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Jenni Convey
Head of Online Marketing
O2



O2 strengthens brand with best practice Google Content Network campaign

O2 is a leading provider of mobile and broadband services to consumers and businesses in the UK. Telefonica O2 UK is part of the Telefónica O2 Europe group which comprises mobile, broadband and fixed businesses in the UK, Ireland, Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

O2 has an integrated marketing strategy for all its consumer and business offerings. The internet has always played a part in their advertising strategies. As Jenni Convey, Head of Online Marketing O2 explains “The internet has always been central to O2 for direct response marketing.” She continues, “Rather than moving from offline to online we have really worked the other way round.” However, O2 are always striving to create the most effective campaigns and increasingly to use online for more than just direct response. Moreover in November 2007 O2 launched the iPhone in an exclusive partnership with Apple. In order to maximise this partnership, to drive sales to their stores and to promote O2 it was necessary to go beyond direct response and to begin brand building online.

A targeted approach

“Search has always formed a core part of our digital marketing strategy as it is effectively our shop window online,” says Jenni, “but in 2007 we began testing ways of reaching consumers earlier in the purchase process to increase brand & product consideration.” O2 began content campaigns for all of their handsets in March, and advertised the launch of the iPhone through the Google Content Network from October. “The real benefit of the content network is that it is so targeted – you can reach the right users at the right time.” Due to the breadth of sites using the Google content network, O2 could reach their consumers at every point along their purchase path, and also effectively drive awareness amongst the right audience.

“Content is now becoming a consistent part of O2’s digital marketing mix. It allows us to target appropriate audience segments in the research and decision making phases of the purchase process. Its main role is to build awareness of new products and propositions in contextually relevant environments.”

The iPhone

The iPhone was one of those products that really gets consumers excited and it was heavily anticipated by the market. As Jenni explains, “There was a real buzz that we wanted to be a part of.” It was also a product that appeals to a certain audience. The content network allowed O2 to really tap into this market. “We aimed to really own the space and to get our message to the right consumers, so being in contextually relevant environments really helped.” She further elaborates, “Using the long tail of smaller, relevant sites and really targeting the message, is important to us.”

ABOUT THE GOOGLE CONTENT NETWORK

The Google Content Network consists of thousands of sites that you can advertise on. Content targeting places your ads on relevant pages. This Network combined with Google's sites, means advertisers can reach 85% of all Internet users in the UK.

The brand challenge

“Working with such strong brands means that we always have to be responsible and sensible in our advertising strategy; there is always an implicit risk when using the internet that comes from a lack of control. The controls on Google content network not only mean that you can be confident your ads will not show inappropriately, but also that you can optimize your campaigns to get the most out of your campaign.” This is exactly what O2 did, when it became clear that appearing on social network sites wasn't delivering the results they had hoped for, O2 chose not to appear against them, resulting in higher click through rates.

Success

“We did see increases in traffic to the website and sales, but the true success of this campaign was in more than that,” concludes Jenni. “The campaign was to raise awareness, we came to realise the potential of the online world for more than sales, and it worked.” As O2 try to always stay at the top of their industry with marketing, their approach is to think ‘Online’ at the outset, as it is at the core of their brand strategy. “Now that O2 has such a large and varied offering, we want to make sure the right message gets heard, be this for our consumers or businesses.”

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