Social Media Marketing Case Study

(Part 1 & 2)

Social Talent

Social Talent is the leading provider of online and social media training to the recruitment and staffing industry worldwide. It does so through its online learning management system and video-based training, currently serving customers in over 100 countries.

Social Talent is now an International company with offices in Australia, Ireland, Poland and Hungary, but started out with humble beginnings in December 2010 as a spin-out business from a small recruitment agency.

The remit of Social Talent was to attract customers to its business and website by *helping them*. The company had no dedicated sales team, but instead had a driven CEO, a diligent co-founder, a digital marketing exec and a video producer in its early days. With such a small team, they made significant waves in a niche industry, securing global customers and a loyal following for minimal financial investment.

What did they do?

Helping recruiters become more productive was the guiding principle of the company. They felt that by helping people, they would *earn* the right to promote their business and products. Writing and producing free, high-quality, digital content that answered recruiter's questions *and* demonstrated innovative techniques was their main method of engagement with customers and prospects.

Daily Blogs and weekly webinars were produced that demonstrated, in detail, how one may go about sourcing specific industry talent on LinkedIn, for example, or best practice for promoting job openings on Twitter. Ideas for content were inspired by questions asked by recruiters, popular Google searches, or new techniques or methods found online.

The blogs and webinars were distributed and promoted across LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Google+ with links back to the site to read more, and thus earned Social Talent loyal fans who actively shared those blogs to their networks online and promoted the company's training solutions to their teams. This army of brand ambassadors were the sole promotional tool used by Social Talent, as they had no monetary budget to advertise across any digital platform.

From 2013, the company had grown to increase its digital marketing and video production team, and then began hiring its dedicated sales team. As the business had no physical store location, the website (*www.socialtalent.co*) was the most important owned asset of the company. Directing potential customers to the website and converting them into named leads through data-capture forms when downloading white papers, or watching 30-minute webinars, was the most important marketing activity to drive sales.

In 2016, the company now employs over 60 people in Ireland, Australia, Poland and Hungary, and receives over 3,000 new inbound leads each and every week, representing a conversion rate of website-visitor-to-lead of approximately 10%.

To continue bringing high-quality leads to the sales team, the marketing team regularly produce high value content to serve specific recruiter needs, from industry insights to specific tasks like starting an Instagram employer branding

campaign. At least 8 blogs are published every week, and distributed across Social Talent's social media channels to communities of recruiters and potential customers. More "chunky" long-form content is produced as downloadable white papers or watchable webinars, where a data-capture form gates this content and provides a direct lead for the sales team to follow up on.

Below is a specific example of a campaign run by the Social Talent team, in collaboration with a recruitment outsourcing company, Alexander Mann Solutions, to promote its 2016 Global Recruiting Survey report.

Generating Leads Through Great Industry Content

Task:

Conduct market research into the every-day life of frontline recruiters across the globe.

Objective:

Identify trends amongst recruiters relating to productivity, find problem-areas that can be solved through training or improved processes, and present potential solutions that can be delivered by Social Talent and/or Alexander Mann Solutions

Actions Taken:

A comprehensive survey was designed by Social Talent and Alexander Mann Solutions, which sought to gain insight into everyday recruiters' working lives. Both companies emailed members of their respective databases for responses, as well as promoting the survey across their social media communities on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Overall, 1000 responses were delivered in full, and the results were analyzed by the market researchers.

A full report was written, which outlined some key trends that pointed to poor or great productivity and best practice amongst recruiters, as well as solutions to

improve productivity or recruitment processes. This report was uploaded to the Social Talent and Alexander Mann Solutions websites, with their own dedicated landing pages and data-capture forms that, once completed, would reveal the full report.

The report was pushed out as content across LinkedIn groups, employee status updates and company pages; Twitter; Facebook; and a live webinar which was later published on YouTube. Recruiters were asked to download the report from the Social Talent site, and to share it with their teams. No social media posts were promoted for greater reach, but instead because the content was inherently helpful (and the Social Talent fans were regularly engaged through helpful content), so there were no additional costs associated with producing the report.

Results:

The insights gleaned from the survey were newsworthy too. Press releases were issued to major business publications, including the Harvard Business Review, Wall Street Journal and Forbes, who published findings from the report (for instance, that recruiters who earn performance-related pay perform better than those who earn a flat salary).

After two months, the report had been downloaded more than 6,000 times, resulting in thousands of new leads and increased engagement amongst leads already known to Social Talent.

Listening

Social Talent trains thousands of recruiters around the world using its video training platform, meaning that there is sometimes minimal engagement between learners and the Social Talent trainers. However, the team conduct extensive social media listening to watch out for and recognize learners on their training journey.

Learners are prompted, upon finishing course modules, to share their achievements on LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook. Where learners' share their experiences publicly, the Social Talent team use a range of tools to listen out for these updates (Tweetdeck, Mention, Google Alerts) and respond to those

updates with messages of encouragement, thanks or congratulations. Many times, learners who complete their training take photos of themselves with their certificates and tag Social Talent in their update – the most precious of earned publicity that Social Talent could hope for!

Employer Branding

For a growing business, hiring is the most important activity that any company can do. However, when a company is not consumer-facing, attracting the best talent to you is often a difficult task. Many firms rely on external recruitment agencies to advertise for and shortlist talent, which may result in disengaged applicants who don't quite "get" the culture of the company.

Social Talent are highly aware of this threat, and so use social media to brand the employee experience and company as a place to work, alongside as a client-serving company. This juxtaposition of objectives for social media doesn't conflict with the brand experience however. Instead, it enhances it.

The Social Talent team are actively encouraged to share their experiences at work online, using the hashtag *#WeAreSocialTalent*, and their most preferred medium is Instagram. From work trips at overseas conferences and expositions, to the Monday lunch meetings, employees share their experiences of what it is like to work at Social Talent across social media. Potential applicants see the real life working environment of Social Talent, and apply to join based on their perception of how well they fit with that company culture.

Similarly, clients and end-users see what a fun company Social Talent is, making their desire to work with Social Talent an emotional urge rather than a strictly rational decision. Business-to-Business client relationships are fostered better when they are personal and human. You're definitely not a number in a queue, and that is felt deeply when clients see the human side of Social Talent online.