

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Studio Brand used search engine marketing SEM to bring Houston's largest university into the spotlight.

GOALS

- Meet all critical KPIs established for the campaign.
- Have an estimated monthly conversion rate between 2 percent–8 percent.
- Have at least a 2.5 percent click-through-rate (CTR) on the digital media campaigns.
- Increasing brand awareness for the University, which will be monitored through digital listening and conversions on specific landing pages.

APPROACH

- Allocating marketing expenses to Google Search Network to provide a comprehensive platform for initiating search engine marketing tactics.
- Remarketing on the Search Network (Landing Page + Facebook) to entice previously targeted audiences to interact with the University of Houston brand consistently.
- Take advantage of other auxiliary search-engines-Bing Search and the Google Display Network-to fully optimize our SEM campaigns.

RESULTS

- Nearly 9,000,000 impressions created using SEM tactics allowed Studio Brand and UH to reach online users across ten different countries.
- Achieved first position search status on various outlets like Google and Bing through the entirety of the campaign.
- Generated over 14,500 user sessions across multiple devices such as PC, smartphones, and tablets.
- Accumulated over 26,000 clicks from various paid advertisements and featured positions on all search engines.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

In the 1990s, UH was the state's third fastest-growing university and concentrated on becoming a leading metropolitan university, appealing to both traditional and non-traditional students as well as business professionals with the desire to continue their education. Today, UH is a major public research and teaching institution, serving more than 39,800 students annually with nearly 300 undergraduate and graduate programs. Even with this rapid growth and expansion, the university still felt that more brand awareness was critical, so the "Welcome to the Powerhouse" campaign was born. This campaign focuses on the university's achievements in the areas of energy, health, the arts, athletics, student success, and research. In order to fully execute UH's marketing campaign, Studio

INDUSTRY: INSTITUTION

YEAR: 2018

SERVICE SCOPE: SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

PROJECT TEAM:

BRAND DEVELOPMENT - CONTENT MARKETING

Brand would need to focus a significant portion of their ad fund on various SEM related activities in order to properly promote "Welcome to the Powerhouse."

THE SOLUTION:

By opening UH's marketing-mix to SEM initiatives, they were able to establish their brand on a much grander scale. Analysis of the market atmosphere and trends, target demographics and psychographics, target audience profiles, and market opportunity helped determine marketing objectives to position UH to its most critical constituencies favorably. All messaging and content represented UH as a tier one, competitive, engaging university that propels students into successful lives and careers. Emphasis was placed on demonstrating UH as a powerhouse that "powers up" people's knowledge, opportunities, community engagement, and relationships. Studio Brand ensured consistency of branding regarding the objectives of student recruitment, brand development, alumni outreach, and community initiatives, all while portraying UH as a worthy university and a civic asset.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching plan for this media advertising campaign was to educate people about the university's value, engage Houstonians (both alumni and non-alums), and elevate the university's visibility among prospective students and their parents, the business community, and visitors. To achieve this outcome, the campaign was broken into a primary and secondary objective to generate more interest in the University of Houston by targeting prospective students, current students and faculty, alumni, educators, and corporations through display, text, and remarketing pay per click advertising. In addition, increase brand awareness and reputation for the University of Houston through display and remarketing advertisements.

Studio Brand was pivotal in providing UH with data-driven marketing materials across multiple search engines that would generate exposure all over the globe.

—Radica McKenzie, Director of Operations at Studio Brand

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Studio Brand consistently monitored the health of PPC campaigns to ensure optimal performance. Regular measurement of critical metrics and data analysis will allow us to refine and refocus ad copy and budget allocation to optimize campaigns and achieve a higher level of brand awareness. Studio Brand measured performance through the following metrics:

- Number of impressions for search and display ads
 - Studio Brand adjusted daily budget limits and location targeting where applicable to capitalize on maximum impression share.
- Click-through rate and conversion rate for each ad
 - Studio Brand regularly eliminated ads with poor performance and replaced them with more effective ads closely modeled after top performing ads.
- Cost per conversion for each ad
 - Studio Brand used this information to ensure that we maintain the most efficient ratio of cost per conversion and refocus our keyword bidding.

- Conversion by keyword
 - Studio Brand defined which keywords are most often searched and refined the copy of our ads to correspond to the most popular keywords.
- Conversions by device type
 - Studio Brand determined how to allocate budget and optimize ads according to the interface they are viewed on in the highest volume.
- Conversion by action
 - Studio Brand adjusted the landing page features and content to reflect the characteristics of the top-performing landing pages that garner the most user engagement (i.e., downloading an item, sharing a video, clicking through to social media).

