



Promoting local This Girl Can sessions with Facebook advertising

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of Haringey*

1. Executive summary

Between May and July 2019, London Sport ran a digital marketing pilot programme in partnership with 5 local authorities to support hundreds of people to join This Girl Can activity sessions across London.

The pilot project used Facebook advertising supported by an automated Facebook Messenger communications to support people to take the first steps to become more active by delivering a digital-led behaviour change journey.

Over a series of campaigns across the boroughs the key outcomes were:

- **1,420 women** registered for behaviour change support as part of the campaign.
- **Around 110** of them went on to attend a local activity session.

We found that Facebook Advertising was an effective method for reaching and engaging a less active audience. With 56% of people who signed up classed as “less active” (i.e. not meeting the Chief Medical Officer guidelines of 150 mins activity per week).

To assess the cost-effectiveness of the approach we tracked advertising spend and signups.

- **Cost per lead:** On average it cost £3.94 per person who registered.

Based on the learning we have produced the below guidance for running Facebook campaigns to support less active people to join local activity sessions.

STEP 1 - DRIVE ENQUIRIES THROUGH MARKETING

- a) Define your target audience
- b) Make them a relevant and convincing offer
- c) Test different imagery and wording

STEP 2 - RESPOND TO ENQUIRIES

- a) Set up systems to respond quickly via multiple channels
- b) Build-in behaviour change tactics to your follow up messaging

2. Introduction

Between May and July 2019, London Sport ran a digital marketing pilot programme in partnership with 5 local authorities to support hundreds of people to join This Girl Can activity sessions across London.

The pilot project used Facebook advertising supported by an automated Facebook Messenger bot to support people to take the first steps to become more active.

This report documents the process that was undertaken and highlights the key results and learnings.

In addition, London Sport have published several additional resources and papers covering key elements of setting up and running digital behaviour change campaigns. These can be found at www.londonsport.org

3. Background

Since This Girl Can launched in 2015, many local sport and activity providers have developed sessions to cater for this audience. These sessions typically:

- are inclusive for beginners & those less active.
- take place at a regular time & place each week, allowing participants to establish a new routine.
- have someone to greet new participants and show them around.
- are free or affordable sessions and equipment provided/loaned if needed.

As with most local physical activity promotion the most popular methods of marketing these sessions are posters, leaflets or word of mouth.

This project set out to test whether we could use Facebook advertising to promote these activities to a target audience in their local areas.

4. Results

In total 5 local authorities took part with a series of 2-week campaigns running between May – July 2019. In total:

- 1420 women registered for behaviour change support.
- 114 of them went on to join a local walking group.
- 56% of people who signed up were classed as "less active".
- On average it cost £3.94 per person who registered.



Image 1: The 5 local authorities involved in the project.

5. Research questions

5.1 WHICH AUDIENCE SEGMENT ARE MOST LIKELY TO RESPOND?

We chose to run the campaign on Facebook due to its ability to target advertising by age, gender, and location. This allowed us to focus the campaign budget on an audience who were most likely to be responsive to our adverts.

Our initial testing phase sought to identify which age groups were most likely to respond to the adverts.

Across all adverts the average conversion rate (the percentage of people who see the ad and then click on it) was 0.92%.

- The audience groups of 45-54, 55-64 and 65+ all performed better than the average.

As a result we focused our remaining advertising on a 45+ audience.

