



Criteo campaigns meet aggressive CPO targets and turnaround times for Thomas Cook Airlines.

The display results

-10%

Below our CPO target

+82%*

vs the average CTR market

The Thomas Cook Group is a top name in leisure travel and one of the primary leisure airlines in the UK. As the company’s flight-only sales arm, Thomas Cook Airlines’ fleet carries 6.7m passengers to more than 60 destinations around the world.

Thomas Cook Airlines is also a sophisticated travel marketer in an intensely competitive market. Since they began running lower-funnel performance marketing campaigns with Criteo in late 2014, they’ve continually experimented with new features and banner designs – always in pursuit of higher sales volumes at the lowest possible cost per order (CPO).



We set a high bar for our performance display campaigns. Since relaunching, we have grown our partnership with Criteo and see them as a key part of our overall online marketing mix. They quickly surpassed our expectations across the board by meeting or exceeding the targets we set for our other lower-funnel channels.”

Helen Atkinson, Online Partner Marketing Manager – Thomas Cook Airlines



*Based on Criteo average CTR for Travel clients

The challenge

The company is no-nonsense about KPIs. Performance marketing is part of its broad mix of online marketing channels that includes a strong affiliate programme. In 2014, Thomas Cook Airlines initiated a testing phase for its performance marketing providers. The test compared its Criteo booking volumes and performance metrics vs. those of other vendors to assess the true effectiveness of this display retargeting channel.

Thomas Cook Airlines not only required these marketing campaigns to deliver excellent ROI, it also wanted CPOs comparable to other channels that target visitors who are actively engaged and in-market for their services – an ambitious goal.

After the test period Criteo was able to quickly exceed the high standards that they had been tasked to deliver.

The Criteo solution

As a result of the evaluation period, the company confirmed that its Criteo partnership achieved its strategic goals and relaunched with Criteo as its sole performance marketing provider.

The airlines' lower-funnel Criteo campaign officially launched in December, 2014, in anticipation of the peak ticket sales months of January and February – a period when a large portion of sales for the year are achieved.

Despite the fact that December is typically a quiet month for bookings, the Criteo campaigns optimized so quickly that the company was meeting CPO targets before the month was out.

Not only were its performance campaigns fast out of the gate, they were also fast on their feet, enabling the client to post last-minute offers and coupons to convert down-to-the-wire travelers.

Criteo has been meeting the company's rigorous volume and CPO targets throughout the winter and spring.

Now, Thomas Cook Airlines takes advantage of a broad array of Criteo technologies to stay ahead of the market. The company has deployed Criteo ads on Facebook (both Right Hand Side and Newsfeed); mobile ads with Criteo Extended Browser Support to reach Safari and iOS users; and Criteo Engine-Optimized Segments to maximize ROI.

The advertisement features the Thomas Cook Airlines logo at the top. Below it, a central graphic displays a list of destinations: CANARIES, CARIBBEAN, TURKEY, USA, GAMBIA, and CANCUN. To the right, a scenic image of a tropical island is shown. At the bottom right, a flight offer is highlighted: 'V. C. Bird International - Antigua from £279.99'. A prominent orange 'BOOK NOW' button is located at the bottom left of the ad.

- ▶ CPO : -10% below CPO target
- ▶ CTR : +82% vs the average CTR market

The company has been so pleased with the results of its lower-funnel campaigns in the UK that performance display is becoming a key tactic for its wider business, with testing and roll-out now scheduled for its sister company in Belgium. Due to these great results the company has now also launched mid-funnel targeting.