

duolingo

campaign report

**your life, your voice.
any language**

unlock your potential & connect with the world



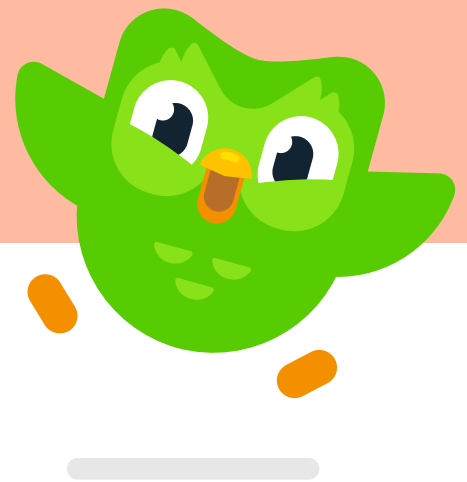
the challenge

“Put Duolingo into the hands of 16-22 year-olds”

Bring learning languages with Duolingo into the everyday lives of 16-22 year-olds globally, in an engaging, inspiring and ‘buzz-worthy’ way, in time for the new academic year.

Create a campaign that gets people to download the app and encourages existing users to use Duolingo daily.

Help to achieve Duolingo’s mission of providing accessible free language education and opportunities.



team profile

We are a team of digital media students who all have experience creating digital content. We appreciate the benefits of language learning with members who can speak multiple languages and who like to travel the world.

Chadfield, Anna, Project Lead

I coordinated the work and communications within the team; lead the finalization of the campaign conceptualization helping to bring everything together. Assisted with some design and researching implementation strategies. I have experience working in marketing with Emotio and also with Balloon Ventures, developing marketing and business strategies for businesses in Uganda.

Zhang, Siting, Development Lead

I worked on development and design. Working closely with the Design Lead, I adhered to the brand and platform specifications, developed audio ads, and created our character. Work experience in digital design and editing in campaign development; also worked for a popular reality show in China; responsible for post-production editing and program character design.

Kirylyuk, Gabriela, Design Lead

I created the visual assets, leading the campaign visualization across several platforms. Liaised with the Development Lead to create artefacts, that adhered to relevant guidelines. Work experience in campaign development for University of Leeds' Careers Centre and School of Music. Volunteered at Digital Marketing Micro Agency (Digi) designing promotional materials for University societies.

Osei-Asibey, Emmanuel, Research Lead

My brand, customer and social media research informed a survey designed to inform how promotional materials should be designed & implemented. Experience in this role also include the University of Leeds' Centre of Translation Studies multilingual mock conference, in which information was sourced to be utilised in a debate, highlighting my multilingualism in French.



why we created the campaign?

From the brief we knew free language education was important to Duolingo, but we needed to understand why this would matter to our target users of 16-22 year-olds.

To do this we asked, what does language mean to people and how can languages be enjoyed so that people are motivated to continue to use and be engaged with Duolingo?

Our campaign “your voice, your life, any language” will launch at the start of the academic year across the digital platforms that 16-22 year-olds use daily. During the development process we identified the technical constraints and audience targeting possibilities of the platforms we used to ensure the designs and outputs would work within these constraints and perform well.

The message we share will highlight how Duolingo helps people to achieve their potential and express

themselves, by making languages fun and relevant to what they care about.

Initially sponsored playlists will increase awareness of and appreciation for different languages through music. Then to further promote an array of international artists to get their music heard by millions of users, we will introduce Music Mondays where people can submit their own songs, for a chance to win free publicity on Duolingo’s social media platforms and in the app, as well as a spot in a virtual concert to be held at the end of the year. This will increase awareness and engagement of music in different languages.

Ruby, our music loving penguin is a new face for the new academic year; she will primarily promote the cultural, musical aspect of the service we have developed, leaving Duo to focus on reminding users to do their lessons.



campaign message

Beginning the academic year people around the world will be thinking of their future. Therefore, the campaign aims to inspire people take change of their potential futures.

The primary tag-line
'Your voice. Your life. Any language'

speaks to our target audience as individuals who value their self-expression and activism. It therefore presents the prospect of learning a language as self-empowering.

The secondary tag-line
'unlock your potential & connect with the world'

expands on the more personal focus of the primary tagline to also taking action towards their future aspirations and being culturally and globally connected.



