



SQWEARS

FINAL MAJOR REPORT

RACHEL NEWBOLT

CONTENTS

3

Initial Ideas

4

Market Research

5

About SQwears

6

Brand Identity

7

Multi-media Content

12

Social Media

16

Backend

19

Reach

22

Conclusion

23

Bibliography



INITIAL IDEAS

FIRST CONCEPT

During the brainstorming process myself and Corby had an array of ideas ranging from a female trades directory to a gay bar review site in the style of tripadvisor. When we reached the second week of FMP we had it set that we were going to create a live streaming wedding service, catering for guests unable to make it to the ceremony. I felt that this would have been a profitable gap in the market as I have family members who live abroad. We hit many walls during this period and many ideas fizzled out due to lack of coding experience and very expensive live streaming equipment for venues without wifi. It was also

Queer Looks



Robyn
Hoodie - Konichiwa Records
1 YEAR AGO 4 NOTES

.ql.
ABOUT US
RSS
ARCHIVE

mentioned to us by our tutors that if a family member on the receiving end watching the ceremony on their computer has poor wifi, the blame may be pushed onto us as we would have been paid to provide a service that didn't quite happen. In the last leg of brainstorming we remembered a Tumblr blog we had both started two years prior called 'The Queer Looks'. 'The Queer Looks' was a blog dedicated to fashion sourcing cheaper alternative to clothes worn by current gay icons. We would post the photo and link underneath each item of clothing. We decided we wanted to turn our dormant blog into a fully functioning multimedia website dedicated to LGBT interest fashion and news. As we are both big fans of youtubers, we noticed how those with a strong voice within the blogging community are paid to conduct product reviews, and are paid through tracked affiliate links to products they promote. We felt that this could be applicable to our fashion blog as we were getting numerous followers reblogging and liking our posts on Tumblr. We felt that if we also had a news section, this may drive traffic and create more revenue through adverts.

THE ADVOCATE

AUTOSTRADDLE

DIVA OUT

MARKET RESEARCH



When conducting market research we found that there are many gay news and entertainment sites out there. Some prime examples being 'The Advocate', 'Autostraddle' and 'Pink News'. When we looked at gay fashion it was clear that it is an area that is not ventured into online. There are limited and poor quality gay fashion sections on pre existing sites/Tumblr blogs, but they seem very one dimensional compared to the user experience we wanted to give our users. We wanted **SQWEARS** to be a rich news, fashion and social experience. During our research we also found that '1 out of every 5 minutes spent online is on social media platforms (telligent, infographic, 2011). Because of this, we knew we wanted to focus on not only providing quality news and fashion content on site, but also establishing a brand voice across social media platforms, similar to the 'Huffington post'.

As members of the gay community ourselves, Corby and I felt that this is a gap in the market that we could fill not only because it hasn't properly been explored, but because we knew we could do it well as we are the target audience.

SQWEARS

**FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T
QUITE SQUARE.**

SQWEARS is an all inclusive LGBT news and fashion website made by myself and fellow class member Corby Taylor. Corby and I have worked on various projects together in our third year as we have different skills that work well together, we have a similar work ethic and because we have very similar interests. This means our group work flows well.

The name SQwears is a play on words as being called a 'square' connotes someone who is stereotypically 'the norm'. Members of the LGBT community have famously been treated as those who are 'out of the norm' so incorporating the word square was for iconic purposes. We also incorporated the word 'wear' as a large chunk of the site is dedicated to sourcing fashion. Our tag line 'for those who aren't quite square' was later incorporated to hint to our users what the site is actually about, without categorising it as a 'gay website'.

SQwears aims are to provide all the latest in LGBT interest news (covering sub categories like 'politics', 'activism', 'celebrities', 'TV', 'music' etc) and also fashion inspiration (covering the latest trends worn by gay celebrities, queer street style and also seasonal 'lookbook's'.)

SQwears is a manifestation of all the multimedia skills we have learned during our time at Ravensbourne as we cover web management, SEO, generation revenue, custom coding, theme hacking, journalism/blogging, video shooting/editing, photography, social media management and more.



SQWEARS FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T
QUITE SQUARE.

