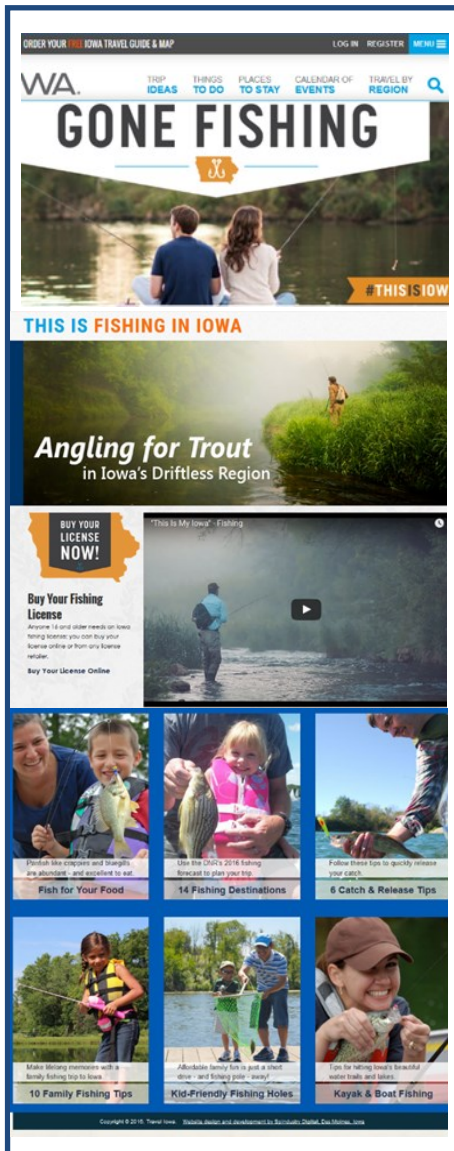


RBFF STATE INNOVATIVE R3 PROGRAM GRANTS IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES GONE FISHING DIGITAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN AND TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

PARTNERS

- Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Tourism Office
- ZLR Ignition, Advertising Agency
- Active Network, License Sales



OVERVIEW

The goal of the Gone Fishing campaign was to partner with the Iowa Tourism Office and promote Iowa's fishing opportunities through innovative, attractive and helpful content on numerous digital media platforms. Through this partnership, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) hoped to find ways to expand its target audiences, especially families planning summer activities, which is the key tourism target market.

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) granted the DNR \$25,000 to assist with the partnership project. Ultimately, the DNR wanted to determine if digital marketing, especially social media and email marketing, can convert those who enjoy DNR/Tourism content into license purchasers.

METHODOLOGY

From May 24 - July 30, 2016, DNR and Iowa Tourism Office showcased fishing as a "leisure activity of choice" for outdoor-minded Iowa families and casual anglers among several of its online channels. The campaign included a "Gone Fishing" web page with numerous where-to/how-to articles, dozens of social media posts on Facebook and Twitter, and advertisement purchases, including Facebook carousel ads, promoted posts and native ads, all leading to either the DNR license sales website or the campaign page at www.traveliowa.com/fishing. The campaign also included a "Gone Fishing" email to past purchasers who had not yet bought their 2016 licenses.

BENEFITS

The strength of the campaign was the partnership between DNR and Iowa Tourism Office. The program allowed both agencies to reach new audiences with relevant content. Additionally, the program leveraged strength areas — the DNR has content expertise about outdoor recreation, and Iowa Tourism Office has sophisticated advertising knowledge, including media buying, design, content development and metrics. Additionally, the DNR's license vendor, Active Network, crafted email communications and provided analytics.

SUPPORT

“Promoting Iowa as a fishing destination is a shared mission of the DNR and the Iowa Tourism Office. By working together on this campaign we were able to strategically allocate our marketing dollars to best reach Iowa families.”

Chuck Gipp, DNR Director

RESULTS

- Overall, 28,302 sessions to the “Gone Fishing” campaign/content page were generated on Travellowa.com during the campaign timeframe.
- Social media efforts drove 22,718 Gone Fishing website sessions and more than 1.49 million impressions.
- Three native content ads generated 1.8 million impressions, more than 5,000 website visits with average time on site of one minute. These ads appeared on sites such as MSN, Fox News and ESPN targeting Iowans.
- 2,544 online visits to DNR license buying page occurred during the campaign timeframe, with digital content and ads referring 557 people to DNR’s licensing page.
- An e-mail was sent to 14,646 recently lapsed license buyers to encourage the license purchase, with 1,402 licenses purchased by that group after receiving the email.
- Although not able to track direct sales from social media, DNR has reported online fishing license sales are up 22% from 2015 for the campaign timeframe.

LESSONS LEARNED/FUTURE PLANS

- The partnership opened doors to future endeavors working with Iowa Tourism. Being flexible and open to new ideas allowed us to build on each others’ strengths and expand reach and engagement with new audiences.
- The shared content strategy was effective in pulling together resources across Iowa state agencies and creating consistent branding for customers.
- The campaign helped expand reach with new audiences. Of the people who clicked through to the DNR website from social media channels, 52% had never visited the online sales site previously.
- Regarding messaging, people are most responsive to “where-to” information. Destination-related content was by far the most popular in the campaign.
- Email continues to be a direct route to increase sales at a low cost. Incorporating email into integrated campaigns helps boost results.
- Tracking actual conversions continues to be a challenge due to e-commerce site securities that limit end-of-purchase tracking. This will be a goal moving forward.

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