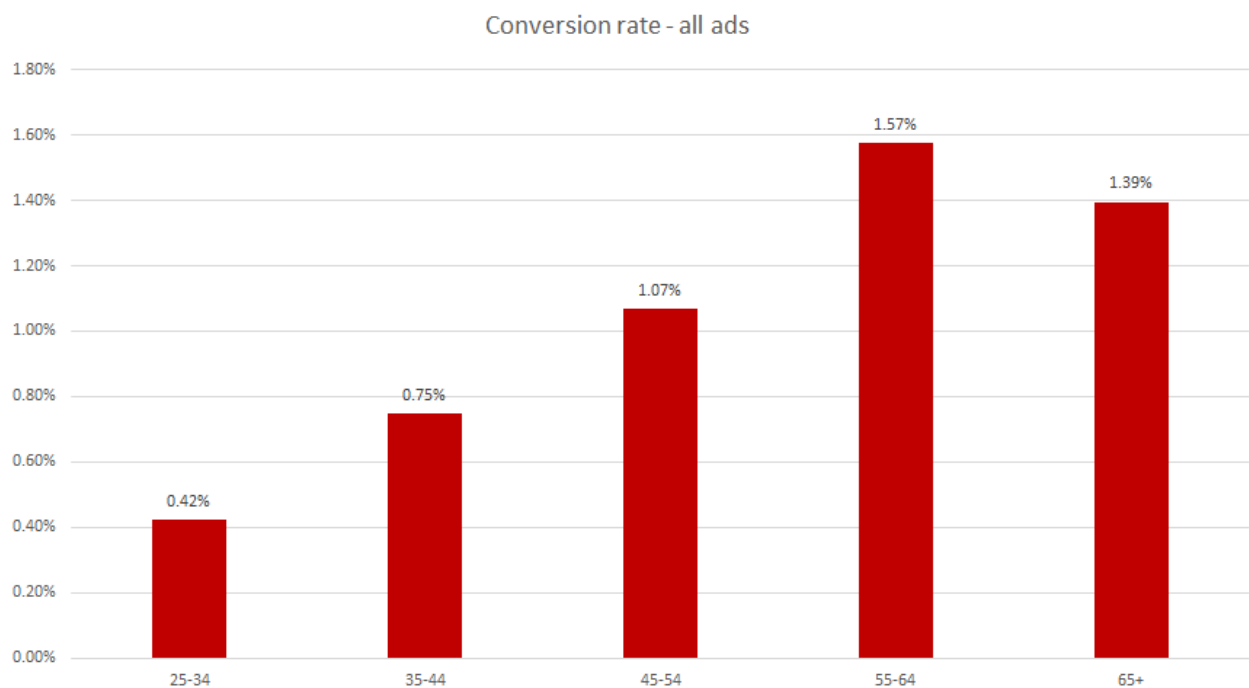


Chart 1: Comparing advert conversion rates by age group.

5.2 WHICH ACTIVITY TYPES WERE THE MOST POPULAR?

Each borough identified a range of sessions that were suitable for the audience. When we compared these across all 5 boroughs the most popular session types were Fitness, Dance, Netball and Cycling.

In our initial testing phase we ran adverts for each of these activity types to identify which generated the most interest.

Across all activities the average conversion rate was 0.90%. Cycling and Fitness sessions had a higher response rate, with netball significantly lower. (We did not have enough data about dance sessions to accurately compare).

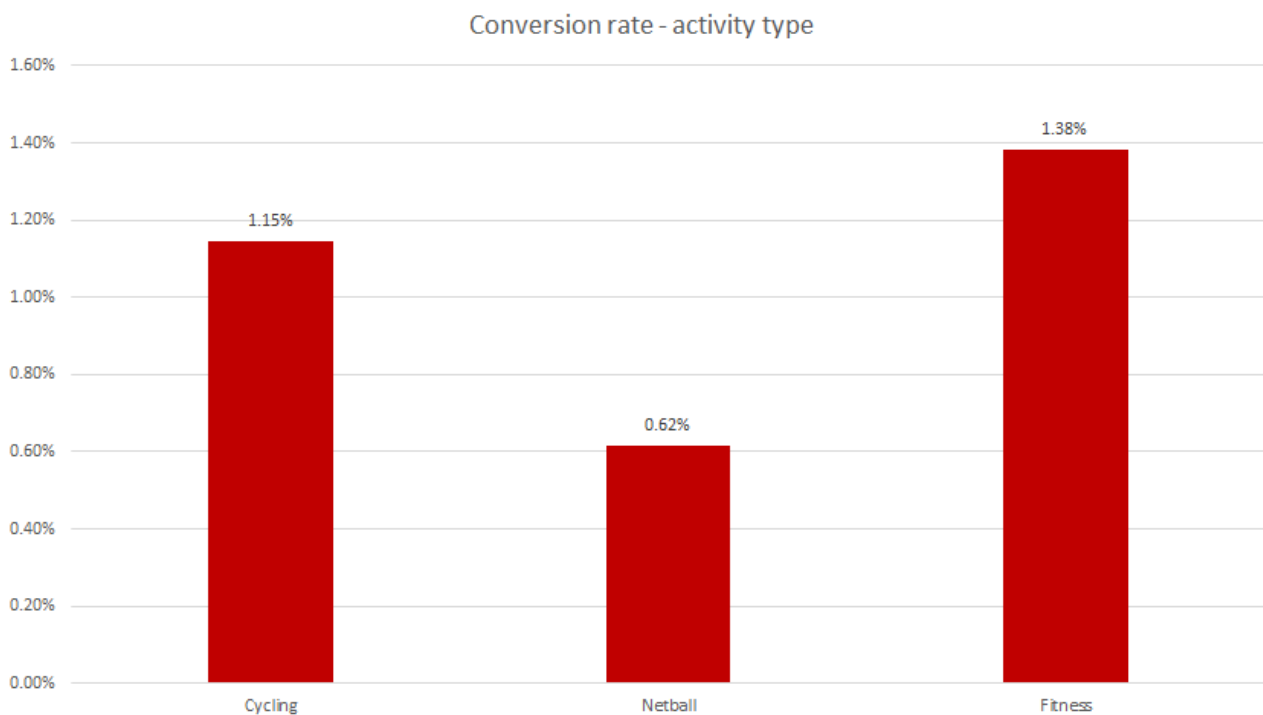


Chart 2: Comparing advert conversion rates by activity type

5.3 HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GET SOMEONE TO SIGN UP, AND THEN ATTEND A SESSION?

We tracked the amount spent on advertising and delivering the programme against the number of people who registered.

