

Finnair drives awareness and response through the new Swipeable Gallery ad format for tablets



At a Glance

Goals

- Introduce Chongqing, a new Asian destination
- Test tablet as a supporting vehicle to drive sales
- Expand sales to Asian destinations
- Encourage competition registrations

Solution

- Launched tablet-specific rich media advertising campaign
- Implemented the new Swipeable Gallery ad format

Results

- Of all impressions, nearly 5% led to an interaction
- Of all interactions, 12% clicked through to Finnair.com to see fares with a possibility to purchase
- Of all interactions, 60% clicked through to enter the competition

Making a move

Finnair is a boutique airline specialising in fast connections between Europe and Asia via Helsinki. The airline carries more than eight million passengers annually and connects 11 cities in Asia with more than 50 destinations in Europe. The airline, a pioneer in sustainable flying, operates a young, modern fleet and has the highest carbon score of any publically disclosing airline in the worldwide Carbon Disclosure Project. The only Nordic carrier with a four-star Skytrax ranking, Finnair has also won the World Airline Award for Best Airline Northern Europe for the past three years running. Finnair is a member of the oneworld alliance.

In May 2012 Finnair opened its 11th destination in Asia with four weekly flights to the Chinese city Chongqing. Finnair is the first airline to operate non-stop flights between Europe and Chongqing.

While China is growing in importance among both business and leisure travellers day by day, Finnair faced a challenge in stimulating travel to a destination that many members of the public had never even heard of. Because travelling to exotic places is an inherently sensory and immersive experience, the company sought to unleash the most stimulating and emotive advertising imaginable.

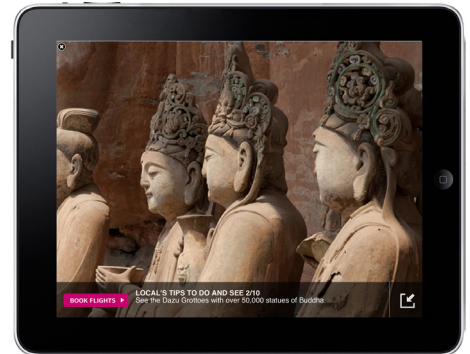
“Even though we have grown to be a major player in the Europe-Asia traffic during the past couple of years, we are still a small airline with limited resources. That is why the excellent targeting possibilities of today’s marketing tools play the key role in planning any campaign we run nowadays. AdMob really helped us target our message to those tablet users we believe would be interested in exploring our new destination more deeply and in an exciting way,” says Anssi Partanen, Finnair’s digital marketing manager responsible for the marketing communication for the Chongqing route launch.

The campaign was structured to achieve a number of specific goals; it needed to be highly visual and interactive, leading people to learn as much as possible about the destination in a short space of time. “Our intention was to devise an ad that would educate, inspire and touch users,” says Emmi Teräs, marketing manager for Finnair. The ad should of course also drive users to both register for a competition and ultimately to visit Finnair’s website to check the current fare offers with a possibility to purchase tickets. Another goal was to better understand the value and impact of tablet advertising.

Ready for takeoff

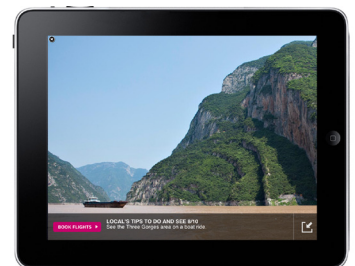
Consumers are embracing tablet devices as the third digital screen in their lives, and 65% of those who own tablets use them at least one hour per day. Research shows that users have higher expectations of ads on tablets, believing they should be more interactive and touch screen friendly.

“The tablet is an unbeatable tool to use in order to reach engaged consumers.”
-- Emmi Teräs, Marketing Manager, Finnair



Google's Rich Media Designs for Mobile are a set of templates to help display marketers reach these engaged consumers. They make it easy to create rich media ads using existing assets, such as photos and logos, and then implement them across platforms including mobile, desktop and tablet. In essence, the designs enable advertisers to create beautiful and highly interactive ads with no HTML5 expertise.

Finnair seized the Swipeable Gallery ad format as the ideal union of performance with branding. The resulting creative consists of links to make a booking or to enter the competition to win two round-trip tickets. But the main content of the ad is a range of compelling imagery, including cityscapes, ancient sculptures, tantalising local food, bamboo forests, architecture and eye-popping landscapes. The viewer can swipe horizontally to browse the gallery. Clicking on any image will expand it to full screen size, effectively allowing the viewer to dive into the sights of Chongqing.



Sky's the limit

The CPM campaign ran across six markets: the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland and Sweden. Of all impressions, nearly 5% led to an interaction. Of these interactions, 12% clicked through to Finnair's website with the possibility to purchase, and 60% clicked through to enter the competition.

But these numbers tell only part of the story. Tablets are present in users' lives throughout the entire purchase funnel. Finnair was keen to understand how tablet advertising can contribute to its existing marketing mix, and the Swipeable Gallery campaign illustrated that tablets are an excellent way to support sales and in some cases lead directly to conversions. Although sales were only a secondary goal in this activity, the campaign in fact successfully recorded a number of bookings, proving the tablet's potential as a device for driving direct sales in the future.

Finnair's conclusion? "The tablet is an unbeatable tool to use when you want to strengthen your brand while interacting with consumers at a new level," says Anssi. "No other tool enables you to engage with targeted users with so much wow factor while communicating an educational message."

