



DISTRIBUTING CONTENT THAT CONNECTS

CASE STUDY 3

PLAY Magazine launched in 2016 as a content piece to showcase the very best of Virgin Media's offering – from the breadth of entertainment services available to tips and tricks for getting the most as a customer.

Over the course of 10 issues, the magazine grew in popularity, transformed in look and style, transitioned to digital-only, and cemented its place as a key part of the company's vision to provide added value to customers.

But there's always more we can do.

THE CHALLENGES

The content of PLAY was never in question; through extensive audience analysis, tireless research, and a well-honed editorial approach, it had become ideally suited to addressing Virgin Media's customer base.

It was also, however, just one part of the company's content marketing efforts at large. With outlets spanning owned media, social channels and dedicated customer emails, there was an array of untapped resources that could take PLAY to the next



level—and, in turn, bring a whole new world of success to the client's campaigns.

To streamline processes and maximise return, a groundbreaking distribution strategy would be required; one that aligned the efforts of multiple agencies, repurposed content in new and exciting forms, and stretched across a variety of platforms to ensure everything was moving in the same direction.



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THE SOLUTIONS

The heart of our strategy was a commitment to content that delivered over time. Commercial objectives were joined by a focus on how every asset created for PLAY would be reimagined, repurposed and targeted to specific customer groups when most topical, via the best channel over its eight-week lifespan.

A mammoth strategy, workshopped with stakeholders from across the business, was drawn up and enacted. Content would be maximised by distributing the magazine using a number of different channels including;

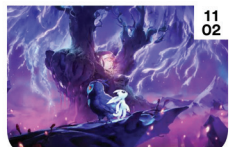
- dedicated customer emails;
- links in Watch & Play articles (Virgin’s online platform for content);
- a banner in My Virgin Media (Virgin customers’ online account access);
- eNews and PLAYextra panels (newsletter emails for specific customer groups);
- digital display advertisements,
- promotion on Virgin Media’s social channels.

The results of the new approach would be carefully monitored and measured, with benchmark items—as well as overall performance—to provide key indicators as to its success.



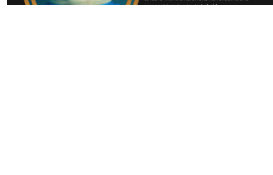
THE GAMES SPRING ONTO THE SCENE THIS SEASON

The games you've been waiting for are just around the corner! There's an epic gaming lineup this season for online gamers of fun, fighting and shooters to Mass Effect and the simulation, there's bound to be something that's just your taste!



ORI AND THE WILL OF THE WISPS

Developed by Moon Studios, this is the beautiful Microsoft Game Pass up to 2019 award-winning LIFE of Ori and the Will of the Wisps. Ori and the Will of the Wisps is an action-adventure game set in a lush, vibrant world where you'll encounter towering enemies and challenging puzzles on your quest to restore Ori's family. That's not to mention graphics, orchestral music and heaps of exciting sidequests and puzzles for a treat.





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THE IMPACT

A 20% increase in unique readers was an ambitious target; within weeks, that milestone was smashed to pieces. The first issue incorporating the new strategy brought about an increase of 100%, with the following issue achieving results 200% greater than observed prior to the strategy's introduction.

In fact, each issue of PLAY since the new strategy was implemented has shown exponential growth, with the most recent issue achieving a readership approximately four times greater than the corresponding publication a year earlier.

The results have underlined the importance of repurposing in driving traffic to PLAY; 38% of clicks in email newsletters were

generated by repurposed PLAY content while digital display campaigns reached some 4.5m impressions.

Even Virgin Media's sales saw a significant impact; while not anticipated, a 15% increase in product and content sales was observed.

It stands as a clear demonstration of how a carefully-crafted, fully-integrated approach can achieve and amplify results, raising the game of an already successful marketing tool.



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“Content Marketing is an important element of our mix and it is part of how we build the relationship we have with our customers. One of the ways we do this is through our customer magazine, PLAY. We really want customers to have the entertainment news they want and get exclusive updates that are relevant to them – all through original editorial that is delivered in a format that suits. As a result, it helps them to get the best from their Virgin Media services. Zahra Media’s experience in both the consumer magazine business, as well as in content marketing, made them a super publishing partner for this project. The team at Zahra are a pleasure to work with and really get what we want to deliver through our customer communications and tone of voice. “Now on issue 14, I have to say we are thrilled with the magazine and how it has grown and progressed. It’s vibrant, engaging, a great read and really brings a new dimension to how we keep the conversation going with our customers!”

**Fionnuala Tohill: Direct,
CRM and Content Marketing Manager,
Virgin Media Ireland.**