- We found that on average the cost to deliver the programme was £3.94 per person who signed up.

This is one of the first marketing projects to effectively track the cost to acquire a new participant. Using this as a baseline figure should allow future projects to monitor and improve on this.

5.4 CAN WE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SIGN UP TO ACTUALLY ATTEND A SESSION?

Each person who signed up provided us with their postcode and availability, which we then used to suggest local activity sessions to them.

For those who found a session close to them, we provided them with 4 weeks follow up support which included reminders and answering their questions.

- We found that on average 8% of people who signed up went on to actually attend a session.

This was a lower conversion rate than we saw in the previous Facebook Advertising pilot which focused on walking groups (13% conversion).

We believe that the following factors had an impact on conversion:

- The varied range of sessions meant that people who signed up may not have found a session type that met their needs. E.g. for "Fitness Sessions" we were promoting indoor sessions in community centres, outdoor bootcamp sessions and leisure centre workouts. The type of session available varied based on location.
- We had a limited supply of opportunities in each borough. We found that were we had over 10 session opportunities we were more likely to be able to match people who signed up to a session.
- Matching people to sessions at times they are available was the biggest challenge. A significant majority of people who signed up were interested in weekend or evening sessions, however many of the activities we were promoting were taking place during the day.

A similar finding to the Walking Group project was that it was clear that it's one thing to click on an ad whilst browsing Facebook from your sofa, but quite another to actually find a time that works to join an activity session and then have the confidence to turn up at and meet a group of new people.

We saw many examples of the concerns, worries and barriers that people faced whilst planning to attend.

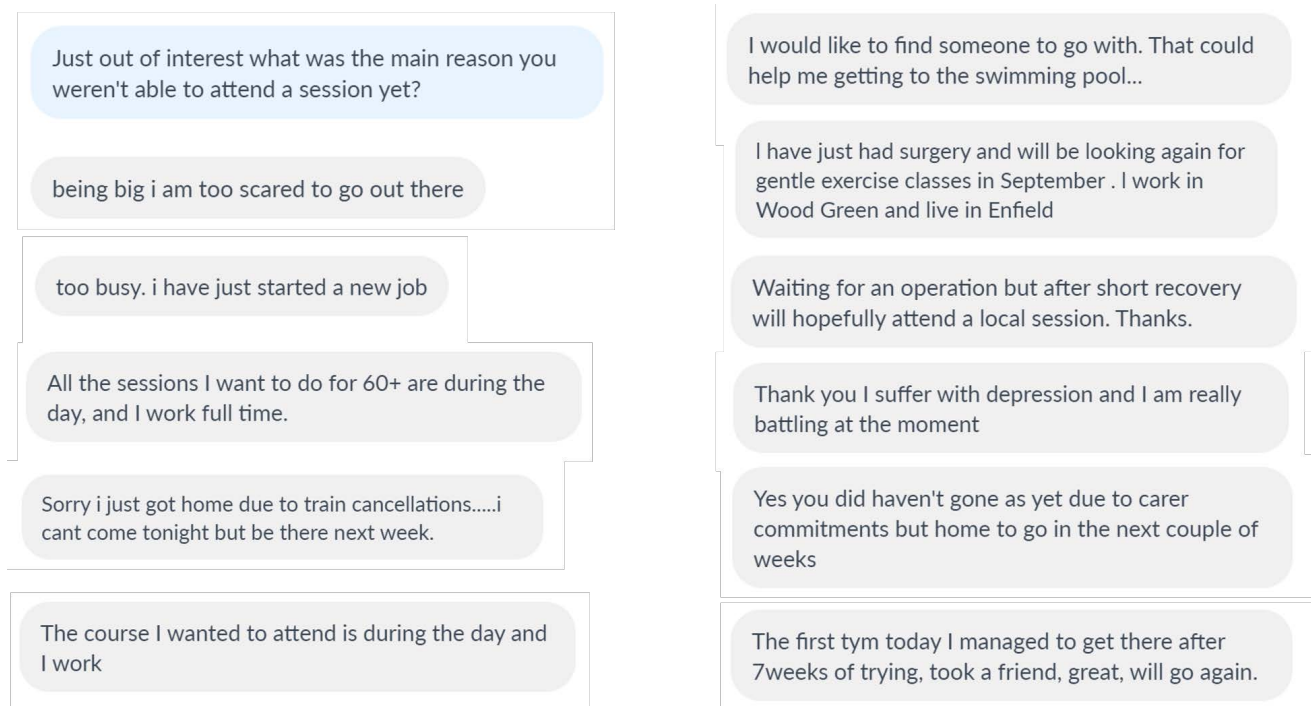


Image 2: Examples of some of the messages we received from participants.

