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Berlin School of Business and Innovation boosts brand awareness and course enrolment using LinkedIn

The challenge

The Berlin School of Business and Innovation needed to market itself effectively to potential students.

Formed in 2018, the business school (BSBI) is a pioneering new institution with global aspirations. The school has seen stellar student growth, starting with nine students but now numbering more than 3,000.

The BSBI has campuses not only in Berlin – attractive to students because of the entrepreneurial culture in the city, not to mention its vibrant and diverse learning community – but also Hamburg, Paris, and Athens. The business school has undergraduate and postgraduate programmes targeting students from a minimum of 17 years old, with courses in everything from graphic design and digital marketing through to tourism, business management and computer science and MBAs. All programmes are delivered in partnership with three established academic institutions, the University for the Creative Arts, Concordia University Chicago, and the Università Telematica Internazionale (UNINETTUNO).

“With this growth, it was the perfect time to invest in brand-building to maximise awareness in our existing markets, while increasing awareness in markets where we are less well-known,” explains Rochelle Gampon, Marketing and Communications Manager at BSBI, who is based in the Philippines. Her marketing team

includes a performance marketing function based in Hyderabad, India is a key market for the business school, along with Latin America and Africa.

Rochelle has used a multi-product approach to market courses in the past, but the introduction of brand awareness content marked a new, more comprehensive creative strategy for BSBI. An understanding of the lengthy student buying lifecycle since then has permitted dedicated brand budget to nurture future students, creating a holistic marketing approach and enrolling them from across the world.

The solution

The BSBI adopted a multi-product strategy from LinkedIn using sponsored content, InMail and social media to increase brand awareness and conversions. The team had seen huge increases in click-through rates using single image ads and InMail and decided to integrate video advertising of the brand in the new campaign. The creative strategy was to employ succinct yet inspiring creative, drawing on the pillars of what makes BSBI a first-class business school. The branding video drove traffic to a landing page designed for prospective students embarking on the shortlisting process. Warm leads were then retargeted with InMail ads to convert them into leads.

How did LinkedIn help?

Rochelle regards LinkedIn as a crucial weapon in the armoury of educational marketers, along with Google. Previous campaigns solely using InMail had driven increased conversions, but the desire was to increase awareness of the BSBI brand – not just its courses. The combination of top-of-funnel sponsored brand awareness content followed up with low funnel course-specific InMail enabled this.

Thanks to the new approach, BSBI became a pioneer of brand awareness advertising among institutions in the Global University Systems portfolio, its parent. “We wanted to try something new and to be innovative, much like the school itself,” explains Rochelle. LinkedIn also enabled the school to adopt a best practice approach to higher education marketing, navigating the “sea of sameness” often seen in the sector – course-based, lower funnel creative without the priming of brand marketing.

The results

More than 600 LinkedIn members were exposed to both brand awareness and course specific InMail marketing within 30 days. Click-through rates soared by 33% and there were consistent lead-to-course enrolment rates from LinkedIn. “We measure leads by on-site conversions,” Rochelle says, “so it was really impressive to see people clicking through after they had been primed by the brand activity.”

She adds: “BSBI understands how LinkedIn and Google work together. LinkedIn plays a major role in showcasing the value of the school in a trusted environment, then Google plays the role of final conversion. Open conversations about the synergies between LinkedIn and Google continue to enhance

the strategy. By employing tools such as Google Analytics, Power Bi and Salesforce, BSBI is able to understand the importance of LinkedIn throughout the prospects’ journey in terms of assisted conversions.”

Rochelle says exploring a multi-product approach was about “maximising what LinkedIn has to offer.” “We could see how the platform has evolved and with the growth of the channel it was appropriate to explore other avenues.”

The BSBI is continuing with the campaign as it looks to introduce new programmes and courses. The creative assets and ad formats are being assessed and tweaked to improve performance. “We will introduce a lot of new programmes in the future,” says Rochelle, “and LinkedIn will always be a part of the mix.”

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609
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The BSBI marketing team always looks for new and innovative ways to improve our holistic approach and reach new audiences while strengthening our value proposition with the current ones. LinkedIn’s multi-product strategy was just what we needed to increase our brand exposure and nurture the right leads. Our performance is going from strength to strength, and we are looking forward to further exploring and improving the multi-product strategy.”



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