



## GSK succeeds in driving mass reach by adopting a digital only approach, positioning YouTube as a TV channel

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### Goals

- Drive maximum reach across brands' target audiences
- Maximize efficiency and reduce waste
- Understand impact of YouTube-only across video

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### Approach

- Adopted a digital-only month with no TV
- Ran YouTube-only campaigns
- Optimized plans in real time

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*"We overachieved all reach targets, reaching over 80% of the target audience for top brands within the YouTube universe across Arabia."*

— **Unusheah Khan, Brand Manager, Sensodyne**

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*"In a TV-dark month, YouTube – our sole communication platform – helped all of our brands exceed KPIs and covered the gap of TV. Not only did YouTube generate TV-equivalent reach, but also significant efficiency in terms of media dollars."*

— **Salman Altaf, Marketing Director, GSK**

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With a large portfolio of consumer healthcare brands including Sensodyne, Panadol, Parodontax, Otrivin and Voltaren, it's imperative for a business like GSK to efficiently drive reach and achieve better penetration across markets such as KSA and UAE. However, that presents challenges in a region where more people spend time on digital while dual and even triple screening. Therefore we wanted to test the Youtube only approach.

"We knew TV was undoubtedly providing us the scale, but that came at the cost of operating at a higher frequency," explains Ratna Shankar, Business Director at MediaCom. It meant we were hitting the same consumer over and over again – without building any incremental reach. Therefore, we set out to test an alternative media approach that could help us drive mass reach in an efficient way. This also provided an opportunity for us to test the boundaries of reach and determine how high was truly high. We wanted to check if YouTube alone could get us the mass reach reach with a much more controlled frequency, and of course with better targeting capabilities."

Using PBU, the in-house trading desk of GroupM, teams from GSK, MediaCom and Google embarked on a unique experiment in internet video in which all TV activity was turned off completely for a one-month period in order to reveal the effects of a YouTube-only approach.

"Although it provides us the scale, TV is a challenging medium in this region both because of the light consumption among specific audiences and the limitations of Pan-Arab TV in terms of market level targeting," explains Berkan. "YouTube at this point came to the stage and helped us generate TV-equivalent reach, resulting in significant efficiency in terms of media dollars."

Each brand's campaign ran programmatically and incorporated demographic targeting. Sensodyne, Panadol Cold & Flu, Parodontax, Panadol Extra and Otrivin aimed to reach men and women ages 18 to 44, while Panadol Joint targeted those over 35 years of age and Voltaren targeted those aged 30 to 50. To maximize brand recall, ads included adequate branding within the first five seconds of each video.

By serving ads on YouTube, GSK could capitalize on several opportunities not available in traditional TV environments. "We could undertake in-depth copy analysis, measure brand lift in real time and optimize plans mid-flight, as opposed to TV where we'd have to wait for six weeks to make any changes," Ratna says.

Plans were optimized continuously based on consumers' receptivity. "For example, mid-flight we upweighted the focus on mobile, where the eyeballs were coming from," says Angel Ruiz de Llano, Digital Lead at MediaCom. "The team also manually adjusted the cost per view based on bids from competitors within the category."

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*"We achieved a 28% brand recall uplift – best-in-class for the category."*

**– Berkan Tunaboynu, Digital Lead, GSK**

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*"The market share of our top brand increased by 5 percentage points year over year, and by 0.2% month over month despite the category shrinking by 2.6% during the same period."*

**– Unusheah Khan, Brand Manager, Sensodyne**

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As far as results go, a host of success metrics demonstrate the wisdom in GSK's unique experiment. "All reach targets were exceeded, in many cases by more than 10 percentage points, and during a three-week period only," Berkan reveals. The reach achieved across brands ranged from 63% to 87% of the target audience, for varying levels of media spend behind each brand. Despite the high intensity of the campaigns, the overall cost per view was in line with benchmarks for KSA and UAE. Meanwhile, view-through rates were aligned with KSA benchmarks and outperformed UAE benchmarks. Thanks to smart upfront branding in videos, the uplift in brand recall was 28% – a best-in-class result for the category.

In addition, GSK's market share of one of its key brands, Sensodyne, increased by 5 percentage points year over year, and by 0.2% month over month despite the category shrinking by 2.6% in the same period. "Our approach delivered scale, cost efficiency and the right targeting with real time results," affirms Unusheah Khan, Brand Manager for GSK. "And we reached real people, versus measuring the impact on TV based on an opportunity to see."

In summary, YouTube proved to be an effective and efficient reach building platform with notable impacts on sales and the business overall.