

CRACKING SALES MISSIONS

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A Sales Mission is usually arranged by a tourism organisation (like Fáilte Ireland or Tourism Ireland), by a local tourist initiative (Chambers of Commerce/Local Authority) or in the case of those who are members of International Marketing Consortia, it may be arranged by them (in the case of the latter, your partners may include other destinations).

A sales mission involves a selection of tourism businesses engaging in a joint trip to a market and a presentation will be made by the group (or sub-groups) to a range of distribution partners (in some cases it can be 1 distribution partner with various front line staff). Each tourism business is usually given a time slot to present. Have your Sales Toolkit ready to leave after each of the presentations.

TOP TIP

A typical Sales Toolkit should include:

- A printout of your sales presentation
- Copies of your sales brochure & your business card
- A product fact sheet, ideally translated into relevant language
- High quality selection of images, video and product descriptor text on a USB
- Sample Media Reviews & List of Award/Accolades (if relevant)

If luggage allowances allow and agreed format permits as will be advised by the host/sponsor...you could bring branded desk pop-ups either for your destination or your sponsor. Just be careful not to confuse the overall message, the host or sponsor will be best to advise on this.

Organising or participating in a Sales Blitz

A sales blitz is where you personally organise a series of meetings and presentations in an area, perhaps 3 or 4 a day. It is usually just you presenting, or you may plan as a collective group of complementary businesses or businesses under a single brand. Some meeting presentations may take place by way of a hosted lunch or reception event, where the buyer prospects are hosted and you make a presentation to groups of buyer representatives (this can be the case for businesses who have a lot of home based agents in an area and have not got the office space to allow for group meetings).



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When planning a sales blitz in an international market for the first time, your first step should be to:

1. Contact your local Fáilte Ireland representative, who may be aware of other partners in your geography planning similar trips that you could potentially work together with to optimise cost effectiveness.
2. Having discussed your proposed plan and approach with you they will introduce you to the relevant Business Development Unit team member or specialist segment contact, who may be able to offer advice on new prospects to try to meet.

Both the local Fáilte Ireland programme representative and the Business Development Unit staff will advise on collateral, sales tools and offer suitable resources to support and strengthen your sales pitch.

Equally, the Business Development contact may be aware of future plans for the suitable sales mission, led by the tourism agency partners being organised for that market/segment. This may be a complimentary or alternatively a more effective approach to growing your sales in the market.

The Fáilte Ireland Business Development representative will also introduce you to the respective Tourism Ireland office contact. Talk to them to ensure your sales blitz will not conflict with other planned activity or events in the market. This will avoid the situation whereby the right contacts for you to meet could be at other sales events planned by external sales event bodies such as GTM USA, WTM London, ITB Berlin etc.

This will also serve to highlight if there is any planned networking events or market research opportunities that are relevant for you to access while you are in the market. It may provide offer additional recommendations on who to meet.

Ultimately, it will be up to you to reach out and try to arrange access with the buyer, if they have time and are sufficiently interested. But, remember the golden rule.... never arrive unannounced as it could blacklist you forever!

Fáilte Ireland's introduction of your plan to the In-Market Tourism Ireland contact will also ensure your planned trip does not conflict with international holidays and peak working months/days/hours for these businesses, which need to be avoided.

At early planning/consideration stage, it is also important to check out the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal to view the calendar of In-Ireland and In-market events <https://tradeportal.failteireland.ie/> (Bear in mind that this calendar is added to throughout the year, so a regular check of this is advised) to check for any conflicts in event dates and your planned blitz and equally to see if you could consider your blitz at the end or in advance of a planned in market event you plan to express interest in with a view to securing a place to attend.



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Also consider...

- How long will you have to present? Plan your presentation length accordingly, allowing time for discussion and questions and don't over run.
- How many will be at the meeting / presentation?
- Brining a nice gift. Gifts should be thoughtful, useful and relevant to your product/ region, but not expensive.
- Scheduling enough time between meetings to allow for travel, any potential delays and time between appointments to focus on the client you are about to meet.