HOME / FASHION / NEWS / SHOP

EUROVISION 'EUROPE-WIDE GAY PARADE'
MAY 6, 2014 / 0 COMMENTS

SOCIAL

Vitaly Milonov in talk about "Eurovision Boycott"

Vitaly Milonov is the legislator of St. Petersburg and a prominent figure in Russian politics and is famously antigay. Milonov supported the controversial

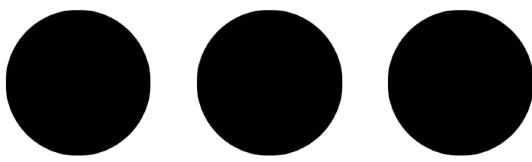
▶ ACHING, NEWS, POLITICS, VI ▶ ANTI-GAY, AUSTRALIA, EUROVISION, BLURRED LADY, CONCHITA WURST, EUROVISION 2014, EUROVISION BOYCOTT, EUROVISION COPENHAGEN, GAY PARADE, KODENKAN, LODE, RUSSIA, THOMAS NEWMUTH, TRANSGENDER, VITALY MILONOV

POPULAR LATEST TAGS

GAY UGANDAN MAN BURNED ALIVE IS HOAX?



BRAND IDENTITY



Brand // Identity // Logo

The site was originally branded 'the queer looks' because the term queer is often used to describe everybody on the LGBT spectrum. It's basically one, easy word that describes every person within our target audience. After our first FMP meeting our tutors asked us to research into whether the phrase 'queer' was largely accepted by our target audience as they pointed out that members of the gay community have fought for equality for a long time and may not want to be put in a box. We devised a survey sending it out to all of our LGBT friends and also to the Ravensbourne LGBT society. The feedback we received was mixed with opinions ranging from those who thought the term queer was appropriate and inclusive, to those who thought it had negative connotations. Because of this mixed result we decided on a name change.

Our tutors pointed out that it may be quite tongue in cheek to create a name that wasn't so obvious or a name that was



ironic, and thus, SQwears was born. In the design process we wanted to create a bold, memorable logo that fitted with the brands one syllable name. We wanted the logo to be minimalistic using only black and white as this is quite fashionable and it also looks quite clean on a website. We used free font 'Blackout' which had a main font called **SUNRISE** and a sub font called **ZAM** which we used for our tag line. We implemented these colours and fonts onto the website, and also used aqua blue and greys, as well as two secondary fonts 'Oswald' (for titles) and 'helvetica' (for in post text).

MULTI-MEDIA

CONTENT



Corby and I decided that we wanted to showcase the content creation skills we had learned throughout our three years studying Web Media. The three types of multi media content we wanted to implement on **SQWEARS** was:

- Blogs/articles
- Video content
- Photo sets

ARTICLES

A large portion of our websites content are news articles. Our news articles are arranged in categories from general news to tech, celebrities, activism, politics, TV, film and reviews. We made sure our content is not only of LGBT interest but relevant to that particular weeks news. Each post is given meta tags and descriptions and are posted onto our numerous social media pages all of which improve our articles SEO.

Articles are written in a certain tone and voice, complying with sqwears' values. We always take a pro-gay stance but we decided to word articles in passive manner as we are both strong believers that news should not be one persons set views and opinions shoved down your throat. We wanted our news to be quite light hearted, including humorous articles as well as articles addressing serious issues such as world wide hate crimes and inequality. Our tone also encouraged users to leave their thoughts in the comments as we wanted sqwears to be more of a community and a place for discussion.

NEWS / FASHION

Eurovision 'Europe-wide Gay Parade'

MAY 6, 2014 / 0 COMMENTS



Vitaly Milonov in talks about 'Eurovision Boycott'

Vitaly Milonov is the legislator of St Petersburg and a prominent figure in Russian politics and is famously antigay. Milonov supported the controversial

FASHION, NEWS, POLITICS, TV ANTI-GAY, AUSTRIA, EUROVISION, BEARDED LADY, CONCHITA WURST, EUROVISION, EUROVISION 2014, EUROVISION BOYCOTT, EUROVISION COPENHAGEN, GAY PARADE, KØBENHAVN, LGBT, RUSSIA, THOMAS NEUWIRTH, TRANSEXUAL, VITALY MILONOV

TOP SHORTS OF SUMMER 2014

MAY 22, 2014 / 0 COMMENTS



Summers nearly here - update your summer wardrobe!

