



About Opensooq

- <http://www.opensooq.com>
- Arabic online classifieds company operating in the Middle East and North Africa

Objective

- Grow their export business by expanding to new markets, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait
- Take advantage of the explosive growth of mobile usage in the region

Solution

- Establish accurate app tracking
- App download promotion through the Google solutions

Results

- 650,000 downloads in 8 months directly generated by Google solutions
- Helped the app to reach 2 millions of downloads in 1 year
- Low cost per acquisition:
Iraq: \$0.30 per download
KSA: \$0.35 per download
Kuwait: \$1.00 per download



How Opensooq used Google solutions to promote its app across new markets, becoming the largest mobile classifieds app in the Middle East

Opensooq is an Arabic classifieds site where sellers can offer products and services to millions of users online without intermediaries, allowing buyers to browse a large variety of goods and services (electronics, real estate, cars, services etc.)

The company was founded in 2008 and rapidly became a market leader in Jordan and Libya.

In 2014, as part of a larger growth strategy, Opensooq wanted to expand across the Middle East region and enter new markets.

Looking for the best strategy to enter new markets

Teams from Opensooq and Google worked closely together to analyse the potential in the region and the state of the competition.

Opensooq's ambition was high and it aimed to expand into 3 large and diverse markets: Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait. This posed multiple challenges, including a substantial increase in investment and the presence of large, dominant competitors that were already established in some markets.

There was, however, a significant opportunity to enter these large emerging markets at a competitive cost, while simultaneously creating a strong competitive advantage through the use of mobile technologies.

Opensooq's strength: a well-designed mobile app

Opensooq already had a strong mobile asset in the form of an iOS and Android app that was released in October 2013.

The key strength of this app was its ability to offer an optimised, rich user experience (as rich as the website experience), which allowed users to browse and post their ads when buying, selling or renting goods and services.

This represented a key competitive advantage against established competitors in mature markets such as the UAE and Qatar which did not have mobile apps. It also provided an opportunity to capture a growing base of future new internet users who are discovering the web via their mobile devices.

MENA, a region with a huge mobile potential

In the Middle East, the smartphone penetration rate rose by at least 11% in each country from 2012 to 2013. Estimates for 2014 are even more astounding: eMarketer forecasts that the number of smartphone users in the region will jump 33% to reach 156.4 million.

Clearly, dominating the mobile space was an effective new strategy for market entry, while also providing a long-term means of capturing potential internet users in the future.



Driving cost-effective app downloads with Google

The first step in moving to a strong “mobile first” strategy was to establish accurate app tracking via Google Analytics for both iOS and Android using Google Tag Manager, and to set the appropriate KPIs for driving this strategy.

The next step was to design an optimal app promotion campaign to drive app downloads. In doing so, the teams from Opensooq and Google leveraged both Google search and the AdMob advertising platform, which allows advertisers to reach millions of potential new users thanks to its network of over 300,000 apps.

Smart app promotion

Multiple app downloads formats were tested, including search campaigns with app extensions or text and banners that appear on mobile sites and in other apps.

Thanks to the Conversion Optimiser tool, Opensooq was able to drive app installs at a targeted cost per acquisition. This strategy was also combined with the use of negative remarketing to further optimise the cost per download.

Results

In 8 months, the Google app promotion campaign generated more than 650,000 direct downloads and boosted Opensooq’s app to reach more than 2 million downloads within the first year of launching. This made it the largest mobile classifieds application in the MENA region, with more downloads than all of its competitors combined.

Not only did Opensooq manage to drive a large amount of downloads, it was also able to do so at very cost-efficient prices. The cost per download was about \$0.30 for Iraq, \$0.35 for Saudi Arabia and \$1.00 for Kuwait.

“Using Google solutions to promote Opensooq’s mobile application helped us find the right customer at the right price by targeting based on behaviour and browsing habits resulting in users that most likely are to interact with the app”

Next steps

In 2015, Opensooq plans to continue expanding its mobile user base and reinforce its leadership in the region by targeting new markets. Opensooq will also start to test Google app re-engagement solutions that allow advertisers to target app users based on their behaviour. The objective is to increase overall app usage by activating people who downloaded the app but did not use it for a period of time, and to push engagement by transforming passive buyers into active sellers.



In app ad download example