



Dockers® takes to LinkedIn to prove you don't need a suit



For the last three years, the Levi Strauss-owned Dockers® brand has been on a journey to engage modern professionals with its vision of workplace fashion. In the 1980s, its ground-breaking 'Casual Fridays' campaign made Dockers® synonymous with the concept of smart casual, and built one of the fastest-growing fashion brands in history. That initiative involved writing letters to the heads of more than 25,000 HR departments to promote a new way of engaging employees. When it came to re-igniting the conversation though, Dockers® had a more powerful platform at its disposal.

The Challenge

- Build awareness of the Dockers® brand among millennials
- Re-connect the brand to lapsed audiences among Gen X and boomers
- Reinvigorate the conversation around fashion at work

Why LinkedIn?

- The destination for the world's professionals
- Ability to build awareness and update perceptions at scale
- Targeting capabilities
- Engagement levels for content, video and Carousel Ads

The Solution

- Striking video ad campaign with young professional overcoming an empty suit in a wrestling match
- Campaign message that "to change the world, you don't need a suit"
- Integrated content and advertising including Carousel Ads showcasing Smart360Flex designs and The New Casual Book guide to workplace fashion
- Targeting decision-makers on workplace culture, job switchers and young professionals starting careers

Results

- The campaign achieved 57% market penetration and over-delivered on every KPI, with tracking studies showing significant rises in brand equity
- The Carousel Ad click-through rate (CTR) outperformed benchmarks by 33%

31%

The engagement rate for video ads beat LinkedIn benchmarks by 31%

The iconic brand re-styled a classic campaign for an entrepreneurial generation, and brought about the second coming of casual

"30 years on, we found we have a platform called LinkedIn that's perfectly suited to engaging professionals at all levels," says Joan Calabria, Director Brand Marketing for Dockers® Europe. "It's where a modern, contemporary brand that's born at work needs to be."

To change the world, you don't need a suit

Dockers®' marketing team decided that going back to its origins would be the best way to revitalise its brand and align it with the entrepreneurial mindset of millennial professionals. "We went back and studied what Dockers® was doing when it became one of the fastest-growing fashion brands in history," says Joan. "The 'Casual Friday' movement positioned Dockers® as a disruptive brand born in the workplace. That's what we needed to get back to."

Part of the solution came through product innovation, with the development of Dockers®' Smart360Flex fabrics adding stretch, comfort and accessibility. Joan and his team also commissioned in-depth consumer research. "We wanted to understand the zeitgeist," he says. "We discovered that millennials inhabit a world of uncertainty, but that their response is often to focus on the opportunity – to be innovative and entrepreneurial. That brought us to our updated brand line: 'to change the world, you don't need a suit.'"



To change the conversation, you need LinkedIn

Dockers® and media agency OMD knew that there was an obvious platform for re-starting a conversation around workplace fashion: LinkedIn.

"We identified three key audiences: senior decision-makers interested in workplace culture and employee engagement, people changing jobs, and those just starting out in their careers," explains Alex Grecu, Director Social Advertising at OMD EMEA. "On LinkedIn, we were able to use targeting facets like seniority, time in position and industry to reach the audiences our research showed would be most responsive."

The integrated campaign led with video ads featuring entertaining tussle between a young man and an empty suit. "Our longer versions of the ad performed better on LinkedIn than on any other channel," says Alex. The video ads were supported by Carousel Ads showcasing features of the Smart360Flex range, and The New Casual Book, an update of the classic guide to workplace dress that Dockers® had created in the 1980s. "We used the insights from our research to provide guidance on how to dress for interviews, business travel, meetings and other occasions," says Joan. "It was content that worked perfectly on LinkedIn."

Engaging a relevant audience at scale with a compelling new view of fashion delivered the head-turning results Dockers® was seeking. The campaign achieved 57% penetration of its target market, with a frequency of 3x – and beat all KPIs for engagement. This included beating LinkedIn benchmarks for Video Ad engagement by 31% – and outperforming benchmarks for Carousel Ad click-through rate (CTR) by 33%.

"Just as importantly, we tracked increases in our brand equity measures and evidence that people are associating our brand with an emotional message – not just comfort," says Joan. "This was one of our key challenges and LinkedIn was a great platform for meeting it."

"LinkedIn fitted our strategy like a glove: highly relevant and with great targeting capabilities. Our brand tracking showed that it could deliver the emotional message we needed, associating our brand with an entrepreneurial mindset and getting out of your comfort zone."

Joan Calabia
Director Brand Marketing,
Dockers® Europe

