

Google Japan: AdWords Puzzle Campaign

Source: DMA (US), Gold and USPS Gold Mailbox Award, DMA International ECHO Awards, 2014

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This case study explains how Google, the tech company, used a direct mailing to target prospects for its Google AdWords products in Japan.

- Google needed to show how its AdWords product offers tailored solutions for business owners by helping them experience its targeting themselves.
- A padlocked box was sent to prospects with an invitation to search on Google AdWords for the combination to unlock it.
- The box contained traditional Japanese symbols and information explaining how AdWords works in a simple and human manner.
- Of the 1,000 high-potential prospects targeted, 95% used AdWords and unlocked the box, 51% filled out a targeted online survey and unprecedented revenue was achieved.

MRM Worldwide

Country Where Program Ran: Japan

Program Start Date: 07/18/13

Program End Date: 09/30/13

Advertiser/Client Name: Google Japan

Category: Professional Services (PS)

Channels used: Direct Mail

Product/Service Overview: AdWords is Google's application for advertisers who want to run ads on the web. AdWords ads can be shown on the Google results page, on partner sites, and on any site that either uses AdSense to supply ads to their site or is part of the Google Content Network.

Objective of the campaign

Most DM isn't read, is boring, and has low response rates. The challenge was to cut through the clutter in a very low-interest category and tell what is actually a very interesting story: how Google AdWords offers tailored online advertising solutions to help businesses of any size make their presence known. Once businesspeople

experience AdWords for themselves, they almost invariably become converts. So our DM had to immediately intrigue recipients and lead them to engage with AdWords.

Target Audience: Business-to-Business

Size of Target Audience: 1,000-9,999

Enacted solution

Our solution was ingenious and daring – we sent prospects a padlocked box. A beautiful box we had worked and reworked until it was warm and inviting in a modern-Japanesque style. Recipients were invited to search for a phrase on Google AdWords to receive the combination to the padlock. The search results pointed recipients to a microsite where they found the combination, case studies of businesses enjoying success with AdWords and an online questionnaire. And inside the box recipients found a traditional Japanese scroll and fan, symbols of success and prosperity that further explained AdWords in a human, friendly manner.

Results

A new algorithm was developed for this campaign, helping to winnow over 80,000 leads down to just 1,000 high-potential prospects. The DM was sent to these select 1,000 and drew an astonishing response rate: 95% experienced AdWords, visited the key code microsite and unlocked the box. 51% also filled out a targeted online survey. In financial terms, Google achieved an unprecedented revenue increase of 90 times their campaign investment. And in relationship terms, Google was able to demonstrate the relevance of their AdWords product to almost all the target group in a warm, friendly, and very Japanese way.

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