

October 2025

The Conscious Traveller

A Guide to Capturing the Hearts and
Minds of the Next Generation of Travellers



THG
STUDIOS

Executive Summary

The travel industry is undergoing a seismic shift. A new generation of 'conscious travellers' is emerging, driven by a deep-seated desire for sustainable and responsible travel experiences. This white paper explores the growing demand for ethical and eco-friendly tourism, a market projected to reach over £9 trillion by 2032. It examines the challenges and opportunities for travel brands in this new landscape, where authenticity and transparency are paramount. We delve into the risks of 'greenwashing' and the critical importance of communicating brand values and corporate social responsibility in a way that resonates with a discerning audience. We also showcase how THG Studios, with its integrated approach to strategy, creative and content production, underpinned by innovative technologies, is uniquely positioned to help travel brands connect with the conscious traveller, build lasting brand loyalty, and drive sustainable growth.

The New Age of Exploration

For decades, travel marketing has been fuelled by images of untouched paradises and boundless indulgence. But the world has changed, and with it, the traveller. We are now in a new age of exploration, one defined by connection, not by consumption. The modern traveller is no longer a passive consumer of experiences. They are active participants in a global movement towards a more sustainable and equitable world. This 'conscious traveller' seeks more than just a destination; they seek a connection to the places they visit, a positive impact on the communities they encounter, and a travel footprint that is as light as possible. The demand for sustainable travel is not a fleeting trend but a fundamental shift in consumer behaviour.

This growing consciousness presents both a challenge and an immense opportunity for the travel industry. Brands that can authentically communicate their commitment to sustainability, moving beyond superficial claims to demonstrate real impact, will be the ones to capture the hearts and minds of this new generation of travellers.



image_source_-_avolta.com

84%

of global travellers stated that travelling more sustainably is important to them.

The Crisis of Credibility

While the desire for sustainable travel is clear, a significant trust gap exists between brands and consumers. Many travellers are sceptical of sustainability claims, with 57% believing that brands are guilty of 'greenwashing', making exaggerated or misleading statements about their environmental credentials.

This scepticism is a major hurdle for travel brands. The pressure to appear 'green' without genuine substance can lead to inauthentic marketing that ultimately damages brand reputation and alienates the very audience it seeks to attract. The conscious traveller is highly discerning, digitally savvy, and armed with a wealth of information. They can see through superficial gestures and demand radical transparency.



57% of travellers believe that brands are guilty of 'greenwashing'



The core problem is twofold:

Operational Gaps

Many brands have not yet fully integrated sustainable practices into their core business operations, making any marketing claims feel hollow.

Communication Failures

Even brands with genuine sustainability initiatives often struggle to communicate them effectively. They either hide their efforts for fear of being accused of boasting, or they communicate in a way that feels like a corporate report, missing the emotion and inspiration that drives travel decisions.

The challenge, therefore, is not simply to adopt sustainable practices but to communicate them in a way that is transparent, credible, and engaging. Brands must find a way to weave their commitment to corporate social responsibility into their core brand narrative, creating a story that is both credible and captivating.



Brands must find a way to tell their sustainability story without sacrificing the aspirational and inspirational quality that lies at the heart of travel marketing.

Industry Growth

The sustainable tourism market is experiencing explosive growth. Valued at \$3.3 trillion in 2022, it is projected to reach \$11.4 trillion by 2032, growing at a CAGR of 14%. This growth is fuelled by a number of factors, including heightened environmental awareness, concern about climate change, and a desire for more authentic cultural experiences.

Several key trends are shaping the sustainable travel landscape:

Eco-friendly Accommodation

Many travellers (65%) now prefer accommodation with sustainability certifications.

Reduced Carbon Footprint

Travellers are increasingly conscious of their carbon emissions with many opting for 'slow travel', flight-free journeys, and carbon offset programs.

Projected to reach

\$11.4t

by 2032!

Local and Authentic Experiences

There is a growing demand for travel that supports local communities and provides genuine cultural immersion.

The Rise of Regenerative Travel

Going beyond simply doing no harm, regenerative travel seeks to actively improve the destinations visited.

This shift is particularly pronounced among younger generations. Millennials and Gen Z are at the forefront of the conscious travel movement, with 77% of travellers aged 18-29 stating that sustainability impacts their travel decisions. These digital natives are also highly influenced by online content, making authentic and engaging storytelling more important than ever.



image_source_-_avolta.com

The Power of Storytelling in Travel

⌵
⌵
⌵
⌵

In a market saturated with idyllic images and generic travel promises, a compelling narrative is what sets a brand apart. For the conscious traveller, this narrative must be authentic, transparent, and aligned with their values. This is where the strategic integration of storytelling, content production, and brand strategy becomes paramount. It requires a deep and honest assessment of a brand's values, operations, and place in the world.



