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# 4 TIMES THE REVENUE FOR MONARCH HOLIDAYS

Monarch Holidays, previously Cosmos, is the UK's largest independent tour operator. iCrossing were chosen to create a paid search strategy that would hit tough sales and cost per passenger targets on the same level of investment committed to their paid search activity the previous year.

## OVERVIEW

iCrossing proposed a campaign that was informed by Monarch Holidays' customer behaviour online and the language they use when searching for holidays. This helped the tour operator better understand their customers.

This approach, combined with a performance based agreement, enabled the iCrossing team to exceed Monarch Holiday's return on investment targets across four sites: Monarch Holidays, Archers Direct, Cosmos Tourama and Monarch Hotels (previously somewhere2stay).

## OBJECTIVES

iCrossing was tasked with growing online sales for the Monarch group of sites and improving overall cost efficiency. In order to achieve this, the campaign aimed to acquire the maximum number of passengers possible from each brand site in line with targets defined by Monarch.

To deliver a cost efficient campaign, the iCrossing paid search team had to lower the cost per passenger for each of the Monarch group of company sites.

Increasing Monarch Holidays' visibility in Google's paid listings was also a key success driver.

## STRATEGY

Working with Monarch Holidays, iCrossing increased the volume of search terms targeted by 350 percent to cover all inventory Monarch Holidays sold through each brand site, effectively targeting the 'tail' of search. iCrossing devised the search term list through research and competitor gap analysis, using full site audits and research tools such as AdGooRoo. The creative used with each search term was tried and tested to improve click through and conversion rates.

Deep-linking to the most relevant landing pages took users directly to what they were looking for when searching in Google.

This improved the Google Quality Score awarded to Monarch Holidays for running a customer focused campaign that was relevant and useful to the user. The greater the score, the less each click costs and a better ad position is given. A lower cost per click meant Monarch Holidays maximised spend by spreading the saved cost across more search terms, achieving a lower cost per passenger and improved visibility.

iCrossing devised a 100% performance led commercial agreement that was based purely on cost per acquisition, which is unique to the travel market. This demonstrated iCrossing's belief in the proposed strategy and encouraged an open dialogue that helped establish a strong partnership based on best practice, trust, shared risk and reward. As Monarch Holidays is paying what amounts to a commission on every sale, iCrossing is now acting as an on-line travel agent for their PPC channel.

## RESULTS

Monarch Holidays achieved a 325% increase in revenue. On exactly the same level of investment from Monarch Holidays, iCrossing generated four times as much revenue year-on-year, all at a third of the cost per passenger.

The cost per passenger achieved is 15% lower than the target set and 49% lower than previous campaign performance. The booking volumes generated were 55% above target and 82% above the previous campaign performance.

In one month alone, paid search generated more revenue as an individual channel than the entire web site delivered in the same month two years previously.

## WORKING TOGETHER

Trevor Inch, Director of Marketing & Distribution at Cosmos, says: "We were pleased with the way the Cosmos Holidays site was optimised. Early performance targets were hit – greater numbers of visitors were coming to the site and its ranking was much better than in previous years. iCrossing proved they could be a partner rather than a supplier and quickly established an effective relationship.

We're paying what amounts to a commission on every sale, so iCrossing is acting as an on-line travel agent for our PPC channel. Commercially, iCrossing have an exciting opportunity to make a major contribution to our business in the future."

## ABOUT COSMOS

Monarch Holidays is a trading name of Cosmos Holidays plc, who are the UK's largest independent tour operator and part of the Globus group of companies, a family run organisation established in 1928.

With over 40 years' experience, Cosmos and Monarch are two of the most established names in the travel industry. Having started out offering holidays to just a few Mediterranean destinations, Cosmos Holidays now takes over half a million people to over 35 destinations around the world each year.