

unigodo^x

Next-Gen Console Exclusive

Offers for BT Customers



Executive Summary

To say we ‘ummed and ahhed’ over whether it was case study-suicide to talk about the significant challenges we encountered with this campaign is an understatement. But the success simply isn’t apparent unless we tell the whole story. So we decided to be brave, embrace our vulnerability and humanity, and tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. After all, all good stories have a twist in the tale, and a triumph over evil in conclusion.

This is the story of how we helped BT overcome their challenges of how to sell next-gen consoles to only their existing customers, at a point in time where 100% focus was on eCommerce, with all non-essential retail closed during Lockdown 2.

We needed to control the sale of next-gen consoles to only BT customers, manage the anticipated increase in traffic to BT Shop so as not to interrupt BAU retailing, and help BT deliver a great first launch into the world of gaming. Oh, and all around Black Friday to be in time for Christmas gifting.

This was a job for Uniqodo and a brilliant example of our PromotionX approach; combining advanced promotions with great customer experience onsite to deliver bigger and better outcomes for promotions. And a great showcase of how you can use codes to achieve your business objectives without the need to discount; something that we are helping to educate the market by busting the myths of promotions.



Challenge & Approach

Objectives

With one of the fastest networks in the UK, BT is perfectly positioned to provide a bigger and better gaming experience to customers. Working in partnership with Sony and Microsoft, BT secured the opportunity to offer much-coveted, Next-Gen Consoles to their customers as part of providing added value and great customer experience.

The exam question that BT posed to Uniqodo in September was 'How can BT sell next-gen consoles?' Seems like a fairly simple request on first pass. On closer inspection, there were some clear challenges to overcome;

- The consoles could only be available to purchase by existing and selected BT broadband customers
- The consoles would retail via BT shop, but those customer log-ins aren't federated with BT.com Broadband customer accounts, so they needed a way to securely transition customer identifiers across the different business units to verify customer eligibility
- The anticipated increase in site visits for next-gen console purchasing could not impact BAU trading on BT Shop
- And as a new channel partner for Microsoft and Sony, BT needed to protect manufacturer reputation by delivering a great customer experience

BT Shop needed a methodology.

Solution... 1.0

The first step was to set up the promotion with unique codes to control access to only BT customers. BT targeted communication to customers in two ways; emails that included HTML snippets in the template to issue and display unique codes to each recipient when they opened the email, and via a click-to-reveal button in the account area to eligible customers, providing a unique code onsite.

