

Experiment with Google Ads: Advanced audiences on YouTube unlock relevant results with travelers

Hypothesis

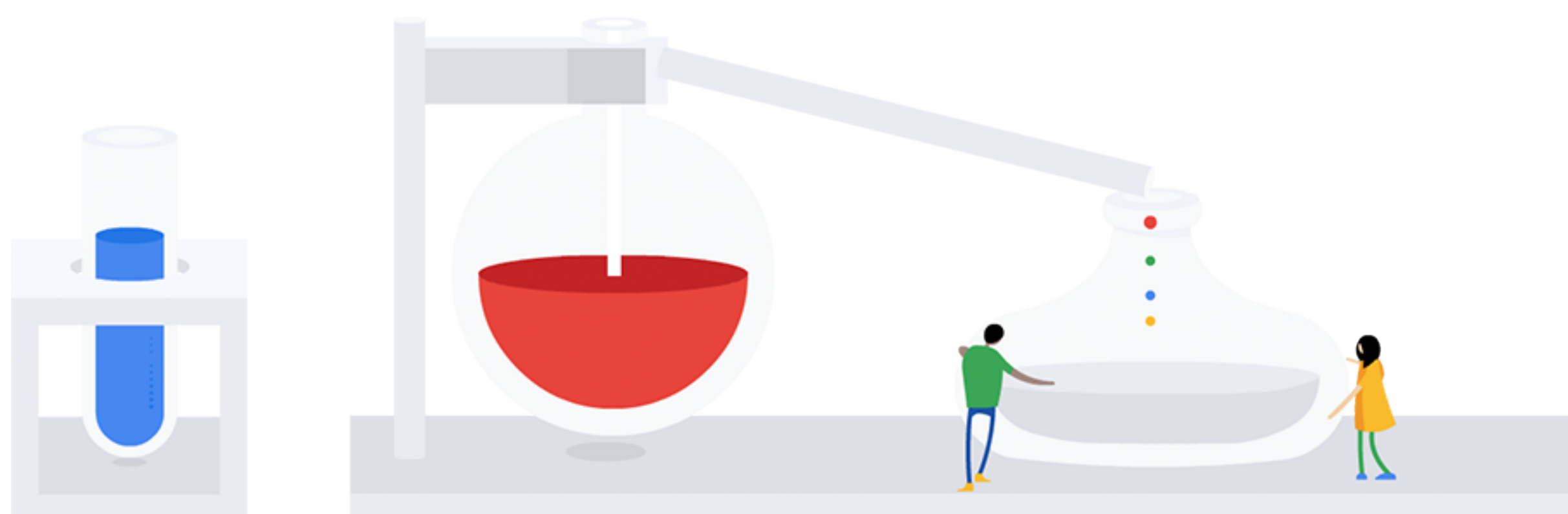
Advanced audiences on YouTube can unlock relevant results with audiences at different stages of their decision-making journey.



Challenge

Airbnb is the global leader in vacation rentals. Looking to build its brand in APAC, the company identified India as one of its focus markets. Airbnb wanted to increase consideration with Indian travelers who were in the “dreaming” and “planning” stages of their travel-planning journey as well as customers ready to book their stay. To do so, the vacation rental company leveraged TrueView ads on YouTube during peak travel season to position itself as an alternative to hotels for international travel.

This campaign let Airbnb experiment with different audiences and explore what works best to help the company identify the optimal signals in various stages of the decision-making journey and achieve its campaign goals of brand recall, consideration, and consumer interest.



Experiment

To reach Indian travelers, Airbnb ran YouTube TrueView video ads featuring India’s top influencers, Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor, in the country’s five biggest cities. The vacation rental company set up three customized audiences, each with separate campaigns:

- Custom affinity: based on signals exhibited by individual customers
- Custom intent: based on what customers were searching on Google
- In-market audience: based on users in the market for travel

Test geographies:

Airbnb used three different video creative across its three different audience segments.

Control geographies:

Airbnb ran general ads in cities outside the top five.

By testing different audiences on YouTube, Airbnb was able to identify optimal search signals in the various stages of travel planning.

Tools

• Signal-based audience solutions

• Brand Lift Survey

Takeaways

- Custom affinity audiences made it easy for Airbnb to reach travelers in the “dreaming” phase, capture their attention, and spark their interest using broader audience segments based on individual consumer signals.
- Custom intent and in-market audiences helped Airbnb connect with consumers in the “planning” stage of their travel journey and drive purchases for those ready to book.

Results

30.6%

view-through rate
with custom affinity audiences

+7.5X

brand interest
from organic search for audiences
in the exploration stage