



Holden's bumper ad campaign gains serious Trax-tion with millennial drivers in Australia

Published
September 2017

Holden took a road less travelled (actually, one never travelled) to shoot a bumper ad campaign for the Trax SUV: Every ad was filmed on a smartphone. Brooke Jamison, senior marketer at Holden, explains how the unorthodox approach helped the brand reach nearly 5M Australians in less than two months.

think with **Google**

People are used to the same types of car ads: Car zips by camera, slow motion turn, rainy road shot, car parks in front of camera.

Tagline. We've used that approach for so long because it works.

But these days, audiences want more emotional connections with brands—and are spending time in different places. So, when we unveiled the latest [Trax SUV](#) model, we decided to shift gears entirely. Instead of opting for beautiful driving shots, we experimented with ways to make our creative more human, more emotional, and more focused on our consumers.

To appeal to a younger audience of 20- to 30-year-old drivers, going mobile (all puns aside) felt like the perfect approach. For one, [millennials are practically glued to their smartphones](#). Pair that insight with the 2017 Trax's mobile phone integration, the first of its kind in the small SUV range, and all signs pointed to mobile.

With the help of our creative agency, [AJF Partnership](#), and our media agency, [Carat](#), we came up with a fresh way to tap into our target audience's love of mobile: Shoot several catchy [bumper ads](#) entirely on Google [Pixels](#) and iPhones and then contextually customise the ad messaging with Director Mix.

A mobile-first campaign for a mobile-first audience

Going 100% digital and focusing our campaign on YouTube was a no-brainer [considering how much time 20- and 30-year-olds spend on the platform](#). Millennials are an unconventional audience in many ways, from [their parenting styles](#) to their preference for cord-cutting, so we knew that winning over that audience would require a unique approach.

Shooting every ad on a smartphone was a huge departure from how we'd filmed and portrayed our cars in the past. We knew this would be something drivers had never seen from a car brand before. And, without a doubt, seeing a Google Pixel mounted on a Russian Arm camera crane was an unforgettable experience for our entire team.



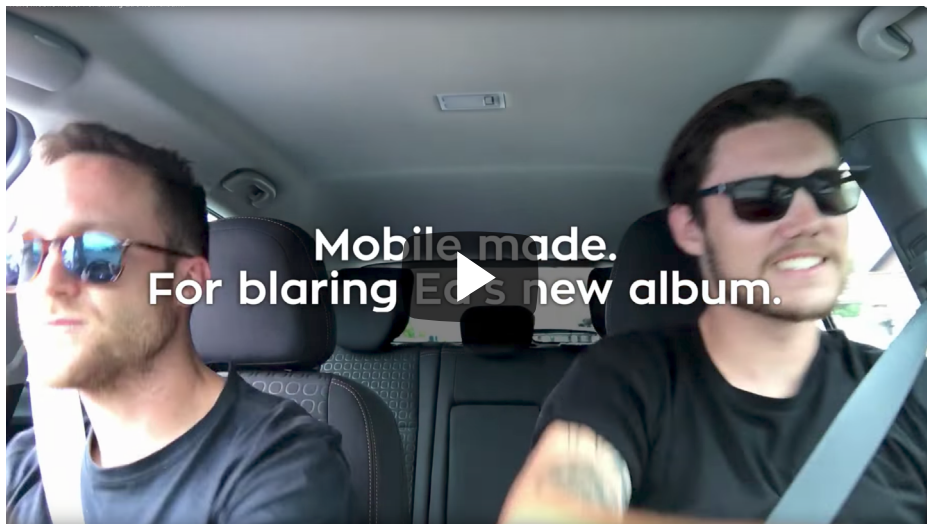
Creating contextual bumper ads with Director Mix

Our idea for the creative was to have each bumper ad focus on a different Trax feature. Quick-hit [bumper ads are great at telling stories quickly](#), and that's what we wanted to focus on. But we didn't stop there. To really connect with our audience, we used Director Mix to create different versions of the ads to align with our audience's favourite video categories and popular search queries.

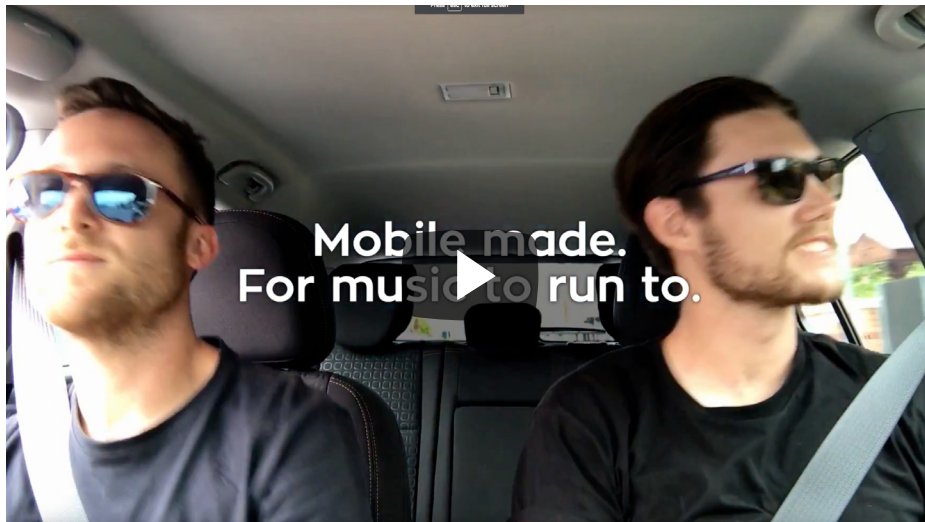
One of my favourite examples is [our ad for the Trax's Blind Spot Alert feature](#). Sports content is hugely popular on YouTube, and we thought "blind spot" as a concept lent itself well to the category. Viewers who were interested in sports were served our Blind Spot Alert creative with the message "Mobile made. For avoiding the opposition."



Being relevant to our audience's interests was crucial to earning their attention. Another example: When someone watched an Ed Sheeran music video, a snappy, six-second bumper with the tagline, "Mobile made. For blaring Ed's new album" was much more likely to complement than to interrupt their viewing experience.



We also kept an eye on popular topics and search trends—including the new “Baywatch” film—and could quickly write up new copy (“For music to run to”) and layer it on our existing base creatives to target users who watched the movie trailer.



Source: Google/Ipsos, “Telecom Shopper Study,” 2017, Canada, n=3,807 all respondents.

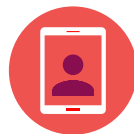
Holden revs up efficient reach and frequency

After just 50 days, the campaign reached a unique audience of nearly 5M users in Australia—nearly 1M of whom were between 25 and 34 years old—at an average frequency of five views per user.

Campaign reach



4.9M
Australians



2.3M
mobile users



835K
25–34-year-olds

Our team also used real-time feedback from YouTube's [Brand Lift](#) surveys to see which ads were working (or just as importantly, which ones weren't) across every campaign simultaneously and determine which devices, demographics, or creative themes should get more focus.

We gained valuable insights from Brand Lift to use in future campaigns; for example, we found that humour and music-driven creatives drove the highest lift in ad recall and product consideration among 25–34-year-olds.

Aside from being a fun and exciting process, our team learned that we can [be bold and experiment](#) with how we market our message to any audience, knowing that we have the tools to see what's working in real time. We may not use smartphones and camera cranes to shoot all our ads, but taking the same contextual ad messaging approach with Director Mix is something we look forward to testing across all our car lines in the near future.



Brooke Jamison

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