In a sentence:
During the Ashes Summer of 2015, Manning Gottlieb OMD, Specsavers and The Telegraph came together to deliver one of the most original, engaging and entertaining partnerships of the year by challenging readers to be the umpire.

Executive Summary:
Tasked to build Specsavers’ professionalism credentials as experts in vision, we harnessed the true power of one of Britain’s biggest Newsbrands to create an integrated campaign that put consumers in the shoes of those who rely on perfect vision to make game-changing judgements.

We challenged them to making the split-second judgements that professional officials do with an engaging digital game that was played more than 60,000 times, and brought it to millions of people with a true multi-channel partnership making the most of The Telegraph’s most engaging elements, helping to shift professionalism scores by 4%.
Background & Objectives:

Specsavers are the market leader in optics within the UK and have one of the most powerful advertising slogans in modern marketing.

However, the humour of “Should’ve Gone to Specsavers” makes it difficult to communicate professionalism credentials, which our key competitors were investing heavily in to create a point of difference.

While eye-care can sometimes be low interest, we realised that sport provides the perfect passion point and environment to capture the excitement and importance of accurate vision.

In 2014, Specsavers and MG OMD signed a deal with the ECB to become Official Partner of the England and Wales Cricket Board and Principal Partner of the Cricket Officials at a county level.

With this association, Specsavers had an opportunity to show our 45+ core audience group how we help the experts see to build professionalism perceptions. However, sport sponsorship is often reduced to meaningless badging of events and teams – to truly succeed we needed to find a way to be authentic and add value to fans.

Insight:

We needed the perfect partner at the crease to deliver scale, authenticity and expertise

We needed to find a partner who could deliver an engaged audience of sports fans, had unmatched authority in cricket and the plethora of platforms which would highlight the level of skill and professionalism that goes with both sport and the Specsavers product offering.

We knew that The Telegraph offered that scale needed with their total reach of 21.6mil people across established print distribution and digital platforms. On top of this, our target audience were twice as likely to consume their platforms, and we knew that the Telegraph with a rich heritage in covering cricket. With an Ashes Summer on the way, we knew we had the perfect window to shout about our sponsorship.

We could add value by challenging fans to do the job

But just telling people wouldn’t be enough. Cricket fans are a passionate bunch, so we knew we had to actively involve them. We spoke to them about the role of the umpires in the game. Mostly, fans focus on the decisions they disagree with. But the ones who had stood in for an umpire before realised what a difficult job it was and respected them more.

But the ones who hadn’t felt they could do a better job... time for us to give them that chance!
The Idea and Plan:

We built the Umpire Challenge, an interactive umpiring game that would ask users to judge a whole over of LBW appeals and decide: was the batsman in or out?

We filmed real footage from an umpire’s POV to give the most authentic experience possible, and worked closely with expert umpires and the ECB direct and certify the content to make sure the decisions were 100% accurate. We made sure it played perfectly over browser, tablet and mobile to fit with how people consume modern Newsbrands.

This game was delivered on a Specsavers-branded page within The Telegraph Sport section and encouraged users to play for a chance to win priceless tickets to sold-out Ashes Tests across the summer. Alongside the game, users could then also learn more about grassroots umpiring and information around the Specsavers brand.

Only if you got all six correct, were you entered into the competition, encouraged to take the most of this skill and learn more about the need for a fresh set of cricket umpires. If you didn’t, well, you 'Should've Gone to Specsavers!' And most players Should’ve. It's not that easy, being an umpire...

Think you can do better? Give it a go yourself by visiting http://umpire.telegraph.co.uk/ or search Specsavers Umpire.

But we wanted to do the idea justice by harnessing the potential of a leading modern Newsbrand and utilising all channels within The Telegraph portfolio.

The Print Powerplay

Although not an official Ashes sponsor, we wanted to be a key part of the cricket conversation across the summer.

Specsavers took ownership of The Telegraph’s Ashes preview supplement announcing our support of cricket umpires and launching our game, reaching 1.2 million people across the UK on one of the most exciting days in the cricket calendar. We even organised for an additional 10,000 copies to be distributed outside the First Test in Cardiff to give spectators an entertaining read at lunch – and the perfect influencer audience to launch our message.
We implemented daily advertorial features that would run across the Ashes reviewing the day’s play prior from the umpire perspective, giving expert analysis on performance.

Display print ads were placed around relevant cricket editorial to further highlight the opportunity to win cricket tickets if you played the Specsavers Umpire Challenge.

Creative formats were used to boost stand out, running a bespoke horizontal ribbon cut-out within the sports section at the start of the decisive Fourth Test.

https://twitter.com/newworks_uk/status/628861217206063104

A true multi-channel approach:

We used digital to road-block the Telegraph cricket channel on key days across desktop and mobile to extend the campaign and drive interest in the game.

The game even captured the imagination of The Telegraph’s writers, with the daily commentary pages featuring multiple mentions during breaks in play even a direct link into their navigation bar across the summer!

Further email marketing and promoted Telegraph social posts reached 400,000 people and ensured that we delivered one of the most multi-channel, innovative and engaging Newsbrand campaigns to date.

The Results:

Through a real partnership of client, brand and agency, we delivered some true innovation, bravery in our execution and hit our targets for SIX!

- **We captured the passion of cricket fans:**
  Over 60,000 game plays with 6,921 good enough to have a chance to win Ashes and ODI tickets. This was alongside 119,710 page views and over-delivering on unique browsers by 58%

- **Built professionalism perceptions**
  Professionalism scores increased post campaign by 4% v. Q1 2015

- **…and drove interest around umpiring**
  The ECB delivered their biggest ever sign up’s to grassroots umpiring!

Client View:

The results were as pleasing as the Ashes result itself and we had a very happy client. HOWZAT for a Newsbrands content partnership in 2015:

“We were thrilled to work with The Telegraph, and really pleased to see this idea brought to life across the summer. Through the diverse plan of print, digital, social and gamification we felt a truly engaging and interactive campaign was delivered.”

Sarah Marquis, Senior Campaign Manager, Specsavers