CASE STUDY
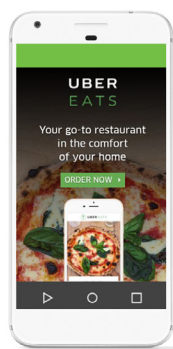
Uber Eats Delivers Timely, Contextual Creative to Hungry Australians
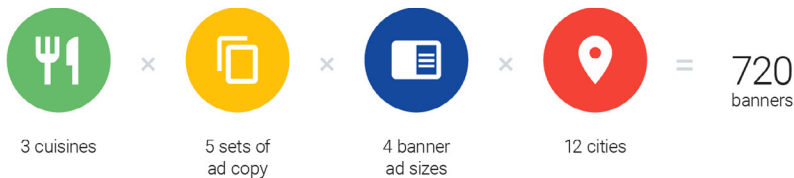
The food consumers want, when they want it—that's how Uber Eats became one of the most popular online food ordering and delivery platforms. The brand identified a strong need for its services in Australia in 2016, expanding to a total of 12 cities within its first year in the region.

Uber Eats saw adoption from existing Uber users who were willing to pay for food delivery, but it needed to acquire more customers in order to grow in Australia's competitive market. The brand started running standard banner ads, but the static, one-size-fits-all approach (featuring the same photos of foods like burgers and pizza across all cities) was met with low engagement across the board.

The recipe for relevant creative

For its second campaign, the Uber Eats APACx team, headquartered in Singapore, began creating digital assets that adapted to each Aussie city's most popular cuisines as they changed. The moving parts resulted in a heavy lift for Uber's regional creative team, which was tasked with constantly designing city-specific banner ads based on quarterly sales data (three cuisines X five sets of ad copy X four banner ad sizes X 12 cities = 720 banners). Moreover, the creative was fed manually into the ad buying system by the in-market media team, further delaying the lead time for campaign launches.

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The second campaign saw higher engagement, but the Eats team wanted to find a more efficient way to reduce workloads, cut down production lag, and, most importantly, make full use of real-time audience location and CRM insights. Today's smartphone users expect brands to be there with relevant, useful content when they search for restaurants nearby or place an order online. In fact, 61% of smartphone users say they're more likely to buy from mobile sites and apps that customise information to their location.[1]
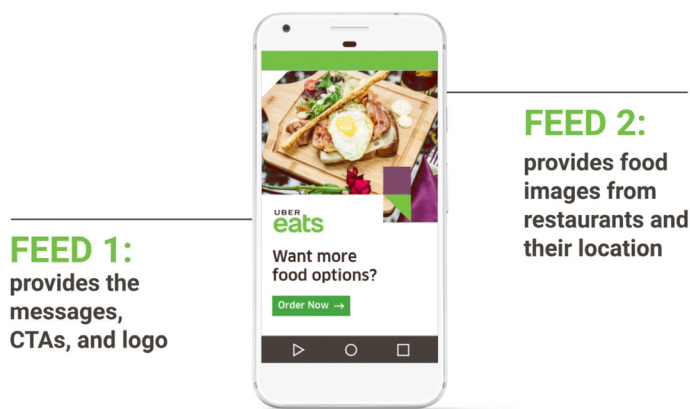
To remedy this, the brand launched a third campaign, using DoubleClick Creative Solutions to produce dynamic banner ads featuring highly relevant creative based on real-time sales data.

Serving up contextual cuisine via dynamic banner ads

Getting the campaign off the ground involved close collaboration and brainstorming between the Uber Eats and DoubleClick SEA teams. The campaign was divided into five stages over 16 weeks:

1. **Planning the creative concept:** Uber Eats expressed interest in serving contextual banner ads showcasing the most popular local restaurants and cuisine based on app users' locations.

2. **Maintaining the dynamic feed:** Google demonstrated how to run the dynamic feed in Google Sheets, which was automatically updated with the latest sales data and restaurant information every four hours.

3. **Developing the banner ads:** Uber Eats worked with Google to integrate a development tool into DoubleClick Studio, where the creative was automatically generated based on real-time data from the feed.

4. **Trafficking the campaign:** The banners were put through a quality assurance process and trafficked through DoubleClick Campaign Manager, allowing the brand to assess and optimise the campaign on the fly.

5. **Executing the media buy:** The media team used DoubleClick Bid Manager to execute the media buy across 12 cities in Australia.

FEED 1: provides the messages, CTAs, and logo

FEED 2: provides food images from restaurants and their location

To bring the banners to life, the creative team at Uber used two file feeds: Feed 1 provided the messaging, CTAs, and logo, while Feed 2 displayed relevant food images pulled from top-selling restaurants in each Australian city. For example, users in Sydney were served contextual ads featuring Sydney's most popular restaurants—all based on real-time sales data and the latest deals (e.g., lunch or dinner specials) and availability.

Boosting CTR, increasing efficiency with DoubleClick

The contextual creative helped Uber Eats achieve a whopping 190% increase in CTR. What's more, the dynamic banners reduced the number of creative elements that had to be manually updated from 720 to just four (99% reduction in manual work). This resulted in a 4X improvement in operational efficiency, freeing up time for refining use cases, concept validation, art creation, and more concept testing.

"As an art director, [the process] gives the creative team greater flexibility in our creative explorations and encourage new dynamic experimentations," said Neville Hew, art director at Uber.

"When we first explored dynamic creative, our goal was to deliver the right message to the right user in an automated manner so each and

every viewer will find our ads relevant and our designers can save time from doing repetitive work. The entire creative request, review, and implementation workflow was improved," said Dianchen Yao, regional growth marketing manager at Uber.

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The campaign's success has encouraged the brand to produce even more dynamic creative moving forward. "Our vision is to have all ads truly personalised in the near future, especially in a mobile-first region like APAC," concluded David Sierra, APAC search and programmatic display lead at Uber.

In March 2018, Uber Eats SEA was sold to Grab, a Singapore-based ridesharing and on-demand delivery service. As a result of the merger, much of the Uber Eats APACx team will join Grab, while a small group of employees will remain focused on the Uber Eats business in AUNZ, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

Source

1 Google/Ipsos, "Consumers in the Micro-Moment, Wave 3," August 2015, U.S., 291 online smartphone users 18+.