

Oxfam uses Google Engagement Ads to bring together brand building engagement with the accountability and transparency of performance marketing



About Oxfam

- www.oxfam.org.uk
- Globally renowned aid and development charity
- 70 years of experience
- Works and campaigns with partners in 94 countries worldwide

Goals

- Drive brand awareness for Oxfam's vision for Food for All
- Find and educate a passionate and engaged audience about Oxfam's vision
- Achieve an attitudinal shift in the target audience

Approach

- Launched Google Engagement Ads using the Google Display Network in AdWords
- Used dynamic optimisation to reach an audience that was more likely to engage with the Oxfam brand message
- Ran side-by-side test with an alternative engagement ad provider

Results

- Positive lifts on brand awareness and knowledge of Oxfam's vision
- Oxfam's Food for All message reached 7.3m people via Google CPE, of which 129k chose to engage with the ad; Oxfam paid only for these deep engagements
- In a head-to-head test with a fixed rate card engagement provider, Google delivered a 52% lower CPE and 13% higher engagement rate

Oxfam is one of the most recognised humanitarian development charities in the UK. Its media agency Jaywing was responsible for developing the digital media strategy for Oxfam's recent Food for All brand campaign.

While brand awareness for Oxfam is above 90%, research indicates the charity faces a number of challenges. First, the public lacks factual understanding of the contemporary work that Oxfam delivers on the ground, especially among younger audiences. Second, levels of personal involvement and passion for the brand can be low – due in large part to the fact that target audiences of any international humanitarian charity will never experience the situation faced by the beneficiaries of their donations.

Creating a connection

While planning the campaign, Jaywing decided to include Google Engagement Ads to help form a solution to some of the challenges Oxfam faced. Jaywing and Oxfam believed the branding opportunities of this unique format would allow Oxfam to “connect our audience and the world around them, to better understand the need and therefore better understand the role they can play in creating a world where there is enough food for all, as well as to re-engage through rich, visual and highly targeted communications that aim to shift people's understanding”.

Engagement Ads provide advertisers with a rich creative canvas, offering several formats to choose from that can be easily customised to suit the tone and style of a brand. The brand experience comes alive as consumers are able to view the ad in a larger size, stream videos, play games and more. Oxfam opted to use the standard expandable format, so users could choose to engage by hovering over the teaser state of the ad for two continuous seconds, which then prompted the ad to expand. The two-second delay helped eliminate accidental expansions, improving the user experience.

“Given how effective Google Engagement Ads were for our Food for All campaign, we intend to make them a key part of our next campaign.”

—Alison Price, Digital Acquisition Manager, Oxfam

Incorporating the same flexible targeting options available on YouTube and AdWords, the Engagement Ads campaign was easy to set up and run. The ads were dynamically optimised for user engagement in the auction, and the Cost Per Engagement (CPE) pricing structure meant that Oxfam only paid when audiences engaged. In this way, the solution combined the art of branding with the science of performance display.

Three main benefits the Jaywing and Oxfam teams valued most:

- The auction model means that good creative is rewarded, with the benefits passed straight through to the advertiser through lower CPE bids
 - The real-time auto-optimisation functionality drives performance
 - The transparency affords the ability to see and understand which targeting types are performing well, then make further optimisation changes beyond the auction's auto-optimisation
-

A core goal of the campaign was “getting people more engaged with our brand creative message”, Jaywing’s Head of Communications Planning says. But we wanted to achieve this as efficiently as possible, noting that in a traditional CPM buy at least 30% of impressions are never seen. The agency also wanted to be able to use flexible targeting in order to achieve the intended attitudinal shift in the audience. “Our plan was to carve out audience segments and optimise to them, target the multiple audiences and optimise to cost and performance relative to the audience mix – in real time.” In its first use of the format, Jaywing decided to test two methodologies, Google’s auction model versus alternative fixed rate card engagement offerings.

Strength in numbers

Google’s auction model delivered twice as many engagements as the fixed rate card solution Jaywing ran. The engagement rate of the Google campaign at 1.8% was 13% higher too, while the Google eCPM was 1.8X lower than the fixed-price model alternative. Overall, the campaign CPE at £0.22, was 52% lower than the fixed-price campaign.

“A lot of this is due to the real-time optimisation offered by the Google Display Network for target audience segments at the segment level,” Jaywing’s Head of Communications Planning says. “With other solutions in the market, we don’t have this level of transparency at all into optimisation. And the fixed rate card pricing model restricted the volume of users we can afford to reach within an equivalent budget. Google Engagement Ads work on the basis on an auction model, hence we could achieve greater volumes of engagements per pound spent.”

Post-click performance, which were measured by charity funds received, also revealed interesting outcomes. Google Engagement Ads outperformed the fixed-price approach by fifteen-fold on number of donations and twenty-fold on donation value.

At the same time, Oxfam also conducted a Millward Brown brand uplift study on the campaign, which indicated that Google Engagement Ads delivered positive lifts on brand awareness, in growing love for the brand and increasing knowledge of Oxfam’s vision for a world where there is Food for All.

A brighter future

Jaywing reports that both agency and client are pleased with the results from their inaugural use of Google Engagement Ads. “CPE is a really nice format in terms of buying and the user experience,” Jaywing’s Head of Communications Planning says. “And you only get the people that you are interested in, so performance is better too.”