A robust strategy involves:

Radical Authenticity

Identifying what your brand can genuinely and credibly own in the sustainability space. It's better to be a master of one area than a jack-of-all-trades with no real impact.

Audience Segmentation

Understanding that 'conscious travellers' are not a monolith. They range from 'deep green' advocates who make every decision based on sustainability, to 'light green' consumers who are influenced by it but still prioritise other factors like price and convenience. A tailored strategy is needed to engage these different segments.

Measurable Impact

Set clear, quantifiable goals for your sustainability initiatives. These KPIs become the building blocks of your story.

Authentic Storytelling: The Heart of the Connection

Once a strategy is in place, the art of storytelling can begin. Authentic storytelling moves beyond simply listing a brand's sustainable features. It's about weaving a narrative that showcases the 'why' behind the 'what'. It's about demonstrating a genuine commitment to corporate social responsibility, not just as a marketing tactic, but as a core tenet of the brand's identity

Effective storytelling in the travel industry can take many forms:

Human-centric narratives

Focusing on the stories of local communities, conservation partners, and even the travellers themselves can create a powerful emotional connection

Transparency and vulnerability

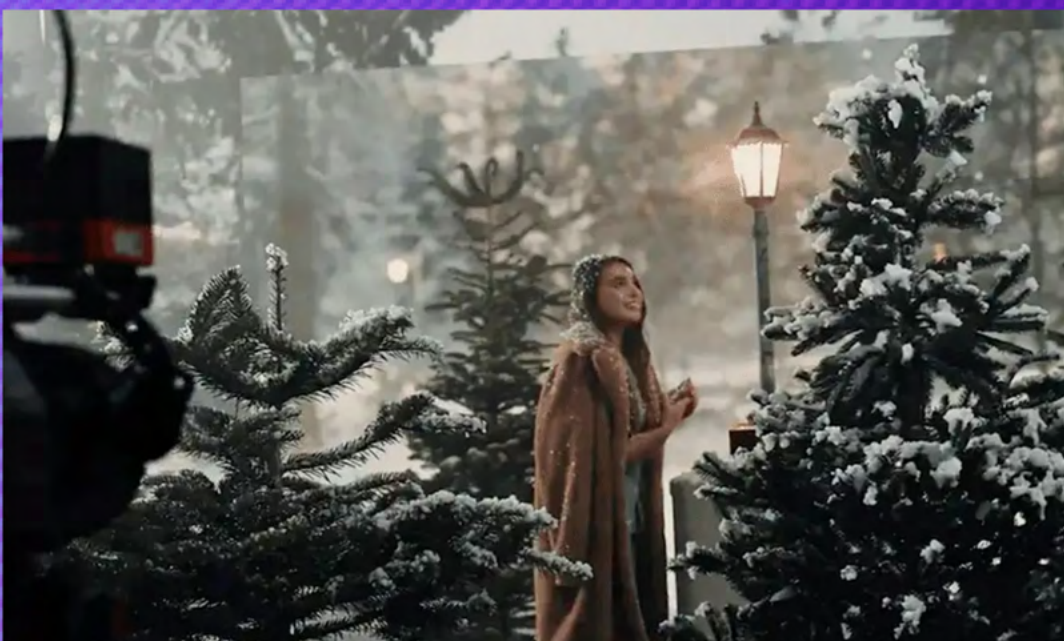
Acknowledging the challenges and complexities of the journey towards sustainability can build more trust than making unsubstantiated claims

Educational content

Sharing insights into local ecosystems, cultural heritage, and the impact of responsible tourism can empower travellers to make more informed choices

Strategic Content Production: Bringing the Story to Life

A powerful story needs a powerful medium. In the travel industry, visual content is king. Video storytelling can transport viewers to a destination, evoke emotion, and create a lasting impression. However, the production of this content must also align with the brand's sustainability goals. This is where innovation in content production becomes crucial.



A modern content production strategy should be multi-channel and diverse, so your story can be told across a multitude of platforms and formats:

Long-Form Video

Create mini documentaries for YouTube and your website that delve deep into your sustainability initiatives

Short-Form Video

Use platforms like TikTok and Instagram to share quick, engaging clips that highlight specific aspects of your story

Immersive Content

Use 360-degree video and virtual reality to create immersive experiences that allow potential travellers to 'visit' your destination and see your sustainability initiatives first-hand

Written Content

Detailed blog posts, white papers, and impact reports can provide the substance and data that build credibility with the most discerning consumers.

