

Agency
Wunderman, London

Client
News UK

Product
Dream Team and The Sun App

Title
It's Not Cheating When It's
Your Dream Team

Country
UK

Background
Managed by The Sun newspaper, Dream Team was one of the largest online fantasy football leagues in the UK. It required soccer fans to make up their ideal team by selecting the best players from all the various teams in the Premier League. Then, as the football season played out, they accumulated points based on the performance of their selected players to see if their "make believe" team was better than everyone else's.

In the UK, football was everything, and people would go through life supporting just one team. It was an allegiance handed down from generation to generation. No one would ever dream of switching sides or supporting rival players.

Idea
The data revealed that despite their lifelong allegiance to a single team, fans chose players from rival sides when building their ultimate Dream Team.

In the previous season, 76% of Chelsea fans had chosen Spurs players (their sworn enemy), while 92% of Crystal Palace fans didn't select a single Crystal Palace player. This unspoken taboo was the insight for a campaign featuring fans trying to deal with the guilt of betraying their beloved team.

The campaign included online film, press ads, social media, digital display, emails, and direct mail, which targeted members of different football clubs by using their own team scarf, embroidered with a salient fact about their fellow fans' cheating behaviour. All channels drove traffic online to Dream Team to come sign up.



Results

The campaign reached 4,121,910 on Facebook and 12,434,032 on Twitter. Dream Team was mentioned on social media an average of 1,905 times per day (up to 3,870 times), reaching over 500,000 people every day. Facebook fans increased 5% (from 98,037 to 102,707) and Twitter followers increased 5% (from 95,571 to 100,016).

Despite the introduction of a pay-wall for the first time in 20 years, the campaign achieved over 630,000 registrations (5% above target) and usage of the Sun Goals app increased by 678%, creating a massive annual revenue stream (that cannot be disclosed).

Insights

At the heart of this campaign is data. Knowing which team an individual supported and then being given the numbers for exactly how many other fans of the same team had treacherously invested in an "enemy" player would have been a gift to any creative team anywhere.

Though it was an integrated campaign with important TV and online components, mail was crucial to its success. This isn't just personalization through the use of the recipient's name throughout, but through knowing who he supported and how he was supposed to behave.

The letter revealed to the fan the essential contradiction between his rational selection of players for his fantasy team and his irrational support of his actual team. And that was enough to get them in their thousands to pay up to keep playing the game online.

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