The Great British summer is almost upon us, its nearly that time of year where most people in the UK get two to three weeks of sun before winter sets

FASHION, GET THE LOOK ANDROGYNOUS FASHION, BEST SHORTS 2014, COOL SHORTS, FEMALE FASHION, GAY, GAY FASHION, LESBIAN FASHION, LGBT FASHION, MALE FASHION, QUEER FASHION, SUMMER SHORTS, TOP 10 SHORTS, TOP SUMMER SHORTS 2014

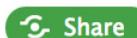
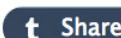
STRAIGHT MEN CHECK OUT GRindr

MAY 22, 2014 / 0 COMMENTS



Ever wondered what happens when straight men check out Grindr? YouTuber Neil McNeil shows nine different straight men the gay hook-up app 'Grindr' and their reactions are hilarious. Watch it for yourself!

NEWS, TECH GAY DATING APP, GRindr, LGBT, LGBT LAUGHS, NEIL MCNEIL, STRAIGHT GUYS CHECK OUT GRindr, YOUTUBER



VIDEO CONTENT

As well as text based news articles we wanted to provide our users with video content. This is because we wanted sqwears to be rich in multi media content, to be visually entertaining and because we want to showcase our content creation skills for future employment. We used the video platform YouTube to host our videos which provided us with free video hosting and also redirected YouTube users to sqwears, improving our hits. There were two types of videos we made for sqwears; fashion lookbooks and tutorials. Both were inspired by the YouTuber 'Zoella' as she is well known for creating fashion lookbooks, fashion advise tutorials and cooking tutorials. We decided to make fashion lookbooks to support our photo sets on lookbook.nu as it is popular within the fashion blogging community. Photo lookbooks can often be rigid and staged and we thought that this would be a great way for users to gain fashion inspiration. We

also made a step by step rainbow cake cooking tutorial as we thought it was a fun way to celebrate the upcoming event London Gay Pride. Videos were edited using Final Cut Pro 7 by myself and Jade Matheson, a second year Editing and Post Production student at Ravensbourne.



LOOKBOOK





Lookbooks are largely accepted by the fashion community as a visual way to present creative and fashionable outfits, advertising the stores in which the clothes were bought. This gives viewers ideas on how to style outfits, or to show what the latest fashions are. The trend was made popular by the hub for fashion bloggers 'lookbook.nu' which boasts over 1.2 million members.

Whilst browsing on lookbook we couldn't find a defined space for gay fashion. This encouraged us to create our own lookbook sets arranged by season and style. Our lookbooks are accessible through our sites menu and redirects users straight to our lookbook.nu profile.

Our first set was a gay wedding inspired lookbook as equal marriage has been a recent news topic. We also decided to make this lookbook set because as androgynous members of the LGBT

community we have often struggled knowing what to wear to weddings. Our second lookbook was advertising the anti-Putin t-shirt I designed that we were giving away in a competition. This competition was also hosted on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Because this set had a strong political message we received a lot of support from lookbook users, especially those from the Ukraine. Again, using lookbook attracted numerous site users to sqwears.

SOCIAL



Twitter

SQwears @SQwears · May 10

We utilised Twitter to build an online audience and interact with readers. #socialmedia #interaction

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [★ Favorite](#) [...](#) [More](#)

SQwears @SQwears · May 10

Tweets range from automatic blog post notifications to retweets from other LGBT News sources

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [★ Favorite](#) [...](#) [More](#)

SQwears @SQwears · May 10

We also used the platform to host our T-shirt giveaway and found we received many redirects to the site from this platform

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [★ Favorite](#) [...](#) [More](#)

SQwears @SQwears · May 6

Using the platform gave us 100+ more visitors

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [★ Favorite](#) [...](#) [More](#)

SQwears @SQwears · May 6

Twitter also improved our Klout score to 45 #winning

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [★ Favorite](#) [...](#) [More](#)



Facebook

SQWEARS

SQwears
200 likes

Update Page Info Liked Following

We found our largest audience on Facebook by sharing our articles and content. We chose to post relative and interesting content, hashtagging as appropriate. We also hosted our t-shirt giveaway on Facebook asking users to share the post. The post reached thousands of users.