Virtual Production

Offers brands an opportunity to shoot multi-location content spanning seasons & geographies from a single studio, with edit capabilities in real-time.



Brands Doing it Well

Several brands are leading the way in authentic sustainability communication:



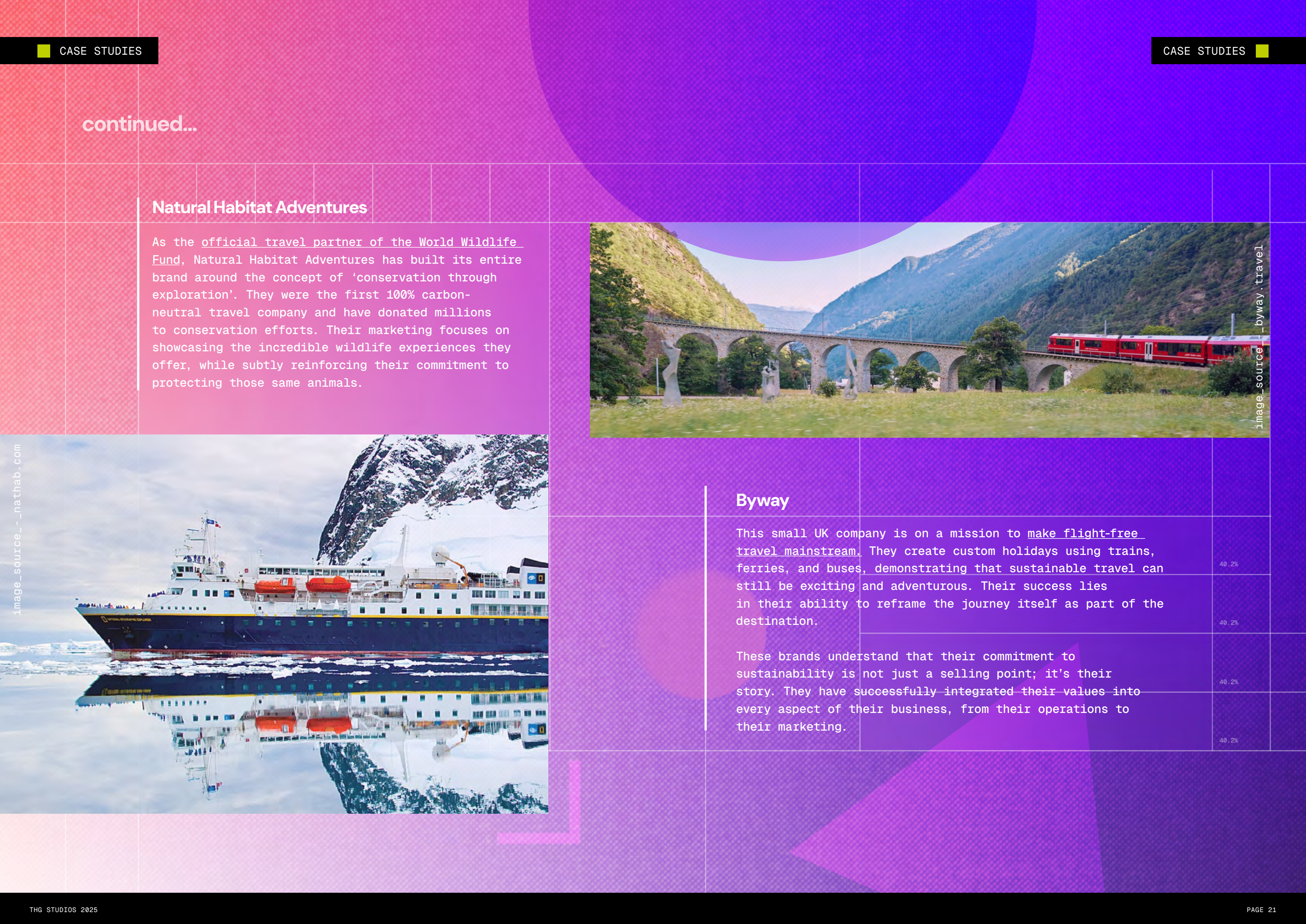
Intrepid Travel

As the world's largest travel B Corp, Intrepid has made sustainability a cornerstone of its brand. They have introduced carbon labelling on their trips, allowing travellers to see the carbon footprint of their journey. They have also partnered with NGOs like the Pink City Rickshaw Company in India, which empowers women from low-income households by training them as rickshaw drivers. This is a powerful example of how a brand can integrate social responsibility into its core offering.

