

Press release: Game of Thrones capitalises on British exports

The American owned HBO series, Game of Thrones (GoT), has drawn huge influence from UK products, talent and locations to contribute to the International efforts which made the decade-long series such a hit with a world- wide audience.

The popularity of the exports reflects a wider increase in the success of Britain's creative industries and cultural exports and the substantial effect they have on the UK economy.

Since 2017 UK creative industries are now contributing over £100 billion a year to the economy in, an increase of 53% since 2010 (£66.3 billion). The original exports have a knock-on-effect, contribute to rising visitor numbers to UK destinations and can help set trends and consumer patterns.

- Since the show began in 2011, an additional 150,000 people have visited Northern Ireland on an overnight trip each year
- 8 of the 10 lead characters in GoT's final season are British, launching the careers of over 30 British stars
- TV series generate millions for local UK economies – in Belfast its worth £180 million a year

The 'Game of Thrones' effect

Many of the most famous locations in Westeros, the imaginary continent the action takes place on, were filmed in Northern Ireland, across County Down, County Antrim and County Derry. Winterfell, one of the central Castles to the story, was filmed at Castle Ward in Country Down. The beautiful backdrops have had a dramatic impact on visitor numbers to Northern Ireland and Belfast, sending them to record highs in recent years.

From the year the show started in 2011 until 2017, there has been over 30 million overnight trips in Northern Ireland, increasing by 4% on average each year the show has run. GoT and other TV series are now generating around £180 million a year to Belfast alone.

British fashion designer, Michele Clapton, is also recognised for bringing GoT fan-favourites Daenerys Targaryen, Arya Stark and Jon Snow to life on screen by providing the designs for their costumes in seasons 1 – 6 and winning 3 Emmy Awards. GoT's uniquely British style has gone on to further acclaim by arguably also influencing fashion collections worldwide – acknowledged by Clapton herself.

The UK film and TV industry employs almost 2 million people in the UK, so it's no surprise that 8 of the 10 lead characters in GoT's final season are British, along with a vast majority of the supporting cast.

The show is credited for launching the careers of British stars Emilia Clarke, Maisie Williams, Sophie Turner, Kit Harrington, Richard Madden and Gwendoline Christie, to name a few.

Flying the flag for Britain

To travel across Westeros – from Winterfell to Kings Landing – GoT's heroes rely on horsepower and HBO relies on British company, the Devil's Horsemen, to provide the equine component of the show. Based in Oxfordshire, they are the leading film-industry horse supplier in Europe.

Working on GoT during its entire 8 season run, the company exported over 250 horses and a huge British handling team to filming locations in Ireland, Spain, Malta, Iceland and Croatia. Exports account for nearly half (45%) of the company's business, which plans to expand its operation overseas by a further 20% due to growing demand for world leading equine services in the film and tv industries.

Camilla Naprous, co-founder of the Devil's Horseman said:

We are delighted to be given the opportunity as a British company to fly the flag abroad on such a huge show, with such an intricate creative process that really is reflected on screen.

The show has provided real opportunities to provide our unique services overseas that in turn generate revenue for the United Kingdom. In many ways, it was British horses that provided the most on-screen continuity across the entire series!

More than 1 billion viewers in 170 different countries tuned in to watch the final season of Game of Thrones. Not only is it the most-watched show in HBO history, but the franchise is also worth over \$1 billion and British creative industries are at the heart of its success.

Liam Fox, Secretary of State for International Trade said:

For nearly a decade, Game of Thrones has provided opportunities for British business to showcase their products, services and talent on the world stage.

Not only have exports and investment attributed to the show surged in Northern Ireland, but the best of British talent from across the UK have taken advantage of the opportunities it presented.

Through the Export Strategy, we have set out to increase total UK exports to 35% of GDP to transform the UK into one of the G7's most successful exporting powers.

I encourage creative business to tap into this success and I want to further strengthen international ties in the industry to make it easier for companies of all sizes to do business internationally.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The Department for International Trade (DIT) secures UK and global prosperity by promoting and financing international trade and investment and championing free trade.

We are an international economic department, responsible for:

- Bringing together policy, promotion and financial expertise to break down barriers to trade and investment, and help businesses succeed
 - Delivering a new trade policy framework for the UK as we leave the EU
 - Promoting British trade and investment across the world
 - Building the global appetite for British goods and services
1. Game of Thrones is an American television series created by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss for HBO. It is an adaptation of A Song of Ice and Fire, a series of fantasy novels written by George R. R. Martin. It premiered in the USA on 17 April 2011 and concluded on 19 May 2019 with 73 episodes broadcast over 8 seasons.
 2. Latest statistics from the ONS show UK firms sold more overseas in the 2018/19 financial year, £639.9 billion, than at any time since records began
 3. The UK has now achieved 36 consecutive months of export growth on an annual rolling basis
 4. Separate OECD data shows UK exports grew faster than Germany, France and Italy between 2016 and 2018
 5. UK Creative industries include: Film, TV, radio, photography, music, advertising, museums, galleries and digital creative industries are all part of this thriving sector.
 6. [DCMS Economic estimates 2017](#)