

Google Chrome: Ramakien

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This case study describes a campaign for Google, the internet technology company, to launch its Chrome internet browser in Thailand, using the technology to tell a traditional story.

- Research suggested that consumers in this market respect tradition and enjoy seeing traditional stories in a modern context.
- The product's capabilities were showcased through the telling of a traditional story - Ramakien - that has been passed down through generations.
- As the story was told, interactive experiences demonstrated Chrome's features and security, and Google's services.
- During the campaign there was a 53% increase in usage, making it the most widely used browser in Thailand.

Ogilvy & Mather Singapore

Entry Information

Country where program ran: Thailand

Program start date: 11/12/12

Program end date: 06/10/13

Advertiser/Client Name: Google

Product/Service Description: To promote the Google Chrome browser in thailand and demonstrate that Chrome is way better than your traditional browser.

Category: Information Technologies (IT)

Strategy

Business problem

To launch the Chrome browser in Thailand, and demonstrate that Chrome is way better than your traditional browser. Google didn't want to tell people, they wanted to SHOW people that Chrome is not your traditional browser, it's better. They wanted to tell stories THROUGH technology, not ABOUT technology. Google has previously launched Chrome in other markets with campaigns like Wilderness Downtown which was wildly popular. But we can't just take that campaign, re-launch it in Asia and expect people to relate to it. For a market as diverse and unique as Asia, a different approach is needed.

Target audience: Consumer

Size of target audience: 1,000,000+

Campaign objectives

First off, there can be no strategy without insights. These are the insights we reaped and leveraged off:

1. The majority of our target audience started getting online with browsers such as Safari, Firefox and IE. They are familiar with these browsers and understand what these browsers are capable of. Being a relatively newcomer to the scene, Google Chrome is a foreign product to them and there is inertia for people to switch away from a platform in their comfort zone.
2. Asians respect traditions and their roots. They are intrigued when they see how traditional stories play out in the modern day context. Juxtapose this with how Google has always been viewed as an American brand in Asia – there is a need for Google to embrace the culture and connect with the target audience on their terms, not with another Wilderness Downtown.
3. Social media is huge in the Asian market. People were spending more time online communicating with one another than never before. The sense of community is very strong in Asia -especially in terms the sharing of new ideas and products.

And a quick look back on the campaign objectives:

1. To show instead of tell people that Chrome is not just than your traditional browser.
2. To tell stories through technology, not about technology, in such a way that people feel an emotional connection to Chrome capabilities.

Marketing strategy

To demonstrate that Chrome is not your traditional browser, we decided to show Chrome's cutting edge capabilities through the use of a traditional story that resonates with Asian hearts: the epic tale of Ramakien. The Ramakien interactive experience fulfills both criteria. The familiarity and popularity of Ramakien as an age-old story passed down through the generations is an also advantage – it tugs at the heartstrings of our audience and piques people's curiosity of what we've done to re-tell the story with technology. Ramakien as a story has been told in various forms through the ages in Asia. We re-told this familiar & popular ancient epic through an interactive Chrome Experiment, integrating Chrome features and Google services like Chat, Products, Weather and Maps. The interactive experience also incorporated WebGL and showed off the benefits of HTML5, letting users experience for themselves that Chrome is capable of more than just speed – it's also powerful in security and stability. At the end of the digital journey, users would have experienced the power and stability of the Chrome browser – whilst being entertained.

Creativity

Ramakien is an ancient magical story written thousands of years ago, but is still very much alive in various forms across Asia today – from shadow puppets to water puppets to traditional dance performances. Extensive research was done to fully understand the Ramakien story before we interpreted it for the interactive digital experience. In staying true to the cultural background of the story, the character design, music, and interface – all contained elements of the original Ramakien kon dance. As users watch the story unfold online, they are able to help the characters along by playing in-story games featuring familiar bits of the traditional story we've incorporated using HTML 5 and Web GL – such as building a bridge to lead an army across the waters; burning the holy city using canvas and finishing off the enemy with a fatal blow from your browser arrow. We also thought it'll be fun for users to see how everyday Google products they use can play a role in this traditional story. For example, we used Google Maps as a geographical basis for the story to take place; characters communicated with each other through Google docs and GChat; and Google Weather played a part in helping the hero save the day. At the end of the digital journey, users would have experienced the power and stability of the Chrome browser – whilst being entertained.



Results

When the Ramakien interactive experience was launched in Thailand as part of the country's Children's Day celebration, the Thai people – Prime Minister included – loved it. There was a whopping 53% increase in the number of Chrome users during the campaign period, helping make Chrome the no. 1 browser in Thailand. The experience went on to make waves in the rest of Asia when we adapted the story for the Indonesian market, winning a FWA People's Choice Award through public voting. Google also experienced an increase of 3.5 points in its share since the campaign's launch.

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