

Tourism in Thailand boosted by Facebook

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Background

Thailand Reunited is a Facebook App on the Thailand Fan Club Facebook Page that forms the focus of all consumer marketing communications for the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) - a central space to raise awareness of Thailand as a destination and encourage visitors to upload stories and photographs for app users to gain inspiration for their own trips.

The key objectives of driving 'likes' and encouraging users to return, as well as motivating new visitors, is delivered through partner activity and competitions, with specific relevance either to Thailand or to niche markets.

Integrated creative communications company, Fox Kalomaski Crossing's (FKC), core proposition for Thailand Reunited is to re-connect people who have visited Thailand in the past, inviting them to share their stories and experiences with Fans of the Facebook page.

Users are encouraged to upload their videos, images and itineraries while the app acts as a central point of reference for all visitors to Thailand – old and new. This enables TAT to achieve their objectives of maintaining the repeater market while growing the number of first time visitors.

Strategy

The objectives of the campaign were to maximise budget and deliver best value, innovation and cut through wasted publicity, allowing for targeting of individual niches, and above all, to create a central point of reference that integrated all on and offline

messaging to deliver a robust, exciting and measurable communications programme that supports arrivals figures.

The principal niche markets were identified as families, weddings and honeymoons, golf, alternative/adventure tourism (sustainable, responsible travel), Thai food and photography (Thailand Through the Lens).

Implementation

Each month, FKC approached relevant media partners for a competition project targeting each niche which allowed the agency to widen the audience, gaining best value and maximising coverage.

Every niche has its own unique design on the app with the partner's logos and imagery, while Facebook advertising for each niche encouraged people to visit the Facebook page and upload their stories relevant to that niche.

To-date FKC has worked with Nikon to promote TAT's 2011 photographic campaign which resulted in 18,340 entries to a competition to win one of 5 Coolpix cameras, 1,600 entries to win a photographic trip and around 1,000 new names on the database. Campaigns currently running or coming up in 2013 include partnerships with National Geographic KIDS, Thai Taste (nationwide in-store on pack promotion) and Thai brands such as Monsoon Valley Wine, Singha and Janissa spa.

Gary Jacobs, CEO of FKC, explains, "The strength of the niche market media partnerships lay in the implied endorsement of highly credible specialist publications, resulting in very strong response rates."

Results

Since FKC launched Thailand Reunited in January 2012 the Likes increased dramatically from 1,204 to over 12,700 within nine months.

Joanna Cooke, Consumer Marketing & PR Manager UK& Ireland, of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, comments, "FKC's insightful and innovative campaign draws attention perfectly to the strengths of Thailand as a uniquely special destination and to the many and varied exciting visitor experiences. It promotes the kind of messages that is impacting on the quality of tourists visiting Thailand with an increase in visitors enjoying more experiential holidays, staying longer and becoming a repeat visitor. Thailand Reunited has also served as a fantastic tool for us to be able to engage with a more female focused audience and Family Thailand was by far the most popular campaign to date which we are delighted with."