NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Finds Success with Lightbox Catalog Ads

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Brand USA offers travel partners enhanced cooperative programs with Google Lightbox. This interactive-multimedia advertising platform is generating significant results for Brand USA. Lightbox ads begin in standard, scalable banner ad units, but then expand into a near full-screen canvas that supports full rich-media capabilities. Advertisers can embed a YouTube video, game, or travel experience in a banner ad to grab the customer's attention. Lightbox ads qualify user engagement by requiring users to hover over the ad unit for two-seconds before expanding. Brand USA was the first business to embed an interactive travel guide within this type of ad.

"The Google Lightbox has exceeded all expectations for engagement with the advertising format generating amazing results," said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO for Brand USA. "What makes this platform unique is that it allows travelers to engage users with our brand, USA destinations and travel brands through great storytelling without interrupting their online experience."

Each Lightbox ad generates 3.2 percent engagement rate and rising as the campaign is continually optimized. This represents up to 30 times improvement over traditional banner advertising. The overall campaign showed $0.19 per engaged user (compared to $1.43 per engaged user of a printed catalog. Note: Employing catalog user as alternate comparison due to use of printed guide assets as a source of design for the ad format in this test).

Through Google Lightbox, a user is able to interact with the advertisement, open the highly experiential ad unit, read and view the content, including video, and never leave the site they are browsing. Only when the consumer is truly inspired and decides to take such action are they able to enter the website or digital property directly to the content they were consuming.

"This drives users to engage in a trusted environment and engage only as they move down the consideration and conversion funnel to traveling to the USA," added Yvonne La Penotiere, chief marketing officer for Brand USA. "Our partners are able to work with us on this Google platform in many formats to deliver tailored lifestyle messaging, video content of regions and states and truly engage a highly targeted consumer audience via the many optimization tools that Google provides to drive efficiency in digital marketing."

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.