

## Case study

# Carling – Live music listings and search engines

### Key takeouts: Smartly using search engines can boost brand reach

When the idea behind a brand entertainment website is built for search marketing, a massive transformation in the scale and scope of their messaging is possible. This site touches millions.

Run date: **2006** Territories: **UK** Agency: **Variou** Digital disciplines: **Sponsorship, search, integrated marketing, strategic marketing models, web design**

## Background

In the crowded drinks sector Carling wanted to find a strategic way to achieve cut-through. They developed an award-winning strategy of sponsorships that were amplified on the web through sophisticated search engine marketing that gave the campaign a permanent place online. Carling realised that just as brand compete for a share of sales, they also compete for audience attention online so an alternative to simple advertising was needed.

## Objectives

- Introduce target consumers to the brand by extending awareness.
- Build tight message association around events and live music.
- Encourage consumer engagement and develop richer, more meaningful conversations with consumers.

## What they did

Carling levered a massive offline sponsorship campaign of live music venues to amplify their presence on the web. The key strands were:

- Creating a key entertainment site
- Levering title sponsorship of venues

to boost search position

- Harnessing search engine optimisation and advertising to deliver awareness and traffic
- Monitoring with clear metrics

Because live music entertainment was a category in search engines many many times larger than the volume of drinks searches will ever be, Carling decided to create entertainment content.

They optimised their sponsorships for the marketing potential of search engines by placing the Carling brand name as venue sponsor, letting their venue partners' marketing drive awareness and impacts.

This amplified their offline event and venue sponsorships by ensuring the brand name was on every search and in every listing.

They and their partners ran additional natural search campaigns and tactical pay per click to secure high rankings for keywords relating to live music and artists.

## How they did it

Developing a massive, powerful new entertainments' information site let them capture and publish content for live music, building a scaleable platform of material that would be critical in optimising rankings in natural listings for such competitive terms as those relating to live music.

The Carling site featured comprehensive gig information with fully transactional ticket purchasing, deep information on the Carling branded venues, festival news and members only area for added value.

It covered live music and extended into a related area for the brand: football events.

Pay per click was used constantly and tactically to meet traffic, acquisition and ticket sales objectives. It was selected for the speed of implementation, ability to deliver on key terms and promote specific content.

## Evaluation

This marketing activity combines the:

- Creation of an online community with the intent of becoming no 1 choice for gig information.
- Development of brand loyalty
- Delivery of brand messages
- Digital integrated campaigns can easily be measured and evaluated using hard analytics from web reporting systems to track the number of consumers, target consumers and brand adorners it touches.

These powerful techniques are also combined with brand effectiveness tracking to test movements in key variables such as:



- Brand awareness and image
- Message association
- Purchase intent

## Results

The campaign created an award-winning entertainment site with these results:

- Massive increase in reach and frequency for brand impacts, clear uplift in message association on key brand terms
- Search engines have delivered well over 1.5 million visits to Carling.com that year
- Hitwise ranked Carling as the no.2 UK website in Food & Beverage category (share of visits Jan-Mar in year of the campaign)
- Carling.com is one of the largest independent sellers of gig tickets
- KPIs for recruitment programme "were smashed", greater value through amplification of existing media
- Tactical ppc generated Over 2,000 click throughs, CTR of 4.21%, PC of £0.03

## Academy Tutor comments...

"This is masterful leverage of an offline event programme; a great example of integration. The amplification creates massive online awareness and sustained high presence. Although the brand is investing directly in search, it rides on the energy of the venue partners, creating a crescendo of noise for a target audience ready to hear. It's a model that lets a fast moving consumer good brand become one of the most ranked sites in the entertainment category."

