

Case study

Tourism New Zealand – Blogging to build the brand

Key takeouts: Blogging can deliver engagement and deep propositions

Blogging can deliver personal and rich messages about brands or the topics they are aligned to in a way that both connects to the consumer and creates discoverability through search engines.

Run date: 2007 Territories: Asia-Pacific / Australia Agency: Mindshare Digital disciplines: Online media, monitoring and evaluation, website design

Background

Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) is the international marketing agency responsible for marketing the country as a holiday/travel destination audiences outside New Zealand. An integrated online campaign was undertaken in 2007.

Objectives

The key campaign objectives were to:

- Increase awareness and deepen existing travellers' understanding of all New Zealand has to offer
- Reach new target consumers outside of the country
- Reach the right audience in a way that minimises media wastage
- Deliver an intimate experience of New Zealand, exploring rich aspects of the product (the experiences tourists can explore)
- Build discussion and contagion among target consumers, tapping into their own social networks
- Communicate with consumers in a way that achieves cut-through and deep engagement
- Build a hub of content that can support future communications

What they did

The team selected editorial travel writing as the tool for the campaign, and harnessed online media as the way to ensure massive potential discovery. Rather than classic editorial they chose the format of blogs and devised a storyline which explored a wide range of adventures and experiences available on a trip to New Zealand.

How they did it

Planners identified relevant and accessible sites whose user profile matched that of the target consumer. From that short list they could identify the best place to invest their energy. By aligning with a major media brand the discoverability of the content could be assured, and the potential for significant search engine optimisation could be unlocked because the weight of in-bound links to the media group were certain to boost rankings in search engines as well as creating immediate opportunities for clicks.

Planners used a range of formats with different creative executions to gain maximum benefit from each of these sites.

Evaluation technique

Evaluation for this type of activity can be through the number of views, the number of comments, the consumer attitudes expressed in the comments, the number of impacts of the advertising promoting the content, and the number of active clicks through to related marketing material. Advanced metrics could include running brand tracking studies to measure uplift on key variables such as message association and brand favourability (the likelihood of taking a trip in this case).

Results

The content was successfully developed and published, enjoying the brand halo effect from working with a premium media partner.

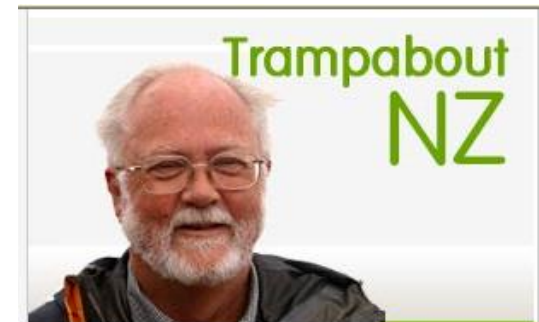
The campaign delivered 10m impacts to more than 3.6m consumers across sites including MSN Entertainment, MSN Hotmail, ivillage.co.uk.

Content was successfully indexed in search engines, with a ranking boosted by the prestige of the partner's website.

Consumers explored the content and were exposed to complex and deep sales propositions about New Zealand as a holiday destination.

Potential travellers to New Zealand began discussion, passing on messages that began as editorial. With something as personal as travel, word of mouth is recognised as a highly effective way to achieve consumer engagement. That's why social media has become such a popular tool in the travel; sector.

The blogs showed the beauty of New Zealand and the wide range of exciting activities as well as endorsing the brand values through Bruce's style of writing and activities he took part in.



Bruce Elder is a journalist, writer and commentator. He is currently a full-time journalist with the Sydney Morning Herald specialising in travel and popular culture. His other areas of expertise include film, television, and popular music. He has written extensively around Australia and has a passion for Australian history.

Bruce Elder is a guest of Tourism New Zealand



Academy Tutor comments...

"Tourism marketing is notoriously competitive, but the blogging format achieves cut through and a connection with the prospective traveller. By leveraging the weight of a mainstream news media site, TNZ could instantly reach a wide range of potential target consumers. The legacy of the initial activity is that consumers next year will still be able to find this content so it should continue to work hard for the brand. Harnessing the permanence of the web like this increase campaign returns."