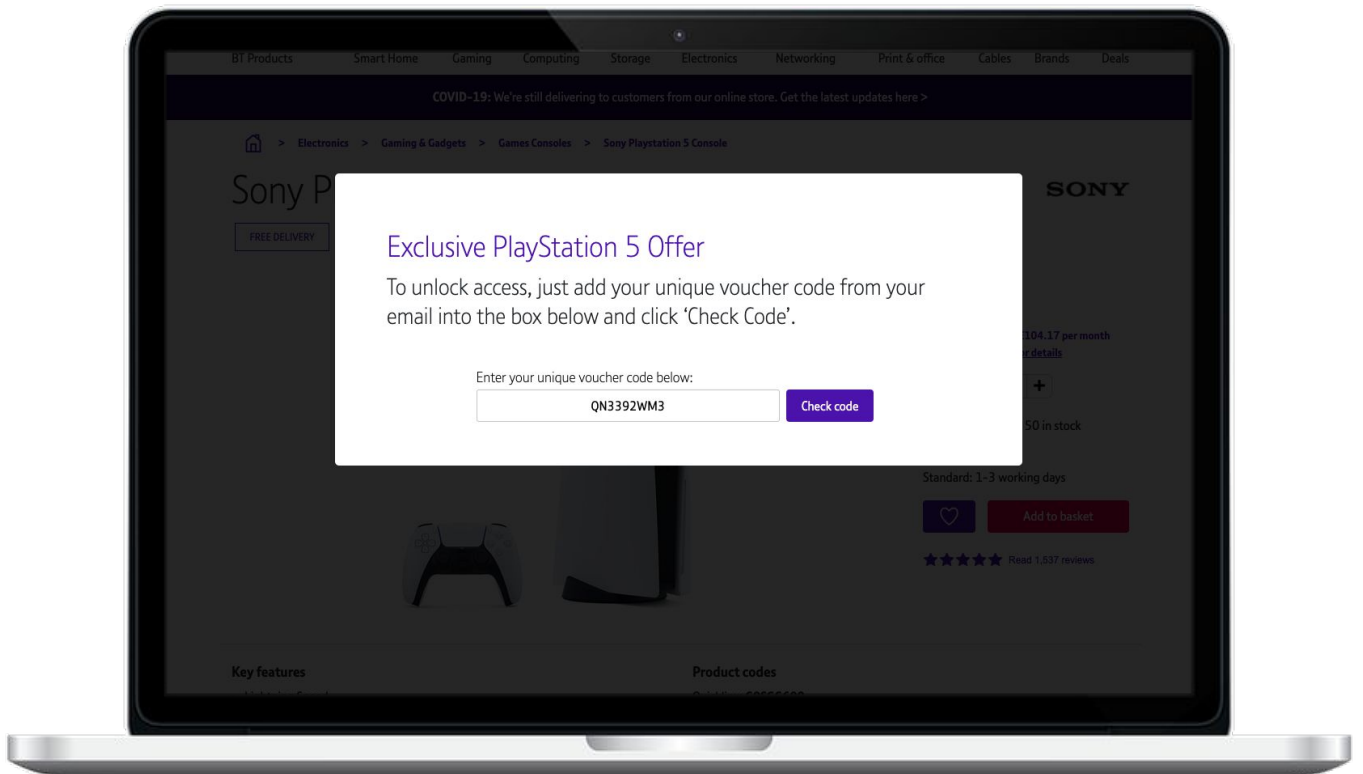
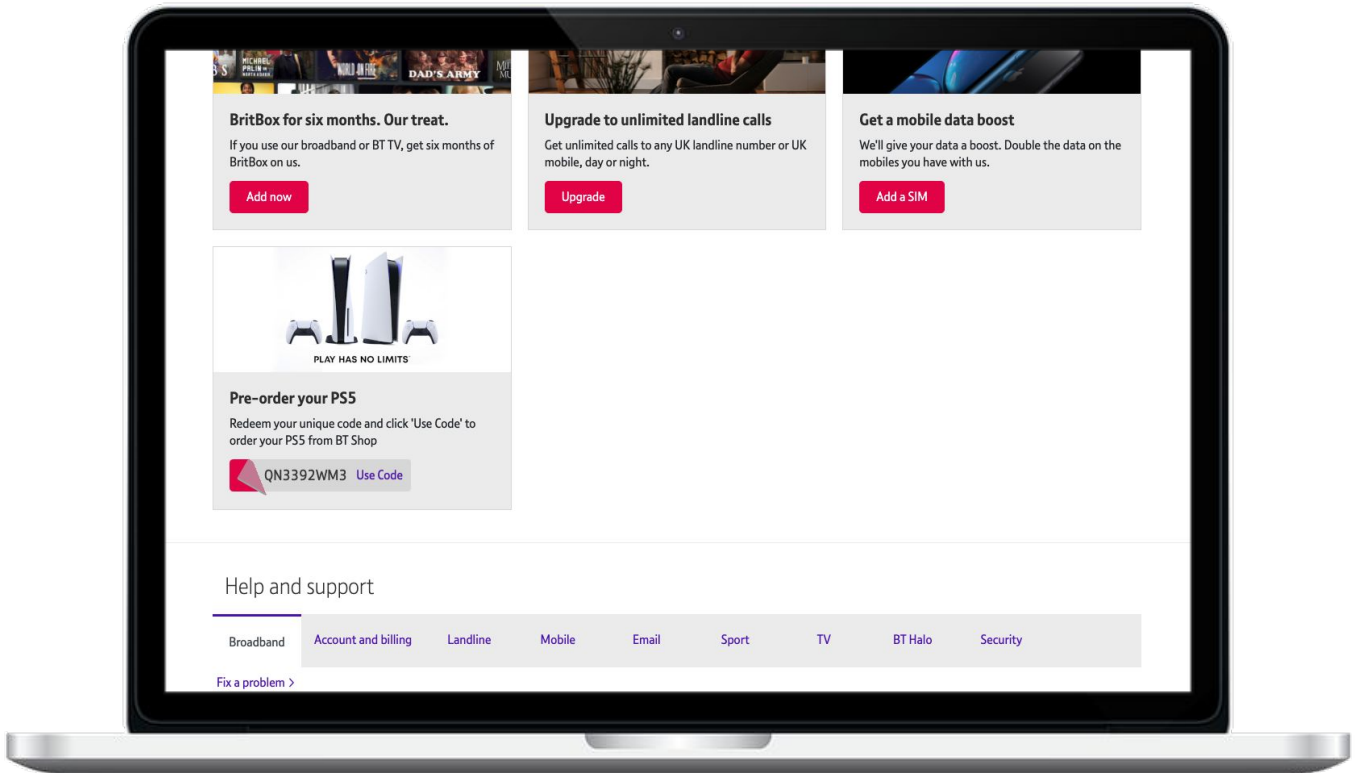
The next step was to solve for the absence of a universal login to securely transfer customers across to BT Shop.

