

CASE STUDY 13

THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD

The challenge

Tourism Queensland wanted to increase international awareness of Queensland's islands of the Great Barrier Reef with the goal of transforming this popular day-trip destination into an international tourist's dream holiday. Based on experience, they knew that increasing awareness of the islands of the Great Barrier Reef as an aspirational destination, using a fresh and interesting story, would drive visitor numbers up over the long term.

Campaign budget

A \$1,000,000 (however this was extended due to the overwhelming success of the campaign).

Target audience

A specific audience referred to as 'global experience seekers' was the principal target. These people are likely to be self-challengers, youthful travellers with a high level of education who use new technology extensively and have a preference for holiday immersion. They want to get 'in amongst it' and go beyond the major cities and well-established tourist destinations. They were primarily targeted across key markets with a high propensity to visit Australia, namely the UK, Europe, the USA, Japan, Germany, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Ireland, Scandinavia, Singapore, Malaysia, India, China, Taiwan and Korea.

Action

The creative team decided to offer something priceless to entice participation and engagement in this campaign: a prize that would capture the imagination of people all over the world.

In fact, it wasn't a prize at all, it was a job as caretaker of the islands of the Great Barrier Reef.

A clear part of the campaign strategy was to launch as a good news story from the sunny, tropical environs of North Queensland at a time when the northern hemisphere was shrouded in the sullen grey of winter. When this campaign launched the news was full of doom and gloom, and the plan was that this opportunity would break like a breath of balmy fresh air!

The island caretaker role wasn't a campaign gimmick, it was a completely genuine employment opportunity with Tourism Queensland, living on the islands of the Great Barrier Reef and reporting back to the world via online social media. Anyone and everyone was free to apply. Creatively the role was set up specifically to highlight the region and its activities, satisfying the target market's thirst for digital information.

The island caretaker would have specific duties: cleaning the pool, feeding the fish, collecting the mail and, of course, reporting back to the world on their adventures living and working in this unique tropical location. In return for all this hard work the caretaker would earn a generous salary of A \$150,000 for six months, with luxury accommodation thrown in. It all seemed too good to be true, but there really was no catch.

Applications for the job opened in January 2009 and would-be caretakers from around the world sent in 60-second videos demonstrating their creativity and skill. From a shortlist of 50 applicants, just 16 were chosen to travel to Queensland in early May 2009 for the final selection process. After a worldwide search involving more than 34,000 applicants, 34-year-old Englishman Ben Southall emerged victorious and was offered the job as Tourism Queensland's Islands Caretaker (the 'Best Job in the World').

Results

'The Best Job in the World' was certainly a resounding success that smashed all expectations and led the team behind it to speculate that 'no single tourism campaign, and perhaps no individual campaign, has ever had such a significant reach or impassioned response, across all media'. That's a bold assertion, but one that is perhaps borne out by the facts.

The success of the campaign was measured in relation to overall reach and its engagement through digital media, but some elements of the campaign, like the passion and creativity with which individuals around the world produced videos, blogs, individual campaigns and so on, really are immeasurable.

Some of the quantifiable measures that help illustrate the phenomenal success of the campaign include the following.

Overall awareness and media coverage

Global news coverage (all media formats), from CNN stories to BBC documentaries, an *Oprah* segment, *Time* magazine article and everything in

The Best Digital Marketing Campaigns in the World

between. Estimated media coverage is valued at approximately US \$368 million (to date and growing). The overall global PR value key performance indicator (KPI) set by Tourism Queensland was US \$66 million.

The campaign was ranked eighth on the international list for the world's top 50 public relations stunts of all time by internationally renowned public relations company Taylor Herring.

To date, the campaign has reached an audience of over 3 billion through media coverage.

Direct response

A total of 34,684 one-minute video job applications (KPI 10,000) from 197 countries (web coded as there are officially only 195 UN recognized countries). At least one person from every country in the world applied for the island caretaker position.

More than 475,000 votes were cast for wild card applicants.

A total of 154,437 individuals subscribed to news updates from the dedicated website.

Website stats

There were 8,465,280 visits to the website (KPI 400,000) and 55,002,415 page views with an average time spent of 8.22 minutes.

A Google search for 'best job in the world island' achieves about 148,000,000 listings.

Global reach has been achieved as part of the objectives as illustrated by the international site traffic.

Connection to social media and consumer-generated content at height of campaign

A Google blog search for 'best job in the world' generates 231,355 blogs.

The social media impact could not be measured fully. However, an indication was the fact that Facebook referred 371,126 visits, the highest referring site after Google and Yahoo! Additionally the site has recorded 165,014 exit links to the 'Add This' social bookmarking site.

Social networks have been established by consumers, further illustrating the penetration of the idea (see example on the NING networking site – on this site alone, there are 359 members and 284 videos, representing more than 13 hours of user-generated content).

In terms of consumer-generated content, there are more than 578 hours of campaign-related video across YouTube and similar video-sharing sites.

A 'best job in the world' search on Flickr for pictures gives you a quick 4,486 pictures to choose from.

The team tracked many other samples of video, text and pictorial content. As so much consumer content lies on diverse sites, blogs and in news coverage, it is not possible to accurately quantify it all.