The two themes of self-empowerment and community complement each other and demonstrate that while the campaign focuses on the individual, it also acknowledges the value of language education for future employability, and global connection.

These taglines align with the Duolingo narrative of accessibility and opportunity of 'anyone can Duolingo', BUT addressing the audience directly better recognizes our audience's individual identity and potential. This is more likely to result in individual actions like downloading the app.

Duolingo

SWOT analysis of the Duolingo app was a first step towards our research.

Following SWOT analysis, detailed below we had a better understanding of what to capitalise on for example, promoting that the app is free. We also identified what to combat or avoid. For instance, we

explored ways to bring more culture and enjoyment into language through music, hence increasing motivation and reducing the abandonment rate.



Duolingo SWOT

Strengths:

Free service, fun gamification; pleasant user interface; monetisation with unobstructive advertising; breath of courses.

Weaknesses:

Limited in-app incentives; no personalisation to learning motivations; limited cultural education; no non-digital formats.

Opportunities:

expand brand's social media marketing; form new cultural & arts education channels.

Threats:

competitive market; high user abandonment rate; other apps offer human tuition.



Duolingo style

Since promotional materials were being made, investigating previous Duolingo advertising was crucial. To date, their sole analogue marketing campaign presented a series of posters on road, rail and Underground stations across London. In 2019, the And Bountiful and Rising Cow campaign

helped garner 12 million users over four weeks. Regulations from Duolingo's style guide were extracted (Duolingo, 2021). Rules regarding the usage of marketing materials are referenced to throughout the design and development process. Adhering to these aids in abiding to legal protocols and ensures designs look authentic to the brand.

Duolingo Users

A survey was release in the design testing phase to carry out add testing on our specific user demographic but to begin user research, we investigated information and analytics on Duolingo and their users.

figure. 1



Users

The Duolingo Global Language Report was an excellent reference to source the app's statistics (Duolingo Blog, 2020). In 2020, registered users stood at 500 million with 42 million active once a month.

Motivations

Listed motivations for studying a language were school, work, travel, brain, family, culture & other. Amongst users worldwide: 22.6% joined the app because of school, 19.9% for career reasons and 15.9% for brain training. Contextually, it was noted that less people are studying languages at secondary and degree level than at the start of the century.

Preferences

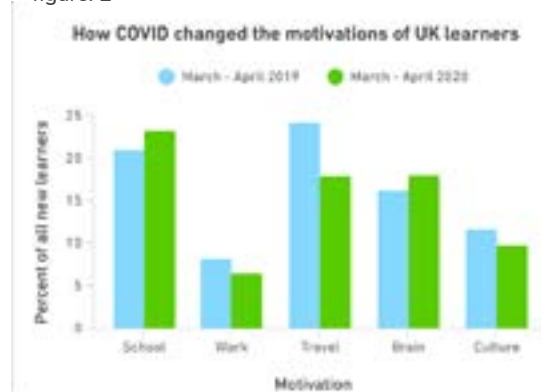
English reigns as the most studied language worldwide, with Spanish recently usurping French's second place title.

A closer look

Duolingo has detailed Language Reports on key countries where their users are located. These were beneficial in seeing how the app is being used in individual countries and gave insights into the reasons behind the motivations of learning a language. For example, in the United Kingdom report (Duolingo Blog, 2020) the fastest growing languages are Welsh, Hindi and Japanese. Motivations for these were mainly cultural: currently there is a desire to revitalise the Welsh

language (BBC News, 2020). In addition, British learners' increased interest in Asian languages like Hindi came from an appreciation of Indian culture and/or family ties, while interest in Japanese is tied to watchers and readers of anime and manga respectively. We also found that the pandemic changed people's motivations: the British Council collated survey responses from 2000 people and found 10% had started or resumed a language course during lock-down (figure).

figure. 2



Primary Research

Our primary research consisted of a survey released to understand 16-22 year olds' online habits, interaction with Duolingo and a review of some advertisements. A variety of results materialised, however we confirmed consumed content was mainly videocentric.

Why the campaign is in English?

Despite a global target audience, it would be unrealistic for us to target every language. Duolingo is best equipped for English speakers as there are more courses for English speaking learners and a 3rd of their learners are on the courses for English speakers; of all the courses for non-English speaking learners the English course always most popular (Duolingo Brand, 2021).

