



Brand USA Boosts Travel Intent 22% with Cross-Screen, Cross-Channel Ads

About Brand USA

- www.discoveramerica.com
- www.thebrandusa.com
- Headquartered in Washington, D.C.
- Promotes international travel to the U.S.

Goals

- Increase international visits to the U.S.
- Grow awareness about and consideration of the U.S. as a travel destination

Approach

- Build brand experience through cross-channel marketing
- Use Google Display, YouTube and Google+ to build engagement
- Create a beautiful digital travel guide within Lightbox Ads
- Run TrueView Ads across YouTube
- Use search and mobile to facilitate conversion

Results

- Targeted 90% of inbound travelers to the U.S.
- Increased intent to travel to the U.S. by up to 22%
- Achieved engagement rate of 6% at a CPE of \$0.06 with Lightbox Ads
- Realized cost-efficient engagement with TrueView ads: CPV as low as \$0.01 with 20% view-through rate

Created in 2012 to address the problem of declining inbound travel, Brand USA's goal is to promote international travel to the United States. Whether visitors are in search of big cities, the great outdoors or simply a taste of American culture, Brand USA helps them "Discover America" and plan their trips.

To attract more visitors, deliver its brand message to the world and maintain an effective digital presence, Brand USA partners with Google for its digital marketing. "Our primary goal and end result is to influence travel and spend to the United States. We have a tremendous platform to do that," says Chris Thompson, CEO of Brand USA. "It's the perfect vehicle for influencing customers to visit the U.S. and engaging them before, during and after their trip," adds Jiri Marousek, Brand USA's director of digital. And the results speak for themselves. Brand USA has increased intent to travel to the U.S. by up to 22% while reaching markets that represent 90% of inbound travel to the U.S.

Campaigns that engage

When planning travel, 80% of consumers use the internet for researching a destination. To engage customers deeply and consistently across channels, Brand USA maintains an integrated presence across the Google Display Network, YouTube and Google+. "By marketing across channels, we efficiently create a continuous experience for the consumer, sharing content at different points and delivering it to the right people," states Jiri. On the Google Display Network, Brand USA uses engagement ads and created the first Travel Catalog Lightbox Ad, which featured a captivating, interactive digital travel guide. Brand USA has seen an amazing response to its Lightbox Ads—a 6% engagement rate (double the average for Lightbox Ads) and a cost-per-engagement (CPE) of \$0.06. "It's just unbelievable. Compared with a simple banner ad, we've been able to multiply the effect tenfold or twentyfold," Jiri remarks.

"In many cases, YouTube and Google+ are the next step for us on any device. We want our campaigns and content to engage people across the board," adds Jiri, "so it's important that our footprint in these channels really represents our brand." On YouTube, Brand USA uses TrueView ads to cost-effectively engage consumers. Jiri says TrueView has had "10x impact versus the standard banner ad." And because Brand USA pays only when viewers watch an ad, it has seen costs-per-view (CPV) drop as low as \$0.01.

To keep consumers engaged over time, Brand USA uses Google+ to share and exchange original photos, video and user-generated content. "When visitors come to the United States and return home, they create and share content. Social channels like Google+ and YouTube let us collect and proliferate that content back out," states Jiri.

"We marketed the country, and we made it work. We made it from brand, from destination marketing all the way to transactions and selling plane tickets. That's an amazing story"

*— Jiri Marousek, director of digital,
Brand USA*

Keeping the doors open

When interested customers are looking for more, Brand USA meets them with paid search and co-op campaigns focused on conversion. "We use search in a very targeted way. It's an access point, mostly for consumers lower in the funnel who already know what they're looking for," says Jiri. Targeting and optimization have helped Brand USA attain click-through rates (CTRs) of up to 4%. And to facilitate conversion from visitors, regardless of device, Brand USA ensures a strong mobile presence. "It's important that consumers can access us on any device. We want our campaigns and content to engage them across the board," he continues. "With our mobile presence, we offer consumers different avenues without closing any doors."

The sky's the limit

Brand USA's cross-channel approach successfully engages consumers around the world, inspiring visitors to choose America as their next travel destination. "By delivering rich content to the right consumer at the right time, we're getting an amazing response," Jiri reveals. In the near future, Brand USA plans to bring a more individualized angle to its ad experience. "When you come here, you can tailor your experience to who you are and your vision of the United States of America," says Jiri, "so we hope to really customize our ads to reflect that."

Eager to build on its successful cross-channel approach, Brand USA will continue to take full advantage of all Google's tools and features. "We have been very successful with video content, partially modified for TrueView and Lightbox ads," says Jiri. The goal going forward is to take "the success and build on it by creating executions that really take advantage of everything that they can provide."

Please visit thinkwithgoogle.com for more information.