

How we used Facebook to increase Hitachi Capital's leads by 300% year-on-year

The brief

The brief

Increase leads

Hitachi Capital gave us a simple brief: increase website leads.

The approach

The approach

Hitachi Capital came to us with a clear goal: increase web leads year-on-year. We were keen to get stuck into the brief but had to overcome a few challenges first.

The initial challenges

Operating in a price-driven sector, competition is tough. Hitachi Capital offers a premium car leasing service, which can hinder the brand from competing on price.

Other contextual factors also had to be considered:

- UK Car buyers spend an average of 11 hours researching before purchase – plenty of time to compare prices
- Customers want to feel in control of their decisions, not like they are being sold to

In addition, we had a compliance team to please. All promotional activity is subject to regulatory approval, severely limiting the channels and messaging we can use and making it difficult to release time-sensitive material.

With new car purchasing constantly increasing in the UK – up to 2.6 million in 2015 – competition is growing. We needed to entice customers, whilst breaking through a customer journey that can take 11 hours.



To view the video version of this case study, click the image above.

Step 1: Audience research

Our audience research – including user journey mapping, panel research and performance audits – identified that car leasing isn't a well-understood option for people purchasing a new vehicle.

We also found large up-front payments to be the main deterrent stopping people purchasing a new car. A fundamental benefit to leasing is driving a new vehicle with less initial financial outlay, so the lack of awareness of this benefit became the linchpin of our entire campaign.

Step 2: Optimising Adwords campaigns

Our messaging aimed to grab the attention of prospective car owners by letting them know they could be driving luxury vehicles for affordable monthly payments.

We began by refining the brand's Adwords account, creating campaigns for:

- Vehicle manufactures
- Vehicle models
- Offer campaigns
- Business and personal customers

We increased the campaigns and keywords we were targeting significantly. Campaigns rose from just 32 to almost 1,479 and targeted keywords shot up from 3,046 to 23,652.

This worked nicely for a time, but we realised more was needed, mainly due to:

1. Increased competition on key terms
2. A drop in quality score after recommendations for the website didn't go live as soon as expected
3. Outdated ads, due to a delay with compliance approving messaging

We soon realised we couldn't put all our eggs in Google's basket and needed to claw back deficit from elsewhere.

Step 3: Introducing Facebook advertising

We chose to explore social as a lead-gen channel. We built multiple ads to test how different audiences reacted to different messages, and analysed effectiveness to see how people responded to different car brands.

Our previous approach was lengthy. It began with a paid search ad, sending users to a landing page, where we could build an audience list and use RLSA campaigns to entice them back to a landing page, before finally submitting an enquiry.

With Facebook, it was simple. We used audience lists from people who had already visited our site to reconnect with these users focusing on one of their key purchasing considerations – price. We then targeted them with an ad when they were actively engaging with content on another platform.

They weren't asked to leave Facebook and return to the site – as they were with RLSA campaigns. It was easy for them to provide details and enquire about the car they wanted there and then.

It proved to be a success, and we've since created dozens of new campaigns, tailored to multiple makes and models.

The results

The results

By getting this campaign live sooner than anticipated, we enabled Hitachi Capital to realise that:

- The USP of its product can be highlighted to realign the magnitude of a car purchase to be less like buying a house, and more like getting a new phone
- Pitching its product as a lifestyle accessory, rather than a milestone purchase, encourages audiences to respond in a different way

Increase in leads

Most impressively, by advertising on Facebook at scale – which is often out of bounds for regulated financial firms – we increased the number of inbound leads via paid activity.

At the time of shooting the video (April 2017), this was up by 209% year-on-year, but upon publication (July 2017) has since risen to an impressive 300%!

New record month

Moreover, we set a new record month for the brand, smashing their previous best by 306%.

Reduced cost-per-lead

And, not only did we significantly increase qualified leads for Hitachi Capital; we did so without compromising the cost-per-lead. In fact, we reduced CPL by an impressive 56%!



01273 916 600

www.rocketmill.co.uk