Communications directed customers to BT.com to login and verify their eligibility for the promotion. Once verified, BT.com surfaced a call-to-action, unlocked with their unique code, that navigated customers to BT Shop and the corresponding product page that was only accessible to eligible customers of the promotion.

Only BT customers who received the code were able to 'unlock' the deal and access the exclusively available next gen console, in turn protecting distribution agreements with manufacturers.

Cracked it with two simple solutions... so it seemed.





Approach 2.0

The second part of this campaign is the real hero (and villain) of the story.

The PlayStation 5 promotion was planned to go on 'exclusive' sale on 19th November, 27th November and 3rd December. Using the same solution for the Xbox Series X and S promotion, PlayStation 5 went live at 8am on 19th November to selected BT customers.

Within 20 minutes, BT Shop's site experienced significant stress with huge traffic volumes, despite press for the promotion only going out the morning of the 19th November on BT.com. Between 8am and 10am, there were in excess of 125,000 people logged in at any one time, and by 10.30am over 1,000 units had been sold.

With huge pent-up demand for the latest PlayStation console, and knowledge that BT had available units on sale, an eager customer found a way around the content gate, and posted the hack on an open voucher site. BT Shop suddenly took hundreds of orders in a matter of minutes. Recognising that something was wrong, BT Shop pulled the deal to stop the campaign abuse and find a solution.

Promotions going wrong is our worst nightmare, but solving problems is in our DNA, so we worked closely with BT Shop to identify the issues and provide a solution. The challenges were threefold;

- Uniqodo's HTML could be compromised with a some engineering knowledge
- BT Shop had a traffic management issue with their queuing platform to overcome
- BT had further internal challenges in the context of the above that required fixing

Within 24 hours, Uniqodo came back with 5 different solutions with varying levels of effort and control.

