

# Building Anticipation: A Case Study on Pre-Opening Marketing for Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort

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PRE-OPENING MARKETING STRATEGY



# Overview

In mid 2023, Dollywood announced the forthcoming opening of HeartSong Lodge & Resort, its second property. Our mission was to create a tailored marketing strategy for this unique resort, and ensuring it resonates with different customer personas while staying true to the distinctive essence of the Dollywood's brand.



# Key Objectives

Our goals and objectives with the launch of the new HeartSong Lodge & Resort consisted of a three-pronged approach.

1. Introducing the newest Dollywood's resort and generating **brand awareness** and **online visibility** for HeartSong Lodge & Resort were significant priorities in the launch of the property.
2. **Growing an engaged database following** and **creating new fans** and **brand ambassadors** for the HeartSong Resort was also one of the goals of our digital marketing efforts and campaigns.
3. **Utilizing Better Together messaging** to strengthen the Dollywood's Resorts brand. The objective was to **grow new audiences** that would help grow the overall following and new guests for the HeartSong Resort without sacrificing or taking away from the current followers and loyal guests of DreamMore Resort.

## Measurements

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were employed to assess the efficacy of the strategy. Metrics included the number of visits to the HeartSong landing page, revenue generated through marketing efforts, and email sign-ups.

March 1 - December 31, 2023

- ✓ **745,342 sessions** were driven to the HeartSong landing page
- ✓ **12,637 email sign-ups** were collected

## Strategy Overview

While the resort would not open until late Fall 2023 and the booking engine wasn't planned to be operable until the end of June 2023, GCommerce faced a unique challenge in generating brand awareness and interest for this new property.

Various channels such as **social media, display advertising, SEO, and paid search** were utilized to drive brand awareness and gather email sign-ups.

# Execution

Dollywood has created the tagline, "Better Together." With each new addition to their expanding portfolio, the brand ensures that all properties seamlessly complement each other, fostering a cohesive and unified experience for our valued guests but also offers unique values at each resort.

As we brainstormed strategies, key questions emerged to shape our digital marketing approach:

1. **Unified Brand, Unique Identities:** How can we craft a digital marketing strategy that seamlessly unifies the two resorts under a single brand while also highlighting their distinctive features?
2. **Tailored Guest Personas:** What sets apart the guest personas for each resort? Understanding the unique preferences and interests of our audience will guide personalized marketing efforts.
3. **Showcasing Uniqueness:** What are the defining characteristics that make each property special? Let's highlight these unique features to captivate our audience and emphasize the distinct charm of each resort.

We developed a strategy to pinpoint the specific demographic that resonates with each resort. By understanding the unique characteristics of the guests at each property, we've tailored our approach to ensure a personalized and enriching experience for every visitor.

# Results

Interest targeting, focusing on lookalike audiences and regional interests, contributed to the success of the campaign. Despite HeartSong's unavailability for booking during the campaign period, **significant revenue was generated through ticket sales and Dollywood's DreamMore Resort bookings.** The campaign surpassed expectations, demonstrating the efficacy of exposure-based and database growth-centric messaging.



## Success Metrics

7,2221,300 TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

158,377 TOTAL CLICKS TO WEBSITE

2.19% TOTAL CTR

17.111 CLICK THROUGH TO THE EMAIL SIGN UP FORM

12,628 COMPLETED THE EMAIL SIGN UP FORM

3,134 PURCHASES

\$1,170,154 REVENUE

\$58:1 ROAS

# Results

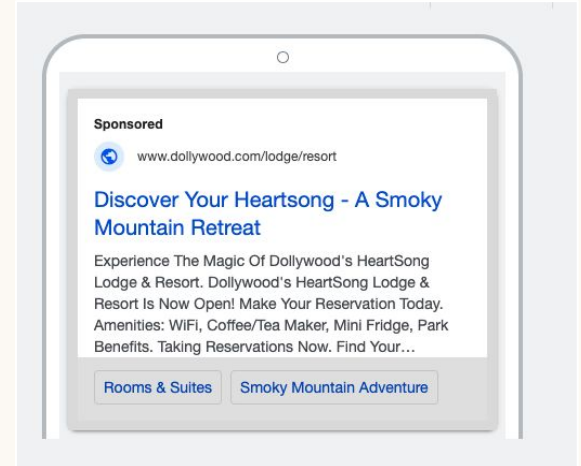
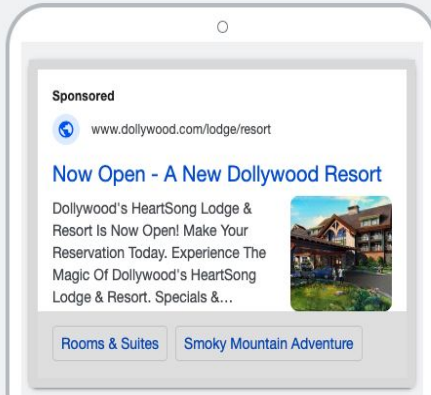
Although reservations were not yet available for Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort, users were directed through our ads to the Dollywood website, where they could book accommodations at the alternate resort, Dollywood's DreamMore Resort and Spa.

Additionally, visitors had the opportunity to purchase park tickets, packages, spa services, and other onsite amenities. While we anticipated some revenue from these efforts, the final outcome exceeded our expectations.

While our primary objective did not revolve around revenue generation, we typically aim for a Return on Advertising Spend (ROAS) of at least \$10 for every dollar invested in our campaigns. Achieving a **\$58 ROAS** represents a significant success, surpassing our typical ROAS goal by **480%**.



# Creatives







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Opening Fall of 2023! Sign up today to receive exclusive updates and offers for Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort.



**NEW - Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort**



2K

176 comments 196 shares



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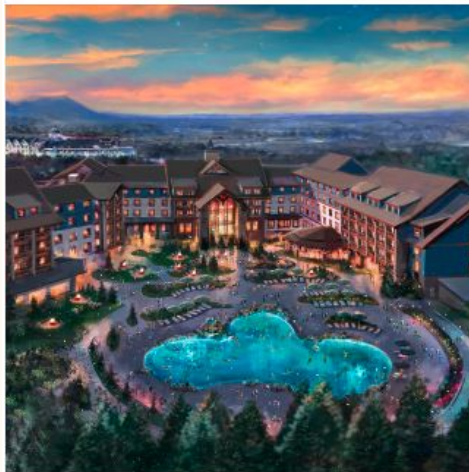
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Dollywood's newest resort is opening this fall! Sign up today to receive exclusive updates and offers for Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort.



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Lodge & Resort Fall 2023**

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dollywood.com

**Reserve A 2024 Meeting  
or Event Today!**

Learn more

A modern interior design scene featuring a tufted leather sofa, a large coffee table, and a chandelier. The room has a high ceiling with a purple-painted section and dark wood beams. A large window in the background shows a view of a garden. A white text box is overlaid in the center of the image.

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