Virgin Trains

Sky AdSmart Case Study

Targeting cities with Sky AdSmart

© Image found on Virgin Trains Website

Background

Virgin Trains used Sky AdSmart as a way to boost recognition following the linear activity.

With Sky AdSmart, Virgin Trains was able to pinpoint households around their major destinations, to ensure that the creative was served only to those with the highest likelihood of needing to use the services.

Objectives

☑ To grow brand recognition and recall at a regional level

☑ To communicate the key brand message is 'don't just arrive; Arrive awesome'

☑ To communicate key messages surrounding price, speed and experience

Audience

Virgin Trains made use of Sky AdSmart's Postcode targeting capabilities to serve the creatives only to people along the route served by the trains.

Postcode Areas:

☑ **London**
☑ **Birmingham**
☑ **Manchester**
☑ **Liverpool**
☑ **Glasgow**

RH FK BR AB SL WS KY HD SN N PE

This approach to targeting audiences ensured that the campaign would work as hard as possible, by exposing those within the right catchment areas, and therefore a higher likelihood of using Virgin Trains, to the creative.

Campaign Delivery

The campaign consisted of 5 versions of the same creative, with a regional specific end frame suited to each postcode area targeted.
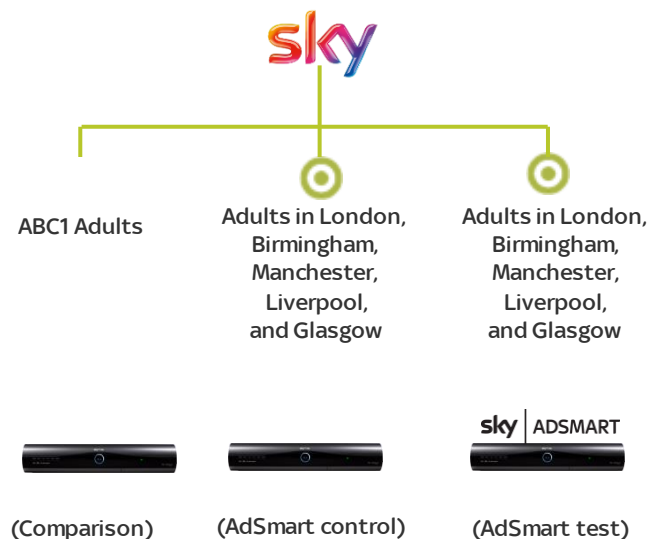
The campaign ran between January and March 2015, and delivered 13m impressions, with an average frequency of 4.6 impressions per household.
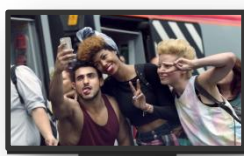
Campaign Evaluation

To evaluate the success of the campaign, Sky appointed research agency BDRC Continental to apply an established, multi-award winning methodology designed by Sky, and conduct web survey interviews amongst different sets of Sky customers.

Based on household characteristics and campaign exposure, respondents were classified into three groups:

sky

| ABC1 Adults	Adults in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow	Adults in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow
(Comparison)	(AdSmart control)	sky ADSMART (AdSmart test)

- A broad **comparison group** of homes not targeted by the Sky AdSmart campaign, but which may have been exposed to the linear campaign. This represents the typical linear TV traded audience used by Virgin Trains and is used to demonstrate the effect of Sky AdSmart targeting.

- A **control group** of homes in any of the targeted postcode areas who were not exposed to the Sky AdSmart campaign, but may have been exposed to the linear advertising.

- A **test group** of homes in any of the targeted postcode areas who were exposed to the Sky AdSmart campaign. The majority of our results are based on this group.

The evaluation examined Sky AdSmart's impact on campaign effectiveness. Key performance indicators such as **campaign cut-through, audience resonance,** and **brand perceptions** were tested. This case study shows the top-line results from the evaluation.

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Cut-through and Relevance

Recall of the specific creative increased steadily from comparison to control (+50%) and from control to test (+48%), thus proving the positive effect that frequency and selective targeting can have on a campaign.

Recall of creative | % Recall Linear ABC1 Audience (comparison) vs Sky AdSmart Non-Exposed (Control) Vs Sky AdSmart Exposed (Test)
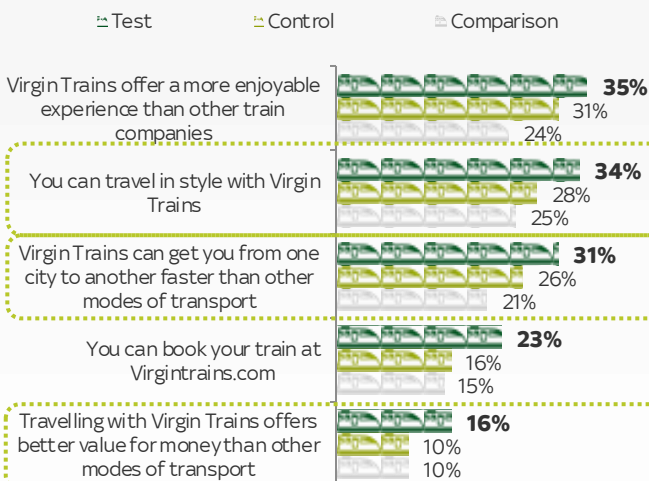
Comparison 18%
Control 27%
Test 40%
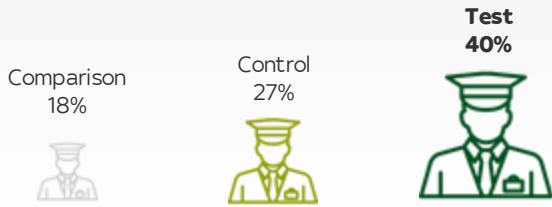
The Sky AdSmart test audience was on average

50%

more likely than the ABC1 comparison audience to be interested in the creative.