200

Shop

About

Photos

Likes

Shop

SQwears shared a link.
Posted by Rachel Newbolt [?] · 4 May

Want to get your hands on this #antiPutin t-shirt?
Like and share this post to win. #win #giveaway
#contest #tshirt #putin #lgbt #gay #lesbian
<http://lookbook.nu/look/6151499-Putin-Him-In-His-Place>

Putin him in his place
lookbook.nu

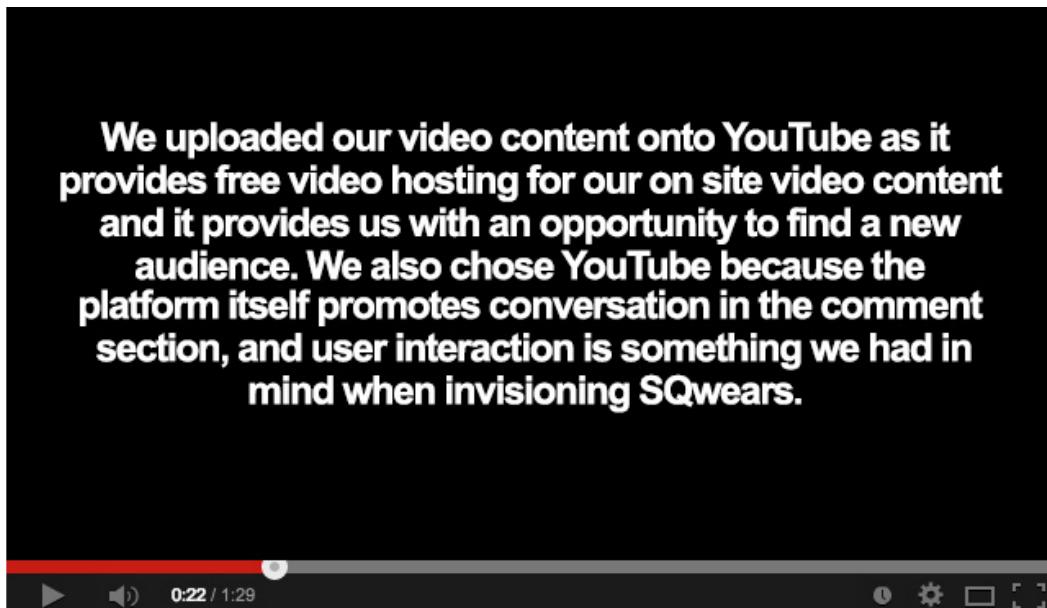
SQwears
Posted by Rachel Newbolt [?] · 20 May

Top looks for androgynous girls
#LesbianFashion #lgbt #androgynous
#androgynousgirls #androgynousfashion
#GayFashion #streetstyle #grunge
<http://sqwears.co.uk/lesbian-fashion-top-looks-for-androgynous-girls/>

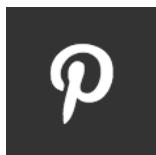
Like · Comment · Share
Caitlin Casey likes this.



YouTube



SQwears - Why We Used YouTube



Pinterest

SQwears

We used Pinterest to pin all original photos linking each to the corresponding post. We decided to use Pinterest because we wanted as many redirects as possible

London, UK - www.sqwears.co.uk

13 Boards | 172 Pins | 1 Like | Unfollow All | Send Profile | 18 Followers | 122 Following

Gay Fashion

32 Pins | Unfollow

Lesbian Fashion

9 Pins | Unfollow

Gay interest

8 Pins | Unfollow

SQwears

33 Pins | Unfollow

Female Fashion-SQwears

16 Pins | Unfollow

Pins from:

- Kevin Entwistle
- chris
- Darren morgan

14



Tumblr

SQWEARS

FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T
QUIITE SQUARE.

+ Follow sqwears tumblr

2 WEEKS AGO

2 NOTES

#SQWEARS

#FASHION

#GAY FASHION

Reposting our blogs and photosets onto Tumblr

Reposting our content onto micro blogging platform Tumblr allowed us to gain a new audience. We chose Tumblr because it has a reputation of being a hub for lgbt bloggers and we thought our posts would be of interest to these typical users. We gained many site redirects from Tumblr.



Instagram

We posted original photos from our articles and also 'regrammed' LGBT interest inspirational quotes. We focused primarily on marriage equality as it is a current news topic. Using this photo based social media platform allowed us to find a new audience and also spread awareness about SQwears' values. We also hosted our t-shirt giveaway on Instagram, giving us a new audience.