Other languages are represented through the music and by using multiple translations of phrase "My potential".

Design process

We applied Design Thinking Model as a framework for the design process. This approach structures a project around 3 main stages: understanding, exploration and materialisation. Moreover, it is based on the idea of reiteration, which allows for greater flexibility with project development.

Following SWOT analysis of the Duolingo brief, identification of our design skills including sound editing, motion graphics, character design and kinetic typography, the 'Understanding' phase was initiated. Research findings revealed that the campaign will target our audiences through social media channels. Therefore, at this stage the Design Role searched for available frameworks for mock-up creation (MockUp Tree, 2021). Our next step was to clearly define further design objectives in response to further research. We gathered Duolingo's available resources including brand guidelines (Duolingo, 2021), logo, characters, colour palette and Nunito typeface to ensure consistency between all of the designs that were produced. Moreover, these elements reinforce brand identity, which is recognisable to existing Duolingo users.

Succeeding design stage involved idea generation. All team members agreed to define temporal set of digital outputs that were later prototyped in Adobe Suite. A list of all digital outputs was completed to better organise workflow.

First designs were built in Photoshop and Illustrator

with each element inserted on a separate layer to allow easy modification. Each draft was consulted with fellow team members and refined if needed. However, one of the principles of design thinking is to always empathise with the target audience, therefore, our team decided to conduct a survey to receive valuable feedback from 16–22 year-olds. This informed the project about audience's online behaviours as well as aesthetic preferences. The process of drafting was resumed.

Next, we instigated implementation phase to prepare designs for the Pitch. This included animating YouTube ad, creating audio podcast ad as well as other static digital graphics. To enhance the workflow, all of the designs were built around template files. For instance, to produce Instagram Post mock-up, we included each design on a separate layer allowing for easy modification.

As a result, after Team Project presentation, we could tailor digital artefacts. Additionally, after receiving constructive feedback during the Pitch, we decided to complement our campaign with Music Mondays over Duolingo's Instagram profile. This involved producing more posts and Instagram story mock-ups, which was promptly achieved with existent mock-up frameworks.

As a result of this process, our team produced high quality static graphics social media posts, animated ads, video ad and audio podcast ad that are consistent with Duolingo visual guidelines.



figure. 3 DESIGN THINKING 101 NNORGROUP.COM

why a multi-platform campaign?

16-22 year-olds with access to a digital device that can support the Duolingo app also engage with multiple digital platforms daily. By using different platforms, our reach and engagement with our target user is strengthened.

Development research found Spotify advertising is more targeted to non- premium users; to reach the full global audience specified in the brief we expanded to other social media platforms. Each media platform provides unique opportunities for advertising, hosts various kinds of content and targets its users differently (figure4).

We distinguish between targeting new and existing users: reinforcing language learning in daily routines of existent users through Spotify playlists and page posts; for new users, we encourage the download of the app with paid and targeted ads.

For instance, Spotify Advertising has video, audio, podcast and custom experience ads, available to be built and tested after registering a business (Spotify Ads, 2021). Whereas Instagram advertising targets new users using the Facebook ad manager to select the objective 'App installs and call-to-action 'Download', targeting 16-22-year-olds, and all genders. Furthermore 'Detailed targeting' refines our audience by 'smartphone owners' & interests such as, 'travel', 'Higher education' & 'languages'.

figure. 4



A new character

A new Duolingo ambassador for the start of the new term. Ruby is a Royal Penguin who loves music and represents important values to our campaign:

Rationale:

Characters are a key visual aspect of Duolingo; they are “ambassadors in marketing and advertising, demonstrating in their diversity that everyone can Duolingo.” They add a relatable, quirky personality to the experience which we are utilising to engage more users.

Penguins are very socially oriented; similarly learning a language consolidates cultural exchanges and connects people around the world.

Penguins symbolize dreams; dreaming strengthens people’s determination and continuous effort in language learning, as they are driven by their own goals.

The name Ruby reflects her unique colour and is especially popular in Australia, the native country of Royal Penguins and a country not typically associated with penguins reflecting the Duolingo’s desire to not ‘pigeon-hole’ people regarding their backgrounds. The name is globally transferable: translations and pronunciations of ‘ruby’ sound

similar in several languages including the most popular Duolingo languages, Spanish and French.

