

How Vail Resorts reached skiers and snowboarders with Start.io



Background

Vail Resorts is the premier mountain resort company in the world, operating 42 resorts in the Rocky Mountains, Pacific Northwest, Northern California, Switzerland, Australia and other top destinations. Their flagship properties—Vail Mountain Resort, Breckenridge Ski Resort, and Park City Resort—were the #1, #2, and #3 most-visited mountain resorts in the U.S. during the 2023-2024 ski season.

Goal

Vail Resorts runs digital advertising campaigns in North America that target skiers and snowboarders who live near their resorts, and in key cities with large concentrations of likely guests. Vail Resorts built a managed ad campaign with Start.io, with the goal of:

- Testing an alternative to the company’s existing ad-service platform
- Targeting guests in specific resort and city locations to maximize ad-serving relevance and drive engagement
- Achieving better cost efficiency and key metric performance

Process

Start.io built audience segmentation, enhanced with first-party guest data from Vail Resorts, to build an ad campaign that targeted skiers and snowboarders, with:

- Geofenced ad campaigns around specific resorts and cities
- Known and prospecting audience data to better target the right consumers at the right time

Outcome

Vail Resorts experienced advertising outcomes that exceeded their expectations:

- Vail Resorts saw average key metrics—including cost-per-click (CPC), clickthrough rate (CTR) and cost per mille (CPM) —that exceeded the performance of competing ad-serving platforms
- CPC metrics exceeded Vail Resorts benchmarks by an average of 16%
- Start.io gave Vail Resorts a better understanding of which audiences and creative assets performed the best, allowing for better advertising optimization
- Commitment to run future ad campaigns with Start.io, using custom audiences to maximize brand exposure and long-term KPIs

“We have been pleased with the results seen from Start.io for our Retail and Rental businesses, with improved performance across many of our key metrics when compared to other partners. The team is knowledgeable and responsive, helping to drive efficiency and greater performance.”



Jon Secrett
Senior Manager, VRR Marketing