As a married person myself, I don't know what it's like to be told I can't marry somebody I love and want to marry. I definitely think we should all have the **RIGHT TO LOVE** - and love publicly - the people that we want to love.

CARRIE UNDERWOOD
Nominated for 2 Grammy Awards
www.freedomtomarry.org

Leviticus ALSO SAID "No Homosexuals" BUT I GUESS WE ARE SKIPPING THAT ONE.

The best day will be when we no longer talk about being gay or straight.
IT'S NOT A 'GAY WEDDING' - IT'S JUST A 'WEDDING.'
It's not a gay marriage - it's just a marriage.

PINK
Nominated for a Grammy Award
www.freedomtomarry.org

I stand for honesty, equality, kindness, compassion, treating people the way you want to be treated, and helping those in need. To me, those are traditional values. - Ellen DeGeneres

sqwears

Follow

21 posts | 25 followers | 98 following

BACKEND

- Ecwid e-commerce store
- Jetpack analytics
- Wordpress CSM platform
- Shareaholic plugin
- HTML/CSS hacking
- Wordfence safety
- Disqus comments plugin
- Yoast SEO
- Contact form 7
- Akismet anti-spam
- Google analytics
- SlideShow
- GARD inpost ads
- NextScripts auto poster
- Google XML Sitemaps



/ wp-admin

We chose to use the CMS platform wordpress to create our site. This is because we needed constant site management and access to post our daily content. We hacked the HTML/CSS in our theme to suit our brand identity and we implemented the use of many wordpress plugins along the way. The top plgins we used was Disqus, Yoast, Ecwid and Wordfence. Disqus provided us with a comment system that allowed our users to comment straight from facebook which was helpful as many users are put off from commenting on articles if they have to sign up to a service. Yoast provided us with helpful and visual on post SEO which gets inserted straight into the code. Ecwid was a safe alternative to a shopping cart plugin and wordfence protected our site from hackers.