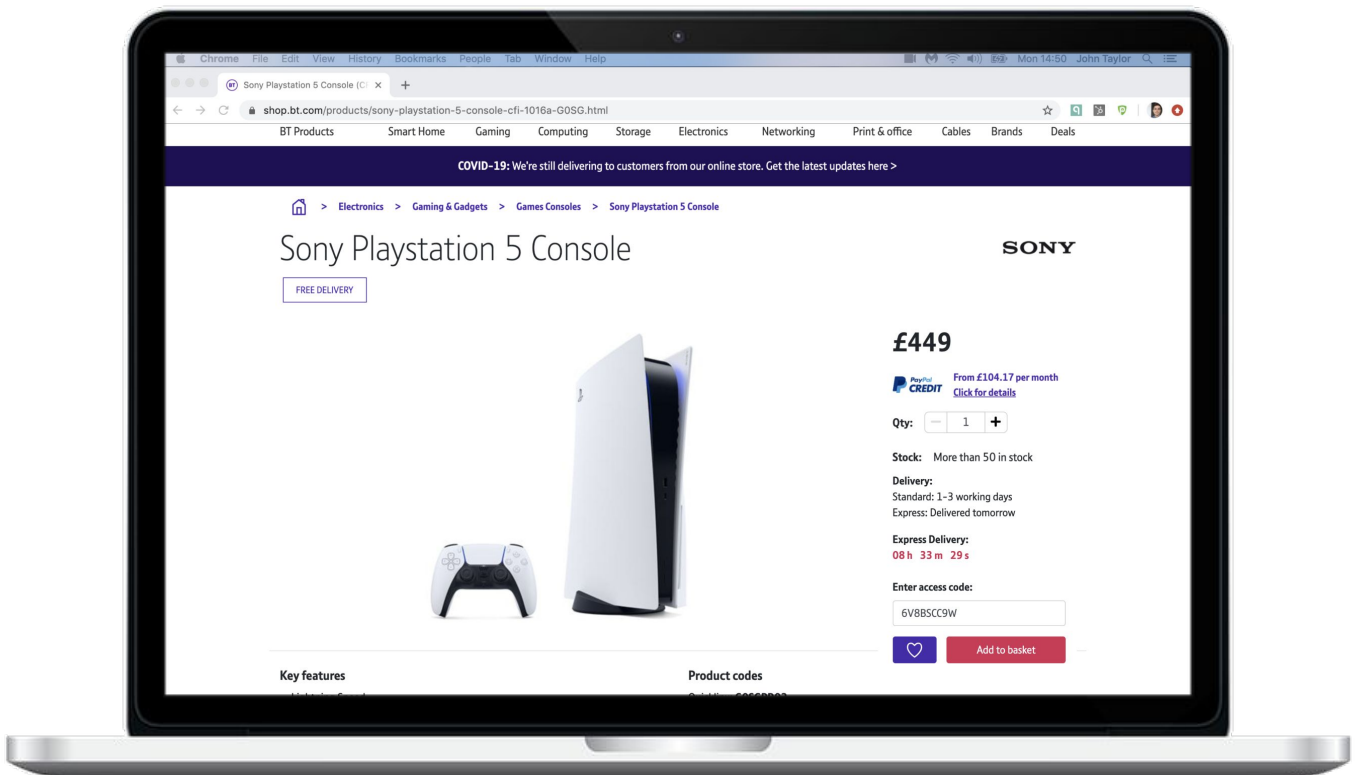
Going for the most robust solution, we put an API integration straight into delivery, aligned with the work that the BT team underwent to fix a multitude of issues. We created two buy funnels with the API and traffic management solution, protecting BAU trading whilst managing high demand for the console promotion. With the new solution in place, the next promotion was planned for 3rd December to retail the remaining PS5 units.

The final PS5 promotion on 3rd December was a roaring success, with customers taking to Twitter to praise BT for their excellent customer experience and service. Furthermore, the feedback from Sony was glowing, especially as BT was one of the only retailers to keep their site trading on the campaign dates, with GAME, John Lewis, Curry's and Amazon all failing under the volume of demand they experienced.

In normal times, there would be physical queues at hundreds of retailers spread out up and down the country. With the nation forced to focus their attention and demands on a handful of eCommerce sites, BT & Uniqodo managed to fix a problem the rest of the UK's retailers couldn't solve, and was a great example of how technology can successfully underpin trading, especially in the special case of 2020 when no shops were open for physical trading. A real achievement for BT, especially as it looks to build a bigger gaming repertoire for customers.

For the customers who had tried to use their code to place an order when the campaign was pulled, we found the BT unique identifier to cross-check against customers who had tried to purchase, and were able to re-approach those who had tried previously and re-issue them a unique code. This is true Promotion EX. Advanced promotions that solve unique challenges, combining with excellent customer experience throughout the entire customer journey.





API Gate Solution 2.0

New solution launched for PlayStation 5 exclusive campaign, and will continue to be the solution we use for all future BT exclusive access campaigns.



Although no eCommerce leader wants to experience promotion problems and a customer impacting failure, to go from the challenges we faced on 19th November, to solving three contributing issues by 3rd December, that no other UK retailer could solve, was an absolute triumph.

The Uniqodo team were nothing short of brilliant, responding with considered solutions in just 24 hours and working over Black Friday weekend to complete a full API integration with BT Shop.

This is proof that with a little ingenuity and determination, you can create amazing digital experiences for customers in a time of real need for our customers.

Duncan Rutherford, Head of eCommerce | BT Shop

