

Virgin Atlantic



Lands 9.2x ROAS with Performance Max

The goal

Since launching in 1984, [Virgin Atlantic](#) has built a reputation for offering travelers a stylish, innovative flying experience. Over the decades, the airline has grown into one of the most recognizable ways to travel between the UK and destinations around the world.

The airline and its media agency, [Assembly Global](#), wanted to drive more revenue from the current media budget. Since branded Search was already running on Microsoft Advertising, the team set out to test additional campaign types and compare them to Google PMax to find out which were the most cost efficient.

The solution

To validate performance independently, Assembly Global led a cross-platform test. Working with the Microsoft Advertising team, the agency set up a direct comparison between Microsoft Advertising [Performance Max](#) and Google Performance Max. Here's why Microsoft PMax stood out:

- **Access to high-intent inventory:** PMax expands reach by combining Search, Native, Display, and Audience formats across the Microsoft ecosystem. This allowed Virgin Atlantic to reach travelers earlier as they browsed, researched, and considered destinations.
- **A simplified, consolidated campaign structure:** Instead of managing multiple campaigns by route or market, the team consolidated activity into a single PMax campaign with destinations separated at the asset group level. This kept messaging focused by route while making performance easier to measure and optimize.
- **Lower creative overhead:** From Assembly Global's perspective, the ability to test with image assets reduced creative overhead, avoiding the need to produce video across multiple markets and destinations. This made it faster and more efficient to test PMax at scale.

The results

In Assembly Global's analysis, Microsoft PMax delivered 9.2x ROAS, returning £9.20 for every £1 spent.

Compared with UK generic Search campaigns in the same account, CPC was 70% lower and the conversion rate was 87% higher, highlighting a step-change improvement in both traffic quality and cost efficiency. So Virgin Atlantic was acquiring users more cost efficiently and converting them at a significantly higher rate than Google PMax during the same period.

The campaign generated 729 bookings with a 7.36% click-through rate. When balancing traffic and return together, Microsoft PMax became the preferred investment in the UK account and was rolled out across all additional markets and destinations.