Pura Aventura

This UK-based tour operator has pledged to offset 160% of the carbon emissions for every trip. They have partnered with a non-profit in Nicaragua to plant trees and support local farmers. This demonstrates a commitment to going beyond simply neutralising their impact and actively contributing to a more sustainable future.





continued...

Natural Habitat Adventures

As the official travel partner of the World Wildlife Fund, Natural Habitat Adventures has built its entire brand around the concept of ‘conservation through exploration’. They were the first 100% carbon-neutral travel company and have donated millions to conservation efforts. Their marketing focuses on showcasing the incredible wildlife experiences they offer, while subtly reinforcing their commitment to protecting those same animals.



Byway

This small UK company is on a mission to make flight-free travel mainstream. They create custom holidays using trains, ferries, and buses, demonstrating that sustainable travel can still be exciting and adventurous. Their success lies in their ability to reframe the journey itself as part of the destination.

These brands understand that their commitment to sustainability is not just a selling point; it's their story. They have successfully integrated their values into every aspect of their business, from their operations to their marketing.

40.2%

40.2%

40.2%

40.2%



We Create Connections That Matter

At THG Studios, we understand that connecting with the conscious traveller requires a holistic approach. We combine data-driven insights with creative excellence to help travel brands build authentic, lasting relationships with their audience.



Strategy & Creative

We begin by delving deep into your brand's DNA, identifying your unique sustainability story and aligning it with the values of your target audience. Our team of strategists and creatives then develops a comprehensive framework for communicating your message in a way that is both compelling and credible. We help you define your brand's purpose and translate it into a powerful narrative that will resonate with conscious travellers.

Content Production & Storytelling

We create content that connects and converts. Our award-winning team specialises in crafting high-quality video content that brings your sustainability story to life. Whether it's a documentary-style film showcasing your partnership with a local community, a series of short-form videos for social media, or an immersive 360-degree experience, we have the expertise to create content that will capture the hearts and minds of your audience.

Virtual Production: The Sustainable Future of Content Creation

We are proud to be at the forefront of a technological revolution that is transforming the content production industry. Our state-of-the-art virtual production screen allows us to create stunning, hyper-realistic travel content without the need for extensive travel and on-location shoots. This not only significantly reduces the carbon footprint of your marketing campaigns but also opens up a world of creative possibilities. Imagine showcasing your brand against the backdrop of a pristine rainforest, a bustling city, or even a fantastical landscape, all from the comfort of our 200,000+ sq ft studio. Virtual production is a powerful tool for brands that want to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability in a tangible and innovative way

Brand Health: Protecting Your Most Valuable Asset

In an era of heightened consumer scepticism, maintaining brand integrity is paramount. Our Brand Health services provide real-time monitoring and analysis of your brand's perception in the market. We track the performance of your sustainability campaigns, measure consumer sentiment, and provide you with the insights you need to adapt your strategy and stay ahead of the curve.



Measuring the Return on Authenticity: KPIs for the Conscious Travel Market

Investing in authentic, sustainable marketing delivers a powerful return but requires a new way of measuring success. Beyond traditional metrics like bookings and revenue, brands should track:

- **Brand Trust and Sentiment**
Using sentiment analysis to measure the percentage of positive, neutral and negative mentions of your brand in relation to sustainability.
- **Share of Voice**
Tracking how often your brand is mentioned in conversations about sustainable and responsible travel compared to your competitors.
- **Engagement on Impact Content**
Measuring the likes, comments, and shares on content that specifically highlights your sustainable initiatives. High engagement here is a strong indicator of a resonant message.
- **Brand Advocacy**
Monitoring the extent to which customers are organically sharing their positive experiences with your brand and its sustainability efforts.

Conclusion

The rise of the conscious traveller represents a pivotal moment for the travel industry. Brands that cling to outdated marketing practices and superficial claims of sustainability will be left behind. The future of travel belongs to those who embrace transparency, authenticity, and a genuine commitment to responsible tourism.

This journey requires courage, commitment and creativity. It requires a willingness to be transparent, to admit imperfection, and to constantly strive to do better. It requires a new kind of storytelling, one that is authentic, human and inspiring.

By partnering with THG Studios, travel brands can navigate this era with confidence. Our integrated approach to strategy, creative, production and activation, combined with our innovative use of technology like virtual production, provides a powerful platform for communicating your brand's sustainability story. We help you not only meet the demands of the conscious traveller but to exceed them, building a brand that is not only successful but also a force for positive change in the world.



Ready to capture the hearts and minds of the next generation of travellers?

To find out more about how your business can gain a competitive edge with authentic storytelling and sustainable content production, get in touch today:

<https://www.thgstudios.com/contact>

