



**About Fiat**

- Founded in 1899, Italian automaker Fiat invests passion in its products, resulting in some of the world's best designed and most loved compact cars
- [www.fiat.com](http://www.fiat.com)

**Goal**

- Increase Fiat's brand awareness and perception to drive sales in the U.S. market

**Approach**

- **Understanding the audience:**  
Fiat carefully observes auto consumer search behavior to learn how to best connect with them at the moments that matter.
- **Reaching the audience:**  
Fiat advertises against both "branded" and "category" keywords to attract the attention of new consumers and undecided shoppers. They also teamed with Google and IpsosMedia CT to measure Search ad impact on brand awareness and perception.
- **Engaging the audience:**  
Fiat drives users to tailored, branded content on both desktop and mobile-optimized landing pages

**Results**

- Total unaided brand awareness increased 11.5 percentage points when a Fiat Search ad was present
- Top-of-mind awareness on mobile increased 4 percentage points when Fiat appeared in the top sponsored position
- 120% increase in year-on-year sales between 2011 and 2012

# Fiat Drives Total Unaided Brand Awareness Up 11.5 Percentage Points With Search Ads

Founded in 1899, Italian automaker Fiat produces some of the most compact vehicles on the market. Although the brand reached international success, it left the U.S. in 1983. After a 28-year absence, Fiat returned in 2011 to a North American market and faced established competitors and decreased brand loyalty across three generations of consumers.

To drive market share and brand awareness in the new auto landscape, the company decided to pursue a creative and sophisticated Search strategy.

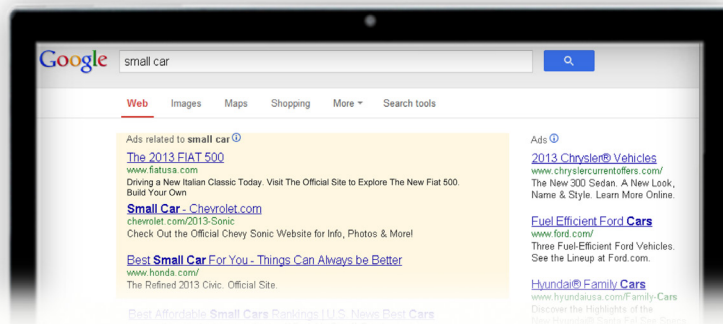
**Shifting gears to focus on Search ... for brand building**

Fiat decided to leverage Search ads as a key part of its U.S. market re-entry strategy. The company adopted a two-pronged approach when it came to keyword coverage. First, it bid competitively on specific branded keywords such as "Fiat" and "Fiat 500", to connect with people already looking for the Fiat brand. Additionally, it bid on broader "category" keywords such as "small car," "compact car," and "city car" to get the attention of new customers and undecided shoppers.

"Retention [or "branded"] terms bring the highest yield at the lowest cost," explains Susan Thomson, director of media & social media at Chrysler Group LLC. "But we invest in our segment [or "category"] terms to ensure that we capture undecided shoppers throughout their purchase process. We work to have the most relevant ad copy and we're constantly optimizing based on what customers are searching so we match up with their needs."

**Using Search to drive brand goals**

Fiat believed that a thoughtful Search strategy could have a positive impact on brand building goals in addition to direct-response goals. To quantify this, Fiat teamed with Google and IpsosMedia CT to conduct a "Brand Value of Search" study. The study was designed to measure how brand awareness was affected when Fiat ads appeared on Google searches for "small car."



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*“While we understood the value of segment search in driving engagement, we were pleasantly surprised to also see a lift in Fiat brand measures thanks to search impressions alone. Through our presence on the search results page on small car queries, the Fiat brand’s awareness and favorability increased and it really helped drive undecided shoppers’ consideration of the brand.”*

— Susan Thomson, Director of Media & Social Media, Chrysler Group LLC

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During the study, Fiat’s search and brand marketing teams worked together to understand not only how the presence of a Fiat ad drove brand lift, but also how different ad copy influenced the results. They tested two variations of desktop ads and found that the one emphasizing Fiat’s Italian roots had a bigger impact on brand perception.

At the end of the study, results revealed that the presence of a search ad for Fiat increased unaided awareness from just 11% to 22.5%. That’s an 11.5 percentage point increase in unaided brand awareness.

Also, top-of-mind awareness of Fiat increased 6 percentage points from just 3% to 9%.

“While we understood the value of segment search in driving engagement, we were pleasantly surprised to also see a lift in Fiat brand measures thanks to search impressions alone,” says Thomson. “Through our presence on the search results page on small car queries, the Fiat brand’s awareness and favorability increased and it really helped drive undecided shoppers’ consideration of the brand.”

Fiat also saw compelling results in the study relating specifically to mobile search ads. Mobile searchers’ unaided awareness of Fiat increased 6 percentage points (from 22.9% to 28.9%) when Fiat was featured in the top sponsored position on mobile. And, top-of-mind awareness on mobile increased 4 percentage points from 15.3% to 19.3%. Seeing the potential for growth in mobile, Fiat recently re-designed its mobile site to focus on the needs and behaviors of mobile auto shoppers.



“We know mobile users are quickly becoming the primary audience,” says Thomson. “We know it’s important to reach people in the moments that matter, regardless of the device they are using, and with Google we’re able to drive new brand awareness and consideration across different screens.”

Overall, Fiat’s market reentry was a great success, as the company saw year-over-year sales growth of over 120% between 2011 and 2012. With virtually no brand awareness in some categories prior to reentry, one year later, one-third of small car shoppers saw Fiat as a market leader and status setter in high-quality small cars.

### Reving up for future success

By keeping digital marketing front and center for both brand and performance, Fiat is ensuring that these results are just the beginning. “We’re seeing the Fiat brand continue to grow,” says Thomson. “Our target consumers are advanced consumers of media, so we’ll continue to invest in mobile, social media and video.” Whatever the future brings, the Fiat brand’s digital strategies have put the brand firmly in the driver’s seat.

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