Audience Resonance

Despite following a heavy linear campaign, the regional targeting enhanced the creative's resonance amongst the Sky AdSmart test audience compared to the untargeted comparison audience.

Key campaign messaging | % Agree | Linear ABC1 Audience (comparison) vs Sky AdSmart Non-Exposed (Control) Vs Sky AdSmart Exposed (Test)
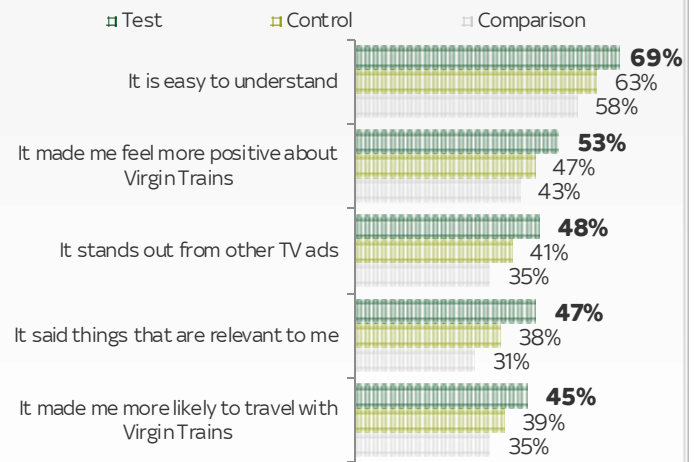
Test Control Comparison

Virgin Trains offer a more enjoyable experience than other train companies
35%
31%
24%

You can travel in style with Virgin Trains
34%
28%
25%

Virgin Trains can get you from one city to another faster than other modes of transport
31%
26%
21%

You can book your train at Virgintrains.com
23%
16%
15%

Travelling with Virgin Trains offers better value for money than other modes of transport
16%
10%
10%

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Positive Ad Perceptions

As seen in the chart below, the creative resonated more with the Sky AdSmart audiences (test and control) than it did with the linear comparison audience, showing the benefit of selective targeting
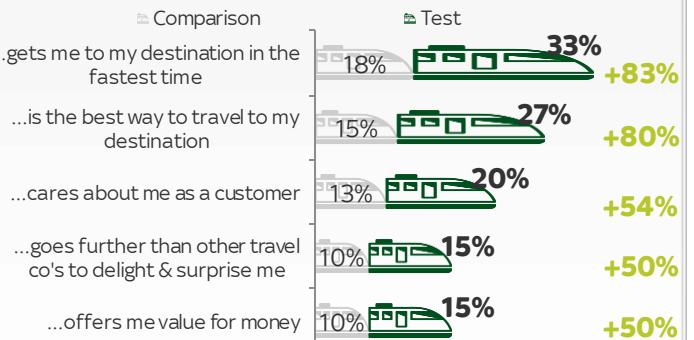
Perceptions of Ad | % Agree | Linear ABC1 Audience (comparison) vs Sky AdSmart Non-Exposed (Control) Vs Sky AdSmart Exposed (Test)

Test Control Comparison

It is easy to understand
69%
63%
58%

It made me feel more positive about Virgin Trains
53%
47%
43%

It stands out from other TV ads
48%
41%
35%

It said things that are relevant to me
47%
38%
31%

It made me more likely to travel with Virgin Trains
45%
39%
35%

Building on Brand Perceptions

There were also positive uplifts in the perceptions of the Virgin Trains brand, giving evidence that those exposed to the Sky AdSmart targeting and frequency were much more likely to rate the brand higher on key measures of fast travel, good value for money and customer service.

Brand Perceptions | % Agree | Linear Comparison (ABC1 Adults) vs Sky AdSmart Test | Virgin Trains...

Comparison Test

...gets me to my destination in the fastest time
18% **33%** +83%

...is the best way to travel to my destination
15% **27%** +80%

...cares about me as a customer
13% **20%** +54%

...goes further than other travel co's to delight & surprise me
10% **15%** +50%

...offers me value for money
10% **15%** +50%

Driving Sales

More Likely to Book...

The Sky AdSmart test audience was

6x

more likely than the linear comparison audience to book tickets on a Virgin Train, and nearly 4x more likely to travel by Virgin Trains as a result of seeing the creative

Attracting 'Non Users'...

Likelihood to travel | % | Linear ABC1 Audience (comparison) vs Sky AdSmart Non-Exposed (Control) Vs Sky AdSmart Exposed (Test) |

Comparison 22%
Control 29%
Test 37%

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