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How a dating service benefited from a tie-in with Madame Tussauds

Best Practice from g8wave

Background

WLTM is the dating service for the London Lite, Associated Newspapers' free evening title, and is run by London-based dating experts g8wave. It allows its members to search for, and interact with, like-minded people in their area through ads in paper, online or via their mobile.

In what is believed to be a first in newspaper dating, g8wave teamed up with brand partnership marketing agency Cocktail Marketing in November 2008 to discuss a potential partnership between the WLTM and their client, Madame Tussauds.

Both are strong brands, London focussed and with a similar target demographic, so a synergy was recognised early in the conversation.

The chief objective was to use Tussauds' branding and the presence of an added value offer to attract new readers - and prospective daters - to the dating page and increase the length of time that they spent looking at the page.

In turn, Tussauds would receive brand exposure in the Lite, which currently distributes around 400,000 copies in London each day.

Execution

g8wave redesigned the WLTM dating page – and its logo - to incorporate the Madame Tussauds branding whilst maintaining the service's own identity.

Tussauds provided a 2 for 1 offer for every Lite reader, valid until the end of March, and redeemable by cutting out the coupon from the WLTM page and presenting it at the attraction.

They also provided a range of images of their most popular characters to be used, in silhouette form, as mock dating profiles, e.g.

"Could love be a losing game? This recently separated soulful London girl, 25, enjoys singing, drinking, smoking and trips to the Caribbean. How could you possibly say no, no, no?" (Amy Winehouse)

"By Royal appointment. This newly single 24 year old is a true prince among men with a real love of partying. He's served his country well – now could he serve you?" (Prince Harry)

"Just a girl from the block. Curvy Latin lovely, 39, enjoys singing, acting, fashion and the finer things in life. Her love don't cost a thing." (Jennifer Lopez)

"Mr Smith... Handsome 45 year-old keeps in good shape! Has friendly past... now moved on, but still Jolie!" (Brad Pitt)

The branded page, including the 2 for 1 offer, ran either as a full page or half page insertion in the London Lite during the three weeks before Valentine's Day.

Analysis

Once the campaign had finished, g8wave compared five insertions that carried the Tussauds branding (three full and two half pages) with five like-for-like insertions from November 2008. (Comparing them to December would have skewed the results as it is traditionally a lower-performing month).

They looked at the effect that the Tussauds branding and offer had on the WLTM dating service overall and, more importantly, at the effect that it had on the service's respondent lines, which indicate how long readers are spending on, and interacting with, the dating page.

g8wave then looked at the average difference in performance on each part of the service and noticed a significant improvement to the service during the campaign period.



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Results

The analysis showed that the Tussauds branding and offer had a positive effect on:

- * the total number of calls (+11.74%)
- * the total call length (+0.87%)
- * the total revenue generated (+3.72%).

The partnership's effect on the respondent lines was also clear:

- * the number of respondent calls rose by 14.38%, considered a hugely significant increase.
- * respondent call times were up by 8.45%
- * the revenue this generated was up by 8.43%.

It's also worth noting that, during the last week of the campaign, the service achieved its highest weekly revenue to date.

Based on these figures, g8wave consider that the Madame Tussauds partnership had a positive effect on the WLTM service and is currently speaking to other brands to secure partnership for dating services across their client portfolio.

Madame Tussauds were also pleased with the campaign and are keen to run similar activity later in the year. At the time of writing, redemptions for the 2 for 1 offer were on a par with a recent stand-alone campaign in a national daily tabloid.



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