



CASE STUDY

VIRGIN TRAINS  
INTERACTIVE TV CAMPAIGN

*“We are absolutely delighted with the results from our recent interactive ‘Return Of The Train’ advertising campaign.*

*The post campaign research results showed that the objectives were clearly met. Viewers were drawn into the site by the stunning TV copy which appealed to their ‘hearts’.”*

*Craig Inglis, Sales & Marketing Director, Virgin Trains*

## BACKGROUND

A multi-media advertising campaign was launched in June 2005 to highlight the benefits of the brand new, faster and better train service from Virgin Trains and to introduce the new Pendolino rolling stock across the West Coast network.

The Return of the Train campaign launched across several media, including TV (both spot and interactive). It aimed to win people's hearts and minds by appealing to the sentimental emotions of the consumer and then follow up by delivering a whole host of persuasive rational facts.

The theme of the TV campaign centred around the timeless romance of train travel. It features iconic train related footage from classic cinema such as "Some Like It Hot" and "North by Northwest", set on modern day, new Pendolino trains.

The TV ad was the lead piece of communication aimed at hearts, it attempted to excite and persuade viewers to engage with rail travel once again. The interactive element to the TV campaign provided the rational communication aimed at minds. This element highlighted the benefits of the train service and introduced the star of the ad – the Pendolino carriage.

"interactivity offered an opportunity to interact with our customers in a fun and involving way with a game and competition element which incentivised prolonged exposure to the main message of the campaign." *Steve McDonald, Marketing Manager, Advertising and Partnerships, Virgin Trains.*

## OBJECTIVES

- To win people's hearts and minds
- To attract new customers from other transport
- To communicate the faster and improved train service
- To introduce the new Pendolino rolling stock

# EXECUTION

The interactive site consisted of 3 elements:-

- All Aboard – an extension of the TV creative
- Tickets Please – competition quiz to win Virgin Train tickets for a year, consisting of 6 questions related to the TV ad
- Beats Flying – a fun game to play

# RESULTS

Both quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken to ascertain what interactors thought of the campaign.

## A Positive Response

From the research, it was found that the vast majority (94%) of interactors were able to clearly describe and recall the Return Of The Train ad.

Response among interactors was extremely positive with an average score of 8.4 out of 10 when asked “how positive do you feel about the Virgin Trains TV advert”. Furthermore, a very positive score of 8.2 out of 10 was given for the interactive area.

The All Aboard area of the interactive site successfully communicated the “minds strategy” including improved timetables, shorter journey times and the on-board experience and facilities. 40% of interactors agreed that journey times would be faster on Virgin Trains, while 50% realised it would be easier to take the train than to use other forms of transport after interacting.

The competition area – Tickets Please – was enjoyed by interactors who found the quiz both entertaining and extremely informative – again, in line with the “minds strategy”.

Positive brand values communicated by the interactive area included being modern, innovative, friendly and entertaining.



# INSIGHTS

## Reasons for Interacting

The top reason for interacting (39%) was because people wanted to enter the competition – “that’s a great way of getting people to press red. Everyone loves the chance to win”. 34% interacted because they wanted to find out more about the train and the service.

## Future Campaigns

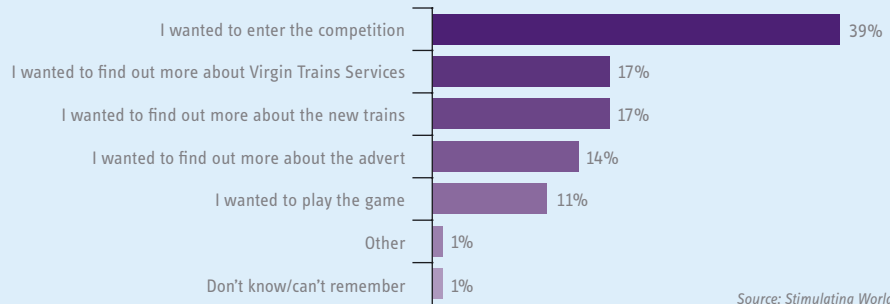
Among interactors, a very positive response to the idea of future interactive campaigns from Virgin Trains was received.

The overall impact of the interactive campaign on increasing likelihood to travel by Virgin Trains was extremely positive.

“Due to these positive results we will definitely be considering interactive TV for our future advertising”.

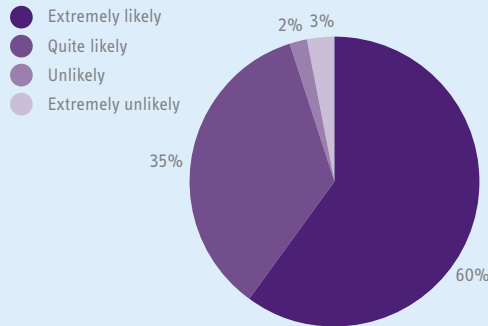
*Craig Inglis, Sales & Marketing Director, Virgin Trains*

## What was the primary motivating factor for you to press the red button during the Virgin Trains advert?



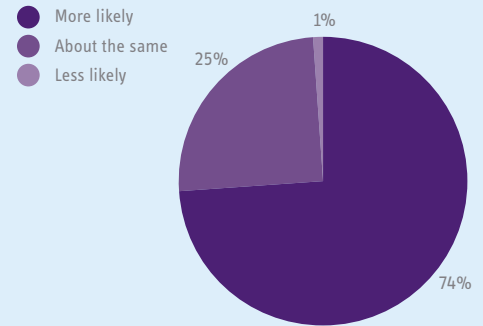
Source: Stimulating World, base 607

## If Virgin Trains made another interactive TV ad, how likely would you be to interact?



Source: Stimulating World, base 601

## Having seen the Virgin Trains interactive area, do you feel more or less likely to travel by Virgin Trains?



Source: Stimulating World, base 600

# CONTACT

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The logo for Sky Media, featuring the word "sky" in a lowercase, rounded, sans-serif font, followed by "media" in a similar font. The letters are light blue and have a subtle drop shadow effect.

what do you want to know?