s website.
• Other opportunities which will evolve in correlation with the participant.

The project is open for participation and we hope you will commit before our first meeting with participants late March. Download the participation agreement here. Please fill in the form, sign, scan and send to Jelena Ohm, jelena@islandsstofa.is, who is happy to give any further information. You can also call Tel. +354 511 4000 at Promote Iceland / Íslandsstofa.
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The aim for the Horses of Iceland project is to strengthen the image of the Icelandic horse through strategic marketing and cohesive promotion activities. The main focus is on value creation and increased revenues within industries related to the Icelandic horse.

This project should benefit all stakeholders within the Icelandic horse community by strengthening the brand identity of the Icelandic horse and therefor increasing the revenues from horsemanship related products and services. The project will be in line with a strong promotional strategy that has been already been developed, and is accessible to all to learn about. A partnership cooperation will ensure a unified message, more momentum and focus for this campaign, as this is intended to be long-term. Digital communication platforms such as a website and social media, as well as public relations, and printed marketing material will play a major role in this project. There will also be close work relations with other sectors in the industry, such as tourism, through on-going marketing campaigns, for example inspired by Iceland.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture, Islandsstofa / Promote Iceland, Horse Breeders Association of Iceland (FHB), the Equestrian Association of Iceland (LH), the Icelandic Horse Trainers Association (FT), Hálar University, the Agricultural University of Iceland, and the Icelandic Travel Industry Association (SAF) are all supporting this project.

The Icelandic government will invest 25 million Icelandic Krona per year for 4 years, given that the industry will provide the same amount. Therefor the estimated budget is at 50 million Icelandic Krona per year, which will be allocated according to the projects’ strategy which the steering committee agrees upon.

PARTICIPATION BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Parties involved in breeding Icelandic horses, producing horse related products or providing services related to the Icelandic horse, as well as anyone interested in offering financial support; organizations, suppliers, and institutions, are offered to partake in this marketing project. Some of the major benefits are as follows:

- Contribution in the consulting board which will hold meetings three to four times a year to discuss the marketing strategy
- The opportunity to influence and shape marketing procedures
- Receive information about all marketing procedures as well as results from market research, as well as training in various areas of expertise
- Network with other participants
- Visibility and information about the participant on various platforms; i.e. logo and link on the projects’ website, visibility at events, being part of information material used for press and media packages with direct email contact
- The possibility to connect marketing procedures with various events, such as Landsmót and the World Championships where the project will be presented
- Permission to feature the project (The Icelandic Horse – brings you closer to nature) on one´s website with direct link to project´s website
- Other opportunities which will evolve in correlation with the participant

January 2016
Participants are asked to confirm their partnership for at least two years and agree to the terms of the project by signature.

Payments will be made twice a year - half with signing the partnership agreement in the beginning of the year and the other half in September.

**PARTICIPATION CONFIRMATION:**

Company / Organization / Name: ____________________________

kt: __________________

Contact: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________

Phone: ____________________________ Mobile: ____________________________

Website: ____________________________

By signing this agreement I hereby confirm my participation in the promotion of the Icelandic horse from the year 2016 – 2019, with _____________ Icelandic Krona per year. This agreement is made for _______ years with a 12 month termination period.

____________________________________________

Signature / Date

**Send signed agreement to:** Promote Iceland – Jelena Ohm jelena@islandsstofa.is – phone 511 4000