SHOP



[Putin T-shirt](#)
SKU 00001

£15.00



[Nigel Farage T-shirt](#)
SKU 00002

£15.00

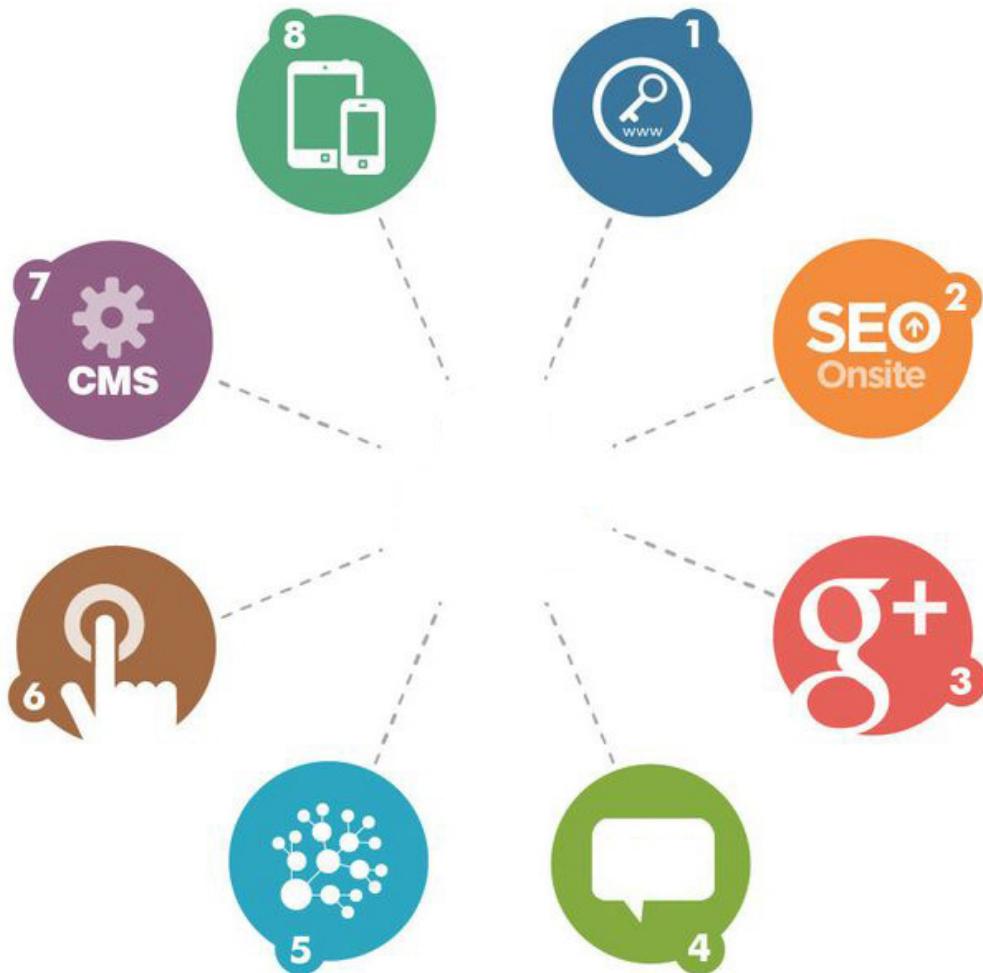


[Too Gay T-shirt](#)
SKU 00005

£15.00



As well as receiving potential revenue through Google Adsense and affiliate link marketing we wanted to sell merchandise online (e-commerce). Many LGBT news and entertainment sites sell political statement/ LGBT interest t-shirts such as 'autostraddle' so we decided that we wanted to explore this as well. We designed a few custom prints on photoshop and put them on the site. At first we researched into Wordpress shopping cart plugins, but they didn't feel safe and the store interfaces were poor. I then found Ecwid. Ecwid is an external e-commerce site that allows you to implement your custom store onto your Wordpress using a short code. Ecwid take 10% of every sale, similar to Ebay, in exchange for a smart, easy to manage, e-commerce platform. During the space of our FMP we gained one sale.



SEO

1. We used relative keywords to improve natural listing.
2. We utilised onsite seo using 'Yoast' for keywords & meta tags.
3. We used Google services including Google+ authorship, Google ads & Web master crawl requests.
4. We used social media platforms to build an online audience.
5. Quality linkbuilding. Our post slugs conformed to hummingbird regulations and we also included many outbound links in posts.
6. We encouraged user interaction onsite and offsite making use of the phrase "let us know in the comments below".
7. We chose to use the CMS platform 'Wordpress' (content management platform).
8. We chose a responsive design making the site mobile and tablet friendly.

REACH

It was important that we understood how to reach our users, analysing the ways in which they got to the site. Understanding this helped us understand which methods were successful and how we could improve our overall ranking. Because of this our overall rankings climbed from a measley 5-10 hits a day into the hundreds. We reached our audience using the various SEO methods listed above as well as through natural listings and paid advertisement.

Overall stats

Sessions

1,260

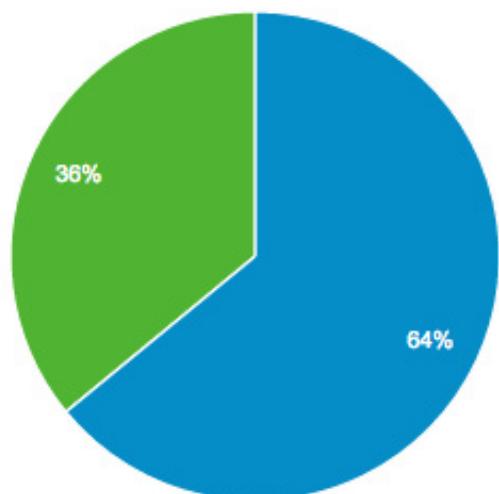
Users

805

Pageviews

6,802

■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor



PAID REACH

We used Facebook ads and Google Adwords to promote our site to the right target audience. Both services present our adverts based on a persons search history. We found that both methods were successful, promoting our posts to thousands

of people. Facebook ads extended our reach and we gained 200 likes during the month we paid for the service.

SQwears is an all inclusive fashion inspiration and popular news website dedicated to those who aren...

Like · Rachel Newbolt likes this.

SQwears

sqwears.co.uk

LGBT T-Shirts For Those Who Aren't Quite Square



Google Adwords proved itself successful with our LGBT merchandise advert being the most clicked over the space in which we paid for the service. We decided to experiment with paid reach because our site wouldn't have achieved its purpose without a community. We wanted sqwears to be an all inclusive place for discussion and without paid reach our site and supporting social media pages would have been dormant.

