



Visit Abu Dhabi uses Lightbox Ads and YouTube Mastheads to stimulate interest and consideration in Abu Dhabi

About Visit Abu Dhabi

- Part of Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi)
- Established in 2012
- www.visitabudhabi.ae
- www.tcaabudhabi.ae

Goal

- Stimulate awareness and consideration of Abu Dhabi as a tourist destination

Approach

- Launched Masthead and Lightbox Ads on YouTube and the Google Display Network
- Targeted users by geographical location

Results

- YouTube Mastheads achieved average engagement rate of 11% and average interaction time of 13 seconds (compared to regional average of 10 seconds)
- Lightbox Ads achieved average interaction time of 17.5 seconds with 3.6% average engagement rate (17% higher than industry average)
- Banner achieved 76% completion rate overall
- Increased numbers of visitors and hotel occupancy rates

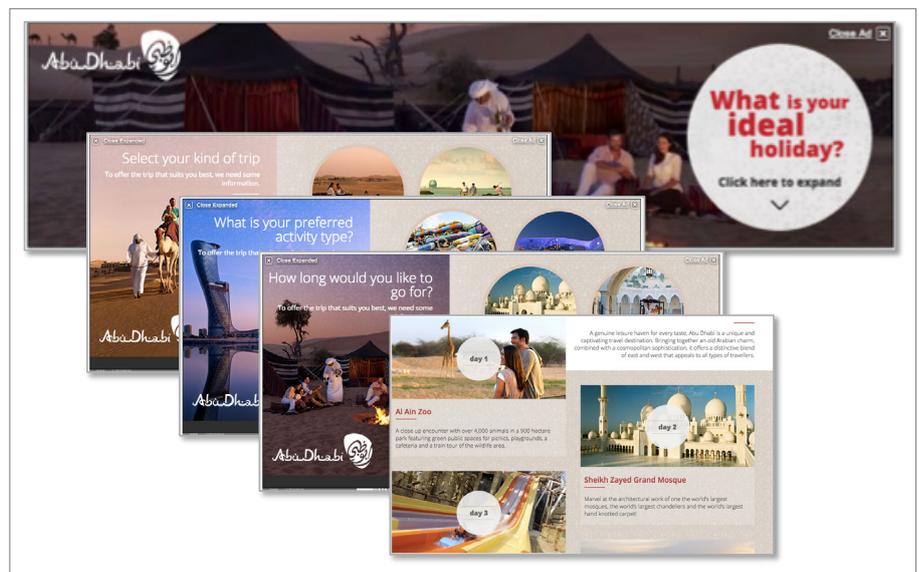
As part of Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), Visit Abu Dhabi exists to promote the emirate’s heritage, culture and traditions. Its responsibilities include the management and international promotion of Abu Dhabi’s growing tourism sector. Key marketing objectives are to raise awareness of Abu Dhabi as an ultimate tourist destination for global and regional travellers and to increase the number of tourists visiting the emirate every year. Performance is measured by increases in website traffic and hotel occupancy rates.

Reach with rich media

TCA Abu Dhabi wanted to achieve massive reach and awareness in a number of key export markets while engaging consumers in a very unique way to provide a memorable user experience. With these aims in mind, it initiated campaigns on YouTube and the Google Display Network using Masthead and Lightbox Ads. In this way, TCA Abu Dhabi established itself as an innovator in the tourism advertising industry by being the first tourism board in the region to embrace these unique formats.

Plans into action

The concept of the creative was to tailor an itinerary of activities in Abu Dhabi to suit different types of travellers (such as couples, business people, families and friends) as well as various trip durations (including weekends, long weekends and whole weeks). Users could engage with the banner ads by entering their own criteria about trip and travel preferences. Based on these inputs, the ad would generate a customised itinerary. Users could then view the activity locations on a map, download the itinerary and even share it via social media with their friends.



The campaign won both Google's internal award for Best Travel Ad (2014) and the Web Marketing Association's Best Rich Media Campaign Online for Travel (2015).

Geographic targeting enabled Visit Abu Dhabi to reach consumers in specific regions. The YouTube Mastheads were targeted to users in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman, while the rich media Lightbox Ads were targeted to the USA, UK, India, Germany, France, Italy, Russia and Australia.

Google proposed the ideal budget per market to be allocated for the ads, and also connected TCA Abu Dhabi with its partner creative agency Biborg to produce the banners using assets provided by Visit Abu Dhabi. Google supported the activity further through continuous performance optimisations, as well as monthly and post-campaign reports broken down by geography and creative. These reports contained comparisons with industry benchmarks and details about engagement levels and durations.

Have a nice trip

By using engaging, intuitive formats containing a strong call to action, Visit Abu Dhabi raised brand awareness and generated deep engagement. Both the Lightbox Ads and YouTube Mastheads delivered above-average industry engagement rates at efficient cost.

The Masthead impressions exceeded the industry benchmark by 44% and the Mastheads' average engagement rate was 11%. Meanwhile the Lightbox banners delivered an engagement rate of 3.6%, outperforming the industry benchmark by 17%. The campaign also successfully engaged targeted audiences for considerable periods of time. For the Lightbox Ads, the average expanded ad state was 17.5 seconds, and for the YouTube Mastheads the average interaction time came in at 13 seconds. Overall, the banner achieved 76% completion rate.

What's more, the campaign won a host of industry accolades, including both Google's internal award for Best Travel Ad (2014) and the Web Marketing Association's Best Rich Media Campaign Online for Travel (2015). Perhaps most impressively though, using Masthead and Lightbox Ads in the overall media mix had a big effect on increasing the traffic to the site. Hotel occupancy rates in Abu Dhabi also went up, an outcome that George Kalliamvakos, TCA Abu Dhabi's Digital Development Manager, attributes to these campaigns. "Google has a big role contributing to this spike," he says. "This is evident when comparing the hotel occupancy figures to those of last year, when TCA Abu Dhabi did not run any advertising for Abu Dhabi as a destination on Google."