

Thomson Sport wins with social using Experian, the Alchemy Social platform and Facebook

Thomson Sport, a member of the TUI Travel PLC Group of Companies, is the exclusive provider of World Cup packages for the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Brazil. Thomson can provide both the tickets and flights and accommodation, ensuring customers experience the excitement of the event without the worry of transfers, tickets and hotel availability.

Challenge

Due to the location of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, increasing ticket costs and lack of hotel availability, Thomson Sport quickly identified that they would need to attract high net worth England football fans to maximise the return on their marketing spend.

With football becoming increasingly 'social' and nearly three million fans of the England team's Facebook page, Thomson Sport engaged Experian Marketing Services to help them maximise the potential of social media. Key requirements for the programme were to:

- Identify the correct target market for their World Cup packages
- Find and reach these potential customers on Facebook
- Maintain a low CPA while driving potential customers to the Thomson Sport website
- Validate the resulting customers for further targeting.

Solution

Thomson Sport decided to incentivise potential customers that matched their ideal customer profile to provide their email address in return for the chance to win a free trip to watch FC Barcelona train. This activity also provided the opportunity to register interest in 2014 World Cup packages. The success of the campaign relied on being able to target only those individuals that matched the perfect customer profile.

Identifying the perfect customer

Thomson Sport already had a database of customers that purchased package deals for the 2010 World Cup. Experian profiled this data against two types of segmentation models – Mosaic UK and Financial Strategy Segments. This information enabled Thomson Sport to have a deep understanding of their perfect customer, their demographics, lifestyle, preferences and buying behaviours.

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Reaching the perfect customer

Using Experian's Alchemy Social Facebook ads manager platform, the Experian team leveraged this deep customer insight across three stages:

- **CRM:** Utilising Facebook custom audiences, the segments were uploaded into Facebook to find existing customers likely to purchase a 2014 package. The creative message was tailored based on the Experian segment the individual fell into.
- **Acquisition:** Once these segments were in Facebook, look-a-like audiences were created by matching key characteristics against Facebook data. This stage delivered new customers for Thomson Sport that matched the profile of their perfect customer.
- **Overlaying Facebook targeting:** By filtering the look-a-like audiences with Facebook targeting options such as "English football fans", the target audiences were further refined, increasing the likelihood that they would be both interested in the packages and able to afford them.

Maintaining ROI

By maximising the power of the Alchemy Social platform the Experian team was able create multiple messaging options for multivariate testing at scale, quickly optimising data sets and creative mix to ensure they were hitting the best performing audience segments.

Validation

Using the new email addresses captured in response to the campaign, Experian further profiled the data to validate it against the intended audience segments. This information can now be used for cross-channel marketing campaigns or further targeting via Facebook custom audiences.

Results

- **14% of the targeted audience** registered an interest in the Brazil World Cup, higher than the other channels used as part of the campaign – PPC, email and display.
- **The match rate between Experian's data and Thomson Sport data was 99.75%**, providing Thomson Sport with an extraordinarily detailed view of its customer base.
- Analysis following the campaign showed that those individuals that registered interest in the 2014 World Cup packages were **nearly two and a half times more likely to fit the Mosaic profile** that Experian defined, validating the accuracy of the targeting strategy.

“Our goal was to not just recruit new customers, but to engage the right audience to acquire quality leads. Working with Alchemy allowed us to leverage Experian's Mosaic profiling to give us extra confidence when building our audience segments. Facebook newsfeed ads were also a great medium for getting people engaged with the brand, and saw us boost page likes by 34%.”

— **Chris James**, Global Multi-channel Performance Manager

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