

Brand: English Heritage

Sector: Charity

Primary Objective: Awareness, consideration, sales

Formats Used: Video

Background and Overview:

English Heritage cares for hundreds of historic places, from prehistoric sites to grand country houses. It was looking for new ways to promote its brand and was aware that video could help.

So, the charity set out to combine its historical know-how with YouTube's powerful platform. It grew subscribers from 1,000 to 390,000 in just over three years, transforming its channel from a hodge-podge of ad hoc content into an internationally-popular brand asset – one that has the potential to become a significant source of revenue.

The English Heritage YouTube channel was launched in 2012 and when analysing its performance in 2015 – the year the organisation became a charity – it was found that a short video featuring a Victorian cook, Mrs Crocombe, was performing well. It decided to build on this with a Victorian cooking show, with YouTube and Google Trends helping to give a steer on the potential success of content.

Later, the brand decided to work on a series inspired by the success of content creators in the beauty sector. In October 2018 it released its first historical makeup tutorials, gaining over a million views in under a week. There are many more videos in the pipeline.

What was the role of digital within the media mix?

YouTube analytics allows English Heritage to hone its craft. It uses metrics like retention and demographic data to measure performance.



Noticing that it had impressive audience retention rates (70% on average), the charity decided to increase the duration of future videos in the hope of increasing engagement. It was correct. Suddenly, more people were watching its YouTube videos than visiting its historic places, including Stonehenge!

In August 2018 the charity began monetising its content, and as of February 2019, it had earned almost £20,000. That figure is expected to grow. YouTube has provided it with an income stream, too.

Results/Achievements:

By 1 January 2018 it had 7,692,325 views and 140,895 subscribers.

One of the main objectives was to increase brand awareness and reach. The charity now reaches over 2.5 million viewers every month, compared to around 25,000 in 2015. The next challenge is to ensure that video content incorporates charitable messaging.

The success of the channel has had an enormous impact. Departments of the charity which rarely get a chance to collaborate have rallied together. A 'Victorian Way' retail range is being developed and the charity plans to publish Mrs Crocombe's cookbook, marketing it off the back of video content.

Its YouTube content has barely scratched the surface of the stories that its historic places have to tell and English Heritage says it can't wait to dive deeper into the past and bring even more history to life.

What's the killer headline?

How English Heritage attracted hundreds of thousands of video subscribers and even created a new revenue stream with YouTube

