

With a YouTube campaign tailored especially to the TrueView format, reed.co.uk far surpasses performance expectations



About reed.co.uk

- Leading UK job site
- Headquarters in London
- www.reed.co.uk

About iCrossing

- Digital marketing agency
- Over 900 staff in 17 offices worldwide
- www.icrossing.co.uk

Goals

- Raise awareness of reed.co.uk brand
- Drive direct candidate registrations on site

Approach

- Created two video ads specifically for TrueView format
- Incorporated calls to action using clickable annotations
- Ran a companion banner alongside video player
- Targeted users by age and time of day

Results

- Recorded 3.6% click-through rate, far exceeding format's average CTR of 1%
- Gained visibility into subsequent post-view registrations
- Drove conversions at costs equivalent to search
- Extended campaign by three months based on outstanding metrics

In 1995, reed.co.uk became the first job search website offered by a recruitment agency in the UK. Through a network of 350 offices across the country and around the world, today it features vacancies from over 8,000 recruiters and handles more than 80,000 employment applications daily. The company's success and growth depends on maintaining a front-of-mind position among people thinking of using the internet to make a career move, and so reed.co.uk designed an innovative digital campaign to serve this aim.

That's the way to work it

"We were looking to target anybody who was interested in work," explains reed.co.uk's Jamie Bodkin of the decision to launch a campaign on YouTube. "We operate across 42 different industry sectors, from graduate to board level, so we really wanted a medium that would allow us to communicate with everybody. One of the good things about YouTube is obviously it's a growing platform and it's got a large audience."

Previously, reed.co.uk had simply repurposed a 30-second TV ad to run on YouTube, but for this campaign the company took the approach of designing two ads specifically for the TrueView format as a way to make the most of the medium and produce the best possible results. "There were two main aims," Jamie says. "One was to raise the overall awareness of reed.co.uk as a brand, and the second was to drive direct candidate registrations to the site."



Featuring the fictional character James Reed, the TrueView ad creatives incorporated clickable zones containing calls to action. The opportunity to add these engaging annotations is unique to YouTube advertising.

1 Source for all statistics cited: reed.co.uk internal data

"We viewed it as a branding campaign to start off, but one of the biggest surprises was that the performance was pretty much in line with what we get from Google AdWords, which has been staggering."

— Jamie Bodkin, Head of Digital Marketing, reed.co.uk

Alongside funny videos featuring the fictional character James Reed, both creatives incorporated clickable zones containing calls to action. The option to add these engaging annotations is a feature unique to YouTube ads. The platform also offers advertisers the ability to effectively control which ads appear to key audiences. In this campaign, reed.co.uk targeted users both by age (18 to 44) and time of day. One ad spoke to viewers using the internet at home, while the other was designed to appeal to people using YouTube while at work.

TrueView gives users control over whether they want to view an ad or not, so reed.co.uk was charged only when a viewer watched at least 30 seconds of its ad. Meanwhile, a companion banner remained in the interface even when a user chose not to view the entire video; any clicks from this ad unit were free of charge to reed.co.uk. And in spite of the fact that both creatives were made especially for YouTube, Jamie says the cost to produce them was minimal. "It wasn't an additional expense for us. They were literally filmed the final ten minutes of our day shooting for the TV ad. It was done quite off the cuff, and I think that kind of adds to the charm."

A job well done

By tailoring creatives perfectly to the format, reed.co.uk's TrueView ads outperformed previous results, far surpassing expectations. "Since running the ads built specifically for YouTube, we've managed to essentially triple the click-through rate," Jamie reports. While the campaign was initially set to run for two months, the fact that it achieved a 3.6% CTR was all the encouragement the team needed to extend the activity by three months. "We found that YouTube compared well to search, which was a big surprise for us because we primarily viewed YouTube as a branding channel. But the results that we saw from this campaign stacked up."

YouTube's analytics capabilities have made it easy for reed.co.uk to understand the effects of the activity. "We certainly weren't expecting the conversion rates that we saw off the back of the campaign," Jamie reveals by way of example. "We had a number of people click through to the site and register there and then. As an additional benefit, we were also able to see how many people were exposed to the ad and then subsequently come through at a later date to create an account with reed.co.uk."

This level of insight into return on investment means that the company is now poised to conduct further YouTube advertising in future. According to Jamie, "The campaign has fundamentally changed the way that reed.co.uk views brand advertising in general, and that primarily has to do with the fact that the results from this have been way over and above our expectations."