



# MORE VISITORS TO OKINAWA

The Japanese archipelago Okinawa with its long sandy beaches and mild climate is a true insider tip for European travelers. To attract more visitors to the islands, the Okinawa Tourism Board partnered with travel audience for an innovative online marketing campaign that is a prime example for how advanced targeting and machine learning can maximize the efficiency and success of travel advertising.

## The challenge

160 subtropical islands spread across a vast ocean

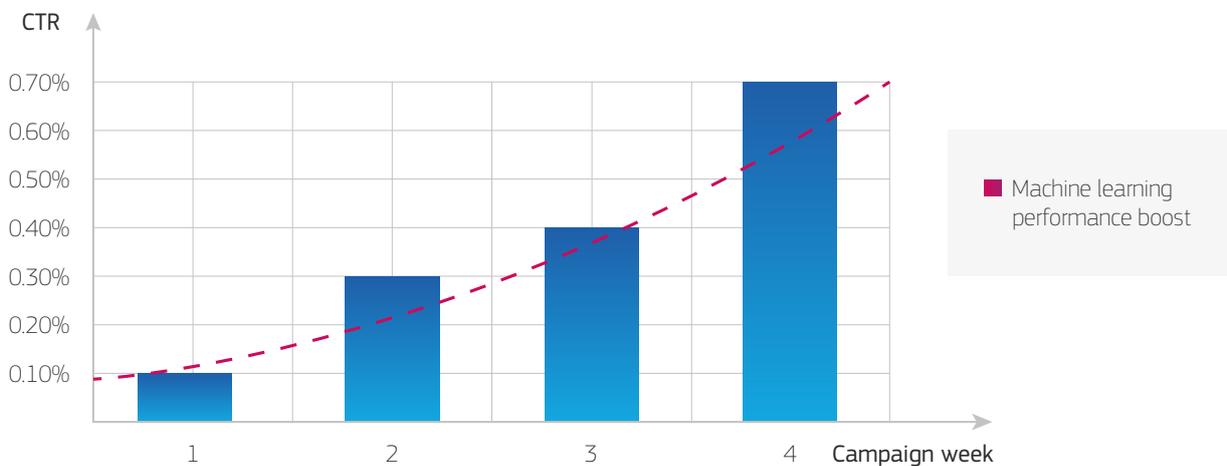
territory of 400 thousand square meters make the island group of Okinawa. Located in southern Japan, it is a truly unique island paradise. To increase the number of European visitors, the Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau partnered with travel audience. Employing their destination marketing know-how and travel advertising expertise, travel audience set out to achieve the highest return of investment for Okinawa.

The chosen vehicle was a programmatic campaign designed to reach more travelers while making the very most of the client's budget.



## The project

For the Okinawa campaign, travel audience selected an internationally trusted Online Travel Agency and ran a campaign in Great Britain from mid-February to mid-March 2017. The ads were shown in various formats, using the slogan „Add on Okinawa.“ When clicking on a banner, the user was guided to a landing page on the OTA’s website, which then offered an immediate opportunity to book.



The advantage of data-driven advertising is the ability to specifically target those user groups that are most likely to consider Okinawa as an add-on to their vacation in Southeast Asia.

Then, travel audience went one step further and asked: ‘How do we find those users with the highest likelihood to book? On what websites perform Okinawa ads the best? What time of day are users most likely to click

on them? And how is the booking pattern related to the weather forecast?’

The answers to all these questions were delivered by travel audience’s data-driven travel advertising platform. The algorithms analyzed the performance, recognized when and where the ads were most effective, and automatically optimized Okinawa’s online marketing campaign accordingly.

**And in addition:** the algorithm learned during the course of the campaign. By analyzing millions of data points, it created benchmarks allowing travel audience to continuously adjust and enhance the effectiveness of the ad placements throughout the campaign. In fact, the algorithm's learning curve was so steep that the click rates were six times higher during the last days of the campaign than during the first week.

Another advantage of programmatic advertising is that it allows marketers to accurately calculate the best price for a specific ad placement, or in this case, a specific user. The reason for this is as follows: in programmatic advertising, banner positions are generally sold through an online

auction that takes place within milliseconds while a website loads. Based on the degree of likelihood that users will book a certain destination, the algorithm calculates how much it should bid for them. In this case, a higher value and therefore higher price tag was attached to clients that had already searched for Japan, Hong Kong or South Korea or had visited sites relevant for travelers to these destinations.

In a nutshell, the algorithm makes it possible to spend exactly the right amount for any given website visitor - all with the goal of reaching those users with highest potential for the client, so that their advertising budgets can be utilized as efficiently as possible.

## The result

### **Hinako Uehara**

Sales and Promotion Department, Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau, says:

*“travel audience’s programmatic campaign has been a tremendous success so far. Our campaign ads were shown over two million times and the result was an increase in bookings from British travelers by a tremendous 450 percent within a single month.*”

We will continue our partnership with travel audience and are excited to see how we can build on these initial achievements in the future.”



### **Sandro Cuzzolin**

Head of Strategic Projects travel audience, adds:

*“Our goal is to open up a new dimension of targeted advertising to our clients, that delivers them the highest performance and return on investment,” says Sandro Cuzzolin, Head of Strategic Projects at travel audience. “It’s our mission to reach those customers, who may have an affinity for our client’s destination and to guide them in their path to purchase. British travelers have looked for a trip to Southeast Asia and we could visualize how beautiful Okinawa is; we are happy that so many have found their way to this paradise.”*



