

Advice and Next Steps for Tourist Accommodation Providers

What next?

Now that your tourist accommodation has been certified, you may be wondering **'what next?'**. There are many ways you can promote, market and grow your business. The aim of this guidance is to help you take the next step and access the support to help you succeed.

Discover Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is marketed as a tourism destination via Tourism NI's (TNI) consumer website Discover Northern Ireland (DNI) - www.discovernorthernireland.com - which receives 2.8 million visitors per year. Once an Accommodation listing has been certified, the listing will automatically appear on DNI. It is paramount that your listing on DNI is current and up to date with information about your property, good quality photographs and special offers, etc.

An accommodation provider can choose not to be displayed on DNI. They will still receive an email for the Owners Login Portal, but they will not be able to access their product. If the owner wishes the listing to be published, they should contact qa@tourismni.com

How to upload content to DNI

The owner will automatically receive an email to the Owners Login Portal - <https://ownerslogin.tourismni.com> - and their username and password. Please note that there is a 30 to 40 minute timeout on the Owners Login Portal. We recommend that the user saves down any work in a word document or email to avoid losing their work.

From the Owners Login Portal the owner is able to:

- **Add/update details displayed on DNI**
Up to nine images of the property. The images must be in landscape format (at least 800x600 resolution) and in JPEG format. Portrait images cannot be used. Logos and images with text are also not permitted.
- **Add a special offer**
- **Add a 'book now' button**, which links to any online bookable website for the property. This makes it easier for people to book and pay for your accommodation instantly.

- **Accommodation certification**
 - Pay an outstanding inspection invoice.
 - Apply for change of category.
- **Accommodation grading**
 - Renew membership.
 - Apply for reassessment.

Tourism Ireland

Your entry on DNI is also displayed on www.ireland.com which gives you an opportunity to promote your property to a global audience of over 19 million visitors online. It is worth considering the opportunity to showcase experiential offers on the dedicated Northern Ireland pages. These offers are translated into five major European languages: German, French, Italian, Spanish and Dutch. www.tourismirelandindustryopportunities.com

Discover NI and Ireland.com are advertising platforms only and not platforms for online bookings. If you wish to provide online bookings, you will need to do so by way of an Online Travel Agency (OTA) or provide your own website.

Online Travel Agency (OTA)

OTAs are often a go-to for tourists before they make their final choice of where to stay in Northern Ireland. These third party booking agents allow you to list your rooms on their sites and facilitate the bookings through them e.g. AirBnB.com, Booking.com, Hotels.com, Expedia.com and Trivago.com, as well as local operators. However, ensure that you are comfortable with their commission rates, and terms and conditions.

Online Presence

Using social media and creating your own website is an important way to advertise and market your property to a wide audience. You can also install booking engine software on your website to allow visitors to book rooms. Tourism NI has designed toolkits to help you with getting online, social media channels, Google Analytics and search engine optimisation <https://tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/toolkits-and-resources/>

Tourism Northern Ireland

Through our corporate website www.tourismni.com you can access various resources, advice, toolkits and training programs to help assist in growing your business and knowing your customer <https://tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/>

Google My Business

Set up a free Business Profile listing on Google My Business. This will enable you to take charge of what people see when they search for your business and give you a business listing on Google Maps. Google My Business gives you the tools to update your Business Profile, add your contact details, upload photographs and engage with your customers from your phone, tablet or computer www.google.com/business/

Quality Grading Scheme

Visitors increasingly demand high accommodation standards and the quality of your establishment will influence the future success of your business. For 75% of consumers, a star rating will influence their choice of hotel. The TNI Quality Grading Scheme is designed to give visitors a clear idea of the standards of accommodation, service and cleanliness, which they can expect during their stay. The scheme is open to hotels, guest houses, B&Bs, self-catering, hostels and guest accommodation; with premises having the ability to achieve a grading of between one to five stars

<https://tourismni.com/startup-advice/quality-grading/tourist-accommodation-grading/>

Welcome Schemes

Tourism NI's Welcome Schemes are designed for accommodation providers who are actively participating in Tourism NI's Quality Grading Scheme only. These Welcome Schemes are provided for those travelling with families, or visitors with a specific interest in walking holidays, golf, cycling, etc. to help them find suitable establishments for their needs. Visitor online searching habits have advanced and people will often now search for e.g. a walking or cycling holiday in Northern Ireland and having your property listed in the relevant Welcome Schemes may make your property more appealing to these visitors <https://tourismni.com/startup-advice/quality-grading/accommodation-welcome-schemes/>

Welcome Pack

You should consider providing guests with a welcome pack to welcome them to your accommodation. It is preferable to provide locally sourced goods e.g. tea/coffee, bottled water, snacks, toiletries etc.

<https://tourismni.com/globalassets/accommodation-on-start-up-advice/quality--standards/quality-assurance/tourist-accommodation-grading-scheme/welcome-hamper-information.pdf>

Guest Information Pack

You should consider providing a guest information pack providing useful information to assist your guests during their stay. To include:

- Your contact details.
- Emergency services contact details.
- Fire escape routes.
- Rules for stay e.g. no smoking, loud music etc.
- Instructions on the use of all appliances.
- Wi-Fi codes.
- Useful local information, websites and maps e.g. local taxis, bus/train timetables, supermarkets, coffee shops, bars, restaurants, proximity to local towns, Visitor Information Centres etc.
- Information on visitor experiences and attractions within the area e.g. historic sites, beaches, forest parks, walks, tours etc. You can visit your local Visitor Information Centre for leaflets/maps etc. on attractions in the area.

This information is meant as a starting point only. Whilst all reasonable efforts have been made, Tourism NI cannot guarantee that the information is accurate and up to date and will not be responsible for any errors or omissions. Professional advice should be sought where appropriate.