Google AdWords Home Opportunities Tools Customer ID: 103-727-1736 mnewbolt@gmail.com

Campaigns Ad Groups Settings Ads Keywords Audiences Ad extensions Dimensions Display Network

All but deleted campaigns Segment Filter Columns Search

Clicks vs None Daily View Change History

Sunday, 6 April 2014 Sunday, 11 May 2014

| + CAMPAIGN | Edit | Details | Bid strategy | Automate | Labels | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------|---------|-------|------------|--------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ● Campaign | Budget ? | Status ? | Campaign Type ? | Campaign subtype | ↓ Clicks ? | Impr. ? | CTR ? | Avg. CPC ? | Cost ? | Avg. Pos. ? | Converted clicks ? | Cost / converted click ? | Click conversion rate ? | View-through Conv. ? | Labels ? | Est. total conv. ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ● SQwears | £3.00/day | Eligible | Search Network with Display Select | All features | 128 | 56,092 | 0.23% | £0.54 | £68.57 | 2.7 | 0 | £0.00 | 0.00% | 0 | - | 0 |
| Total - all but deleted campaigns | | | | | 128 | 56,092 | 0.23% | £0.54 | £68.57 | 2.7 | 0 | £0.00 | 0.00% | 0 | | 0 |
| Total - search | | | | | 109 | 47,129 | 0.23% | £0.59 | £63.84 | 2.9 | 0 | £0.00 | 0.00% | 0 | | 0 |
| Total - Display Network | | | | | 19 | 8,963 | 0.21% | £0.25 | £4.73 | 1.8 | 0 | £0.00 | 0.00% | 0 | | 0 |
| Total - all | £3.00/day | | | | 128 | 56,092 | 0.23% | £0.54 | £68.57 | 2.7 | 0 | £0.00 | 0.00% | 0 | | 0 |

NATURAL REACH

Where users came from

Users that found our site naturally found us through natural listings using search engines like Google and yahoo. Another way site users found us is through redirects from social media sites and content engines like StumbleUpon.

| Referrer | Views |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Search Engines | 66 |
| pinterest.com | 17 |
| googleads.g.doubleclick.net | 13 |
| Facebook | 3 |
| redirect.disqus.com | 3 |
| semalt.semalt.com/crawler.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fsqwears.co.uk | 2 |
| tumblr.com/search/queer fashion advice | 1 |
| gaymuscleandlove.hubpages.com/hub/Gay-Men-7-Places-to-Find-Your-Next-Boyfriend-thats-Not-... | 1 |
| Twitter | 1 |

How?

We achieved these natural rankings through posting relevant and interesting content, constantly inputting and monitoring our SEO. Optimising free services like social media and webmaster tools really helped users find us. We posted our articles on random content engine 'Stumble Upon' under the LGBT category so that we would receive more site redirects. We also reposted our content onto all social media platforms available like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Tumblr which our analytics showed as redirecting users to the site. During the space of our FMP we also hosted a t-shirt giveaway, encouraging users to like and share our post to win. This post reached 9,000 users and really helped grow our natural listings.

SQwears shared a link.
Posted by Rachel Newbolt [?] · 4 May

Want to get your hands on this #antiPutin t-shirt?
Like and share this post to win. #win #giveaway
#contest #tshirt #putin #lgbt #gay #lesbian
<http://lookbook.nu/look/6151499-Putin-Him-In-His-Place>



Putin him in his place
lookbook.nu

Corby from SQwears puts Putin in his place. Win this t-shirt at
<https://www.facebook.com/SQwears> #putin #Vladimir #Vladimirputin #Russia #London #t-shirt #giveaway #lgbt #gay #lesbian #obey #sqwears #gayrights #win #tee #canarywharf



CONCLUSION

Our aims throughout our final major project were to create a website rich in multi media content. Our project pivoted throughout its course and became more about building an audience with users who share the same core values as us. We invested a lot of time in creating sqwears and learned that building an online audience from scratch is a slow process. What I have personally taken away from this project is an understanding of necessary creative media skills and has reaffirmed my career choices in content creation and design. Sqwears is a manifestation of the skills I have learned during my time at Ravesbourne, and is also a reflection of mine and Corbys friendship and will be continued by us both outside of University.

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