



Abu Dhabi’s Department of Culture and Tourism drives more qualified audience through AdWords Smart Bidding

About Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism

- Provides support for Abu Dhabi’s evolution into a world class, sustainable destination of distinction

Goals

- Stimulate interest in travel to Abu Dhabi
- Reach engaged audiences
- Increase media efficiency for non-transactional client

Approach

- Optimized for user engagement with Smart Bidding campaigns using Target CPA

Results

Compared to other paid media channels:

- 2X longer website visits
- 39% more onsite user engagement

Compared to previous paid search campaigns:

- 31% more onsite user engagement
- 90% longer website visits
- 23% more page visits
- 51% reduction in cost per engaged user

“We were delighted to see how machine learning made a sizeable impact on our branding campaigns and look forward to making more use of the powerful tools AdWords provides.”

— Steve Copestake, Acting Executive Director, Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism

Abu Dhabi’s Department of Culture and Tourism regulates, develops and promotes the Emirate of Abu Dhabi as an inspired global destination, rich in cultural authenticity, diverse natural offerings and unparalleled family leisure and entertainment attractions.

The department’s business purpose is not primarily transactional, but rather to inspire, stimulate user interest in travel to Abu Dhabi and provide sufficient information to users who are in a consideration phase. With a marketing goal of using paid search media to deliver a more engaged audience to the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism website, the team embraced AdWords’ Smart Bidding, a set of automated bid strategies that use machine learning to optimize for conversions or conversion value in each and every auction.

The team employed keyword categories covering the entire user journey, from inspiration to planning. In order to incorporate more signals into their campaign bidding, they set out to identify users with stronger intent while automating the whole process. Their focus was on achieving the highest value advertising by tapping into the most relevant traffic.

To do so, they used one of AdWords’ automated bidding strategies, Target CPA. Instead of focusing on a single conversion, they focused on identifying multiple behavioral signals on the website – such as soft conversions and events – to distinguish the most engaged users and those who were most likely to come to Abu Dhabi. These additional signals were then used to automatically improve the bidding algorithm through Smart Bidding.

Thanks to all the additional signals, the campaign delivered users who were more relevant, showed more interest in the department’s website content and were more likely to consider Abu Dhabi as their next destination. The results in comparison to other paid media channels were outstanding: the Smart Bidding campaign drove website visits that were twice as long as other media channels on average, with users engaging 39% more with the content.

In comparison to the department’s traditional paid search campaigns, the Smart Bidding campaigns drove 31% more engagements on the website and produced visits that were on average 90% longer. Not only did users engage more with the website, but they also consumed more content by visiting additional pages – overall the Smart Bidding campaigns produced 23% more page visits. What’s more, the cost per engaged user went down by an impressive 51%.