The campaign was helped along by a target audience familiar with social media and eager to share. Individuals were more than happy to fuel the campaign through their habitual use of social networking and sharing sites and regular participation in a wide variety of online communities. The strategic balance of traditional and new media harnessed as part of this campaign proved the ideal vehicle for the message and had an incredibly positive impact on overall results.

Lessons

'The Best Job in the World' is a truly original idea brilliantly executed. It was a phenomenal success and demonstrates just how effective cross-channel, integrated campaigns can be in a world where social media and traditional mass media are inextricably intertwined. The campaign clearly shows that the perceived boundary between digital media and traditional mainstream media really isn't a boundary at all, and that integrated campaigns that harness all appropriate channels to connect with a specific audience can deliver truly outstanding results.

Tension mounts as Tourism Queensland gets down to the final 16 candidates for 'The Best Job in the World'.

Final 16 Applicants



It took the creation of e-mail to change direct mail, the birth of search to disrupt the classified ads market and it took the advent of social media to change public relations.

Marketers, do the results from your PR activity look like this? If not, ask yourself if you are working with the right agency, regardless of whether they are billed as being digital, PR or social media specialists. This campaign is heralded as ground-breaking in so many ways, but the reality today is that this represents the minimum requirement from what is readily available in the market.

Links to campaign creative



- <http://www.sapient.com/en-us/SapientNitro/Work.html#/?project=109>
- <http://www.islandreefjob.com.au/about-the-best-job>

An expert view

Ankur Shah, CEO, Techlightenment

The campaign was hugely successful in both concept and reach. Its impact on traditional media showed the impact that large-scale digital campaigns can have by leveraging the benefits of user generated content and social media. Highly effective usage of Facebook and YouTube clearly helped to drive the phenomenal growth the campaign achieved. The campaign further highlighted the inherently viral elements of self-promotion; utilizing well-motivated users to promote themselves online gains traction across many different mediums and can, if harnessed properly, gain positive brand association. The 'Best Job in the World' was a fantastic demonstration of that.

Ankur Shah, CEO, Techlightenment



About Ankur



Ankur co-founded Techlightenment in 2007 with Gi Fernando, following a successful stint at the Criminal Bar. Techlightenment is a data driven marketing and technology company specializing in social behaviour. Widely regarded as leaders in the space, Techlightenment's most recent product is the first and most powerful advertising management and optimization technology currently available for social advertising. The company also specializes in applications and campaigns for large global brands, counting among its clients brands like Paramount, Betfair and Sport England.

Credits



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| Client | ● Tourism Queensland |
| Geographical scope | ● Global |
| Agencies | ● SapientNitro |
| Campaign contacts | ● Darren McColl |
| Awards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cannes Lions: Cyber Lion, Grand Prix, Interactive Campaigns ● Cannes Lions: Direct Lion, Grand Prix ● Cannes Lions: PR Lion, Grand Prix ● Cannes Lions: PR Lion, Gold, Tourism & Leisure ● Cannes Lions: PR Lion, Technique, Best Use of the Internet, Digital Media and Social Media ● Cannes Lions: Direct Lion, Gold, Strategy & Traffic Building ● Cannes Lions: Direct Lion, Gold, Product & Service Travel, Entertainment and Leisure ● DMA Echo Awards: Best in Show (Diamond) ● DMA Echo Awards: Gold ● DMA Echo Awards: A. Eicoff Broadcast Innovation ● One Show: Best in Show ● One Show: Interactive Gold World Medal ● One Show: Gold, Integrated Branding Campaign |

- One Show: Silver, Interactive Digital Media Campaign
- New York Festivals Digital and Interactive: Grand Trophy
- New York Festivals Digital and Interactive: Gold Trophy
- New York Festivals Digital and Interactive: Gold World Medal
- MIXX: Best in Show
- MIXX: Gold, Direct Response and Lead Generation
- MIXX: Gold, International
- MIXX: Gold, Cross Media Integration
- Clio: Gold, Innovative Media

Creative biography



Darren McColl

At SapientNitro Darren McColl is the team's strategic thinker, responsible for helping clients grow their business, by bringing insight to strategy and inspiration to creativity.

With a career spanning more than 20 years, he has worked on the client side and within advertising agencies, large and small. This has given him a great expanse of communication and brand strategy experience.

As a strategist Darren thrives on a challenge and has a natural ability to make the complex become understandable. He has worked across a range of local and global brands including: Virgin Blue, Virgin Megastore, Velocity, McDonald's, Nestlé, Foster's Brewing, Racing Victoria, Ford, Mercedes Benz trucks, Merrill Lynch, Zespri Kiwi Fruit, Yalumba Wines, State Governments of Victoria and Queensland, Mrs Field's Cookies, Tourism Queensland, Stockland, Sanofi Aventis Consumer (Nature's Own, Cenovis, Betadine, etc), Supercheap Auto, Mars Snacks and many more.

He was the project leader and strategist behind 'The Best Job in the World' campaign.

Darren's broad background and skills in communication strategy and marketing make him a versatile beast, and one of Australia's leading brand strategists. He brings to any business sound strategic and insightful thinking, a great understanding in communication and a breadth of experience backed by valuable knowledge.