

DIGITAL INNOVATION IN DISTRIBUTION

Case study

The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo

Distributor: **Momentum Pictures**

Release Date: **12th March 2010**



The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo is the first of a trilogy of films based on the books of the late author Stieg Larsson. Larsson's books have become a publishing phenomenon, with over one million copies sold in the UK.

Recognising the potential of the books' massive fanbase, the film's distributor, Momentum Pictures,

chose to use their digital innovation award on a campaign which would focus on finding and targeting these readers.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo was particularly suitable for a digital campaign because the book's fans had already gathered in clusters online, such as in Facebook groups, websites, and Momentum could identify those who had bought the books online, through booksellers such as Amazon.

As well as being efficient way to target these groups, the digital space is perfect as a contextual way to engage this audience. The film's key character, 'Salander', with whom the readers are already captivated, is a hacker operating primarily in the digital space.

Momentum believed this target audience to be predominantly females aged over 20, so they set about discovering the digital environment in which this audience was most comfortable, and their activities and behaviour within this environment. Identifying social networks as the most appropriate environment, and realising members of their target audience are casual consumers of small games and mini puzzles, Momentum decided to create a campaign that would be appealing.

Momentum would run a three-staged campaign:

- engaging the die-hard book fans early
- giving them the tools to act as advocates, reaching out to friends, networks and beyond
- leading to a third stage of mass awareness

Partners

Momentum worked with Amazon and Google to target the fans early, then with Facebook to keep them engaged, and enable them to pass on content to friends. Digital agency Jam created the campaign and the Metro newspaper, a key partner in the non-digital side of the campaign, also drove some Facebook activity.

ACTIVITY	Cost
Fan Recruit Advertising on Google Content Network & Facebook	£7000
Widget	£6000
Interactive Map and Local Screening Drive	£8000
Game mechanic / clues / managing	£1500
Facebook administration / Seeding	£6000
Polls for widget	£1500
TOTAL	£30000

Elements of the campaign

12 weeks before release

Online ad campaign

Beginning around Christmas, targeted ads ran on Facebook, Amazon and Google, aimed at those who had indicated they liked the books, those who had bought the book, or were searching for related terms. This stage was to recruit fans to the Facebook page.

7 weeks before release

The trailer was launched on Yahoo!, with the Metro website giving it frontpage prominence. This achieved 65,000 trailer views, and triggered a large spike in Google searches.

The interactive video website was launched at www.thegirl.co.uk. When users hovered their mouse over characters, they were able to see clickable highlighted words. Clicking them revealed hidden content.

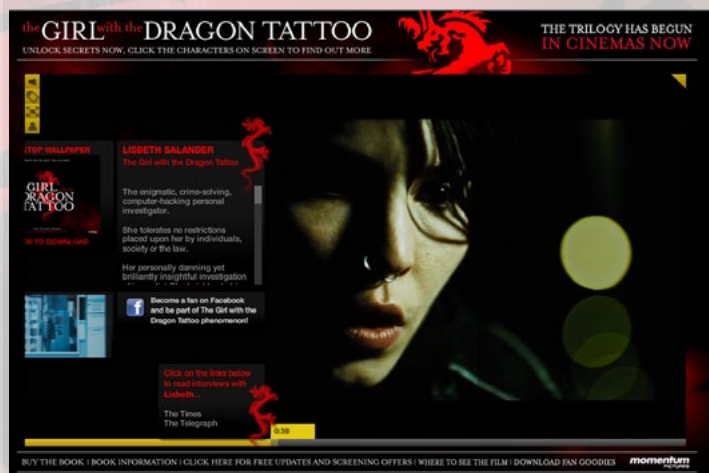
To drive traffic to this site, Facebook users were invited to take part in exclusive poster competition giveaways, and links through to the interactive website were included in regular posts.

The seven-week task-based challenge was launched, with the prize of a trip to Sweden. Fans of the film were given one question or task to answer each week. They could answer questions from previous weeks at any time. Entries were via a widget which also contained film content. Participants' activity was shared on to their friends' walls.

Sharing content would earn 'Superfan' points. A competition was run to find the ultimate Superfan - the user who shared the most content to the most people - who would win their own pre-release private screening of the film. The Facebook competition gained coverage on 'Fan Carpet', 'FO Film', 'Mail.net' and others.

There was also a vote to decide the location of a paid preview. Users could encourage their friends to vote too and see the area's popularity growing on the interactive map.

Metro screenings were held in three key cities, with applications for tickets made through Facebook in order to drive numbers. Users were invited to submit their review of the screenings with the chance to see it in print in the Metro the next day. The popularity of these screenings saw the London one oversubscribed by 300%.



Learnings from the campaign

Momentum found that the Superfan activity which they had hoped would be popular failed to generate much interest.

The system of becoming a superfan through sharing with friends and requesting a paid pre-release screening proved to be too much effort for the audience.

Additionally it became clear that the seven-week task-based game was simply too long and overly complex. It didn't get the numbers expected and it was hard to keep pushing them. While some form of game may well have been the right dynamic for this audience and medium, the game itself was not pitched at the right level. Momentum found that you cannot ask too much of the audience, particularly when you are trying to promote something to them.

Momentum realised they needed a better way of communicating regularly to fans of the film's Facebook page. They responded to this by doing more frequent quickfire competition methods, which helped to build up the Facebook page and encourage fan communication.

Despite some disappointing elements, the overall campaign succeeded in generating good levels of awareness. Momentum were pleased with the number of fans on the Facebook page. They view this as being particularly important as they work to the 1:9:90 model. This is the theory that for each person who truly advocates, nine people follow, and then each of these influence ninety more people.

Momentum's overall aim was always to ensure people were active so that their friends knew about the activity. They are satisfied that they achieved this.

Conclusion

The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo played in 120 sites, with over £2million taken at the box office across a run of more than ten weeks, making this the highest grossing Scandinavian film of all time. The strong audience and critical reaction outperformed Momentum's expectations.

The success continued through into the DVD launch, with 75,000 units sold in its first week, taking more than the major release *The Lovely Bones* (which took £6.3m box office and sold 43,000 units). Perhaps more importantly, there is now a high level of anticipation for the next titles in the trilogy, which will also be distributed by Momentum.

It is difficult to quantify the effect that the digital campaign had on the overall release of the film. However, around 6,600 active fans may have influenced friends to see the film, and with the average Facebook user's activity reaching 130 friends, this could mean as many as 660,000 people may have been reached through this digital activity.

Momentum feel they have gained valuable experience, and built up a significant base of fans of the trilogy and they intend to apply their learnings from this project on the next film.

The second title in the trilogy, *The Girl Who Played With Fire* has subsequently been awarded a follow-up Digital Innovation in Distribution Award, with the aim of furthering the learnings taken from this project.

Statistics

Facebook fans	6609
Facebook seeding impressions	15m
Superfan widget downloads	150
Paid preview location votes cast	209
Website visits	65000