Design:

Ruby’s design meets the Duolingo character style specifications: the body is composed of simple rounded shapes. The poses and expressions complement the ‘quirky’ and cute appearance of Duo and other Duolingo characters. A simple colour palette of pastel and warm pinks and oranges is used (figure5). The colour combines the passion of red with the purity of white; together they reflect the ease of language learning, but with an underlying passion that Duolingo wants to share.

Development

The designs were developed in Illustrator; the vector format ensures scalability. Several versions of the character in different poses were developed as specified in the Duolingo brand guidelines (2021).

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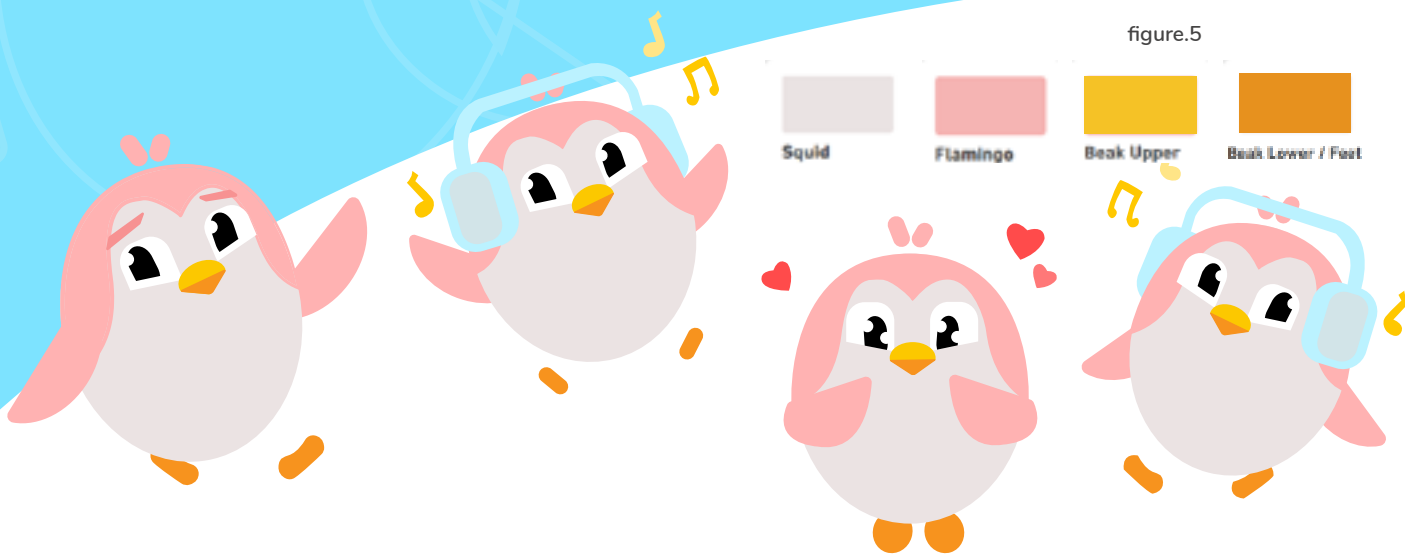
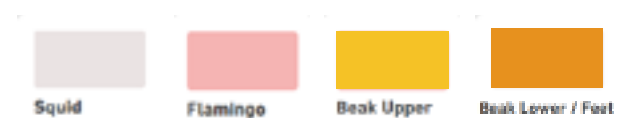
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figure.5



Music: Spotify

The playlist's primary objective is to reinforce language learning in daily routines of existent users by helping and inspiring them to learn different languages. However, for those unfamiliar with Duolingo we encourage them to download the app with Spotify Ads.

Spotify playlists:

As a language learning app, Duolingo naturally focuses on auditory aspect of interpersonal communication. Therefore, we developed a potential collaboration with a sound-based app, Spotify and will sponsor playlists featuring different languages. This would lead to the creation of new playlists; we developed a sample playlist demonstrating the ideas application.

