

WellingtonNZ response to Taxpayers' Union LGOIMA on Escape campaign

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Transferred from: Wellington City Council

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- 1. How much did it cost to make and design and transport the giant ESC key? Is it in storage, was it destroyed? If in storage, where and how much is the storage costing?**

Answer: The ESC key was made in New York and the project management, design and build cost \$NZ130,000. The key was destroyed following the activation, with recycling encouraged where possible.

- 2. Did WellingtonNZ receive permission to perform the stunt? If so from whom – WNZ/New York authorities?**

Answer: The activation was supported by the WellingtonNZ board. The plaza where the activation took place is privately owned. WellingtonNZ worked with an agency in New York who identified the plaza as an appropriate location for the activation and secured its use from the owners.

- 3. When, who and why was the decision made to do this in New York?**

Answer: We aimed to primarily reach the US market in the campaign as one of our important markets.

The US offers a large pool of skilled tech, science, creative workers and beyond, and as high-value visitors who, on average, stay longer and spend more when visiting.

Visitor numbers from the US are on the rise due to increased air capacity and more direct airline routes. The choice to target the US also aligns with our trade partnerships.

We are seeing workers in the US reprioritising their lifestyles and work balance in a post-COVID world, and their eyes were on New Zealand for the FIFA World Women's Cup – the world's largest sporting event. This presented an opportunity to leverage this visibility.

New York was chosen as the location to launch the campaign as the US' most populous city and prominence in mainstream media.

The decision to run the campaign was grounded in long-term economic benefits for Wellington. Attracting talent and visitors is an important part of achieving growth and to meet future demand.

The Escape campaign has generated more than \$NZ15m equivalent advertising value in media coverage. More than 3300 people have submitted expressions of interest on the campaign landing page.

Across paid and organic digital media there have been more than 3.5 million video views and it has reached more than 6.5 million people on digital channels.

- 4. How many staff were sent to New York to do this?**

Answer: one.

5. How much did staff travel cost – include ticket class, taxis, where they flew from etc?

Answer: Flights cost \$NZ5793 premium economy flying Wellington-Auckland-New York return. Taxi/Uber costs: \$US165.59 (to/from JFK Airport), \$NZ43.66 (to/from WLG Airport)

6. Where did staff stay? For how many nights and what was the cost of accommodation per night, including incidentals.

Answer: Sonder Hotel Flatiron for six nights. Total cost \$US1399.62 or \$US233.27 per night. There were no incidentals.

7. Provide hard copy receipts for expenses.

Answer: receipts attached.

8. What was the cost to promote/advertise the stunt, including, but not limited to, social media?

Answer: The total cost of the campaign was \$470,000. This comprised:

- Campaign development/delivery (agency + travel)
- Key (project management, design, build)
- Activation & content (location, filming, editing, event management)
- Media relations (International and local)
- Paid media and content partnerships

9. How many interactions occurred with members of the public? Was there a survey?

Answer: There were interactions on the day with about 100 people. There was no survey. Please see response to question 3 for campaign outcomes.

10. How long did the stunt continue for? Was it a one-day event?

Answer: The activation was held for one day over about seven hours. The purpose of the activation was to create content for a video that was then used as the core of the campaign for mainstream and social media.

11. What was the cost of the video producing for the stunt as displayed online?

Answer: The cost of activation and content (location, filming, editing, event management) was \$98,000

12. And finally, what was the purpose of this stunt?

Answer: As set out in question 3 we aimed to reach one of our important markets which offers a large pool of skilled workers and high-value visitors at a time when we could leverage off the visibility of the FIFA World Women's Cup games being played in New Zealand. Attracting talent and visitors is an important part of achieving growth and to meet future demand.