This emphasised the importance of delivering a comprehensive behaviour change support programme to help address the real and perceived barriers that people may have before attending.

6. The two-step approach

Traditionally sport and physical activity marketing has tended to focus on promoting specific sessions (e.g. “Join our fitness session next Tuesday on Hounslow Heath at 11 am”).

So, people see the details of the activity, they think it sounds good, and then all their uncertainties, nervousness, and doubts start to come into play, and they don't decide to take part – and then you've lost them.

This means that we often only attract those people who are more confident – those who are already active.

Instead of this one-step process, we used a two-step process.

- Step One – Drive enquiries through marketing
- Step Two – Respond to enquiries

6.1 DRIVE ENQUIRIES THROUGH MARKETING

For step one all we are doing here is trying to get people to make an enquiry in some way, to let us know they are interested. This is a much smaller step than turning up to the activity.

We can then follow up (step two) with them and support them to come along and take part. When we respond, we link people up with the right activity for them and we send them the details of it.

Then, if people have concerns, they come back to us with their questions or if they decide to turn up, they tell us if they are coming along.

Finally, we have a chance to follow up with them again and again weekly sending them details of any future events or reminding them to take part in the activity.

What that does – it leads to those inactive people who were nervous about getting started having enough contact from us to actually come along and take part. This allows you to address people's uncertainty and give them reassurance.

They have a chance to engage with a real person and find out the answers to any of their questions and then they come along and take part.

This two-step process is effective in getting more people into activities, specifically those inactive people or hard to reach groups.

6.2 DELIVERING THE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

For this campaign we used Facebook Messenger to deliver follow-up support.

This enabled a seamless experience for the user, as all engagement was conducted within Facebook.

This approach also allowed us to serve rich content in the follow-up messages (e.g. video case studies) as well as allowing us to automate answering some of the most frequently asked questions and increasing the speed at which we could help people find a session.

7. Suggested approach for running Facebook campaigns targeted at a less active audience

Based on the learning here are our top tips for running campaigns to support less active people to join local activity sessions.

Step 1 - Drive enquiries through marketing	Step 2 - Respond to enquiries
<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Define your target audienceb) Make them a relevant and convincing offerc) Test different imagery and wording	<ul style="list-style-type: none">d) Set up systems to respond quickly via multiple channelse) Build-in behaviour change tactics to your follow up messaging

STEP 1 - DRIVE ENQUIRIES THROUGH MARKETING

a) Define your target audience - the who, what, and where.

Ask these questions:

- Who is your target audience? What do you know about them? What information can you use to target your campaign? i.e. Age, gender, location, interests.
- What do you want the audience to do? Do you want them to visit your website or view a video? Or do you want them to register their contact information so you can follow up with them?

b) Make a relevant and convincing offer

Match the activities you are promoting to the target audience. For example:

- If you have several walking groups all aimed at women over 55 then that will work well. If you have a few different activity groups for new mums, then you can promote them together.
- If you have 5 cycling groups and some are aimed at over 50s, and some are aimed at families - then you should separate them out into different campaigns.

The call to action in your ad needs to be an offer that is hard to refuse. We've tested these.

- Claim your voucher for a free session
- Download your free 5-day fitness programme
- Sign up today and we'll match you to your nearest walk

The aim is to convince them to give you their contact information so you can follow up with them. In order to do this, they need to see real value in the offer you are making.

c) Test imagery and wording

The first challenge is stopping someone scrolling past your advert. So prioritise testing images to see which work best.

Then test your wording within the ad. The aim of the text in the body of the advert is to keep the person reading until they get to the call to action which convinces them to click the button to sign up.

Visit the London Sport website for our latest findings on imagery and wording that works.

STEP 2 - RESPOND TO ENQUIRIES

d) Set up systems to respond quickly via multiple channels

When someone registers their contact information with you, they will be expecting an immediate confirmation. This is the start of your interaction with them so be clear about what you are offering and how you will next contact them.

You'll then need to have an automated system or resource to continue to engage with them and answer their questions

The tools that we tested within this pilot were:

- Facebook Lead Ads (to collect contact information)
- Zapier (to connect Facebook lead ads to other services)
- MailChimp (email automation system)
- ManyChat (set up and manage a Facebook Messenger Bot)

e) Build-in behaviour change tactics to your follow up messaging

Now that you have an ongoing communication channel, you have an opportunity to provide support and nudges to help someone start to be more active.

In this pilot we tested using reminders the day before an activity, asking people to commit to attend and prompting them to plan how they would get there.

For more information about this whitepaper:

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