The idea's advantage is that music is enjoyable

without understanding the words. Music is the perfect introduction to learn and enjoy new languages our target audiences existing daily habits: for many 16–22 year-olds listening to music is a daily habit, to relax, study, workout, commute or party! Spotify is one of the most popular music streaming services, inevitably increasing the reach of our campaign. **Spotify adverts**

Designing visual adverts

Spotify ads target audiences that may not have heard of Duolingo, so the logo was always included. We incorporated gradient backgrounds which currently are not in Duolingo's visual identity, but this new aspect fittingly represents a new collaboration.



music: monday motivation

To increase the interactivity of the campaign and get Duolingo's users more involved in creating a modern multi-lingual music culture we came up with 'Music Mondays'. Where users can submit their songs (which include a different language as well as or instead of English) as a video. Each Monday a song is selected to be featured on Duolingo's platforms and within the app, reaching users who don't engage with Duolingo's social media. At the end of the academic year an online virtual concert will be available to watch globally with all the 'Music Mondays' winners. Similar to 'Fan Art Fridays', an existent Duolingo scheme on Instagram, users can submit their video to a hashtag e.g. #duoligomusicmodays. The scheme will be launched slightly after the Spotify playlists because they will form a clue as part of a teaser campaign on social media prior to an official launch announcement (figure7). The suspense should build up some buzz and excitement. There are various mock-ups visualising this idea including a video.

time line

1: having released the playlists post teaser



2: announce launch



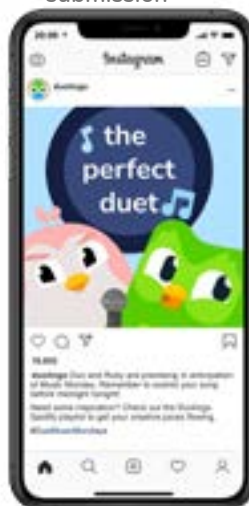
3: build up excitement for 1st monday



4: submission instructions



5: reminder of submission



6: 1st winner announced



Advertisements & posts

With our audience and Duolingo’s online identity in mind, we diversified and tailored designs to each platform.

figure. 8

<p>Ad: (App Downloads)</p> <p>(My potential repeated)</p> <p>(Narrator) Take on the new academic year of just a few minutes each day learning a new language with Duolingo to discover your potential</p> <p>(My potential repeated)</p> <p>(Narrator) checkout Duolingo’s sponsored Spotify playlists bringing you to the best songs in languages from around the world so you can explore the world wherever you are. Your life. Your voice. Any language Where will languages take you?</p>	<p>Ad: (Playlists)</p> <p>(My potential repeated)</p> <p>(Narrator) Get inspired in time for the new academic year and widen your future horizons by learning a new language to discover your potential.</p> <p>(My potential repeated)</p> <p>(Narrator) At Duolingo we believe that languages can take you anywhere. Download the free Duolingo app today and pave your own future. Your life. Your voice. Any language with Duolingo.</p>
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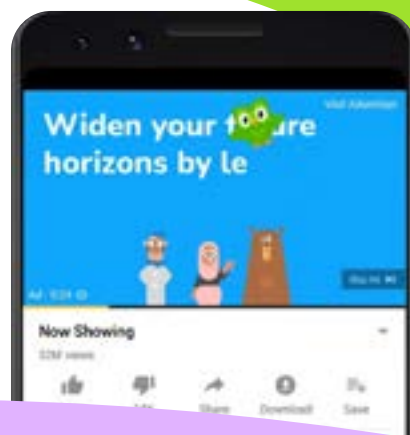
Developing Audio for adverts

Spotify and YouTube allow for audio ads 30 seconds in length. Raw scripted audio material was developed into complete promotional audio advertisement. The words “My potential” in different languages were said in succession, attracting users’ attention in a unique way by exposing them to audio stimuli that they are unfamiliar with. Following this initial attention grab the meaning is explained by a narrator, finally the call to action from the narrator gets the audience to act on the advertisement (figure8) .

Video advert

Generation Z’s online behaviours include spending 3 hr 27 min watching video content a day; YouTube is one of the most popular platforms to view online video content.

Reflecting the brief specification, video is more interactive and visual-based and the combination of visual and audio materials, means the message is more memorable. The audio script for the video was the ‘App Downloads’ and aims to reach new users.



Instagram & Facebook

We used simple background accompanied by the Duo Owl and our new character, Ruby along with the white ‘Nunito’ typography. For sponsored ads we included the logo and a ‘download’ call-to-action, since it was targeting audiences that who are unfamiliar with Duolingo. However, posts on Duolingo’s Facebook and Instagram, didn’t require a logo or a ‘download’ call-to-action’ since they are likely to be seen by existing users.



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