



How The Richards Group's YouTube Campaign Helped Drive Millions of App Downloads for Chick-fil-A

Which comes first, the app campaign or the millions of downloads? Okay, that's easier than the age-old chicken or the egg question. The Richards Group and Chick-fil-A drove a million app downloads in three days with the help of an app promo campaign on YouTube and the Google Display Network.

The Challenge

Run a quick search for restaurant- or food-related apps and you'll see dozens, if not hundreds, of available options fill the screen. [Chick-fil-A](#), the largest quick-service chicken restaurant chain in America, was ready to roll out a [new order-ahead app](#) and knew that [getting the app noticed](#)—and downloaded—in this crowded market would be no small feat.

The new app's audience wasn't necessarily loyal customers or rewards point seekers, but anyone who wanted a faster way to those waffle fries (and Polynesian sauce, of course) than going through the drive-through or waiting in line at the restaurant. To get casual eaters and brand devotees alike to download the app, Chick-fil-A needed a campaign that would drive awareness and downloads in the cluttered app environment quickly.



The Approach

Chick-fil-A gets the word out with YouTube and the Google Display Network

With a short campaign launch window (ten days) and a small initial incentive for downloading the app (a free chicken sandwich), Chick-fil-A and its agency, [The Richards Group](#), turned to YouTube and the Google Display Network (GDN) to spread the word on a mass scale and build excitement.

The campaign featured a video app promo ad run through [YouTube's TrueView](#), [YouTube Masthead ads](#), and banner ads across the [GDN](#). "We feel like video really told the story of the benefits of the app. And having YouTube accompany our other efficient display ads was a good way to help raise awareness of the app, help people develop an overall understanding of what the app can provide, and then ultimately drive downloads," said Josh Phipps, brand media at The Richards Group.

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YouTube allowed Chick-fil-A to tell the story in a compelling way, and it also served up engaged, quality viewers. "YouTube is a lean-in type of environment where people are actively searching for content and are really engaged. So that's the kind of environment we wanted, because we knew we'd get quality users," said Jaquie Hoyos, brand media team lead at The Richards Group.



Chick-fil-A's video ad ran on YouTube's TrueView, reaching engaged viewers.

Chick-fil-A uses a variety of YouTube ad formats to tell a variety of stories

Chick-fil-A and The Richards Group used just about every type of ad format YouTube has to offer, including desktop and mobile masthead ads, skippable TrueView ads, [TrueView for app](#) promotion, and [Bumper ads](#)—all for different

reasons. Google helped the team see the [best uses for each ad unit](#) and the best practices for creating ads for each type.

Each ad communicated a different message so no single ad had to bear the burden of telling the full story. “Different messaging experiences helped us to tell a variety of different stories across a variety of different lengths and ad forms,” Phipps said.

The team liked skippable TrueView ads because they give people the option to skip and not have their experience interrupted. TrueView for app promotion allowed them to get their message in front of people who were interested in content related to the app. Bumper ads were quick and courteous of people’s time. And mastheads were great for launching a big campaign, creating buzz, and giving people ways to engage with the creative.

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Mobile ad units in particular were appealing because they brought users one click away from the App Store or Google Play Store where they could download the app. “Mobile YouTube provided a really good place for an immediate call to action where users could download right away,” said Hoyos. In this way, the ads could both drive awareness and hype while also leading to immediate downloads.

CFA One app campaign meets—and beats—download goals

In a matter of days, CFA One was the #1 downloaded free app in the Apple App Store. “We met our goal a lot faster than we thought we would. We had goals for the end of the year that were met within the first couple of months of the campaign,” said Hoyos. That included 1M app downloads in three days and 7M views of the promo app ad on YouTube.

The Products

YouTube TrueView
YouTube Bumper ads
YouTube Mastheads
Google Display Network

The Results

