

# HCL "CIO Straight Talk" Case Study



## Building online communities through thought leadership

*"HCL's business success has always been premised on building customer relationships that go beyond mere contracts. The CIO Straight Talk community on LinkedIn is an excellent manifestation of this approach to the market - where customers are recognized as practitioner thought leaders whose experience based insights have tremendous community value. The robustness of LinkedIn as a B2B social media platform is aptly demonstrated through this highly engaged, rich content community."*

Krishnan Chatterjee, Senior Vice President and  
Global Head, Strategic Marketing, HCL Technologies

*"This program, through this exclusive CIO community, has set high standards in terms of community engagement and has placed us right amongst the best-in-class in mindshare building and establishing a thought leadership brand in the digital space. Partnering with LinkedIn was key for making this program a success."*

Apurva Chamaria, Head of Brand & Digital Marketing,  
Strategic Marketing, HCL Technologies

## Company Profile

HCL is a leading global Technology and IT Enterprise with annual revenues of US\$ 6.3 billion. The HCL Enterprise comprises two companies listed in India, HCL Technologies and HCL Infosystems.

Its range of offerings span R&D and Technology Services, Enterprise and Applications Consulting, Remote Infrastructure Management, BPO services, IT Hardware, Systems Integration and Distribution of Technology and Telecom products in India. The HCL team comprises 92,000 professionals of diverse nationalities, operating across 31 countries including 505 points of presence in India. HCL has global partnerships with several leading Fortune 1000 firms, including several IT and Technology majors.

## Objectives:

### To create a strong digital presence

Prior to associating with LinkedIn, CIO Straight Talk only had an offline presence in the form of an annual magazine which had a limited shelf life thus restricting its reach. The biggest challenge faced by HCL was to bolster the reach and have a continuous engagement plan through content on a credible professional platform.

### To establish HCL's perception as a thought leader

HCL was committed to resolving CIO issues through dissemination of premium and high quality content.

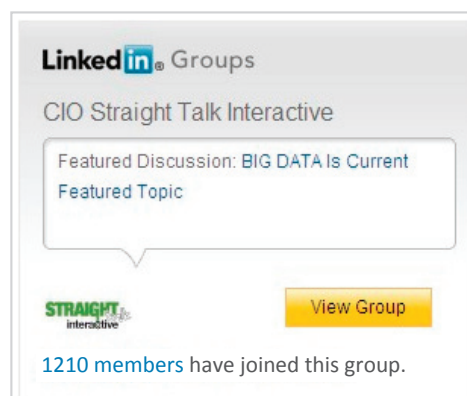
They sought to build a content marketing engine to keep the conversation and engagement going within the target group through a sustainable model.

### Engagement Metrics

- 8 high-profile CIO webinars with 900+ IT leaders as attendees
- Around 10% of community members participated in micromarketing activities like webinars, contributions to the magazine, etc.
- 700+ responses for crowd-sourced polls & surveys
- High engagement: 320+ comments; 422 discussions threads initiated
- 15 highly active HCL SMEs on the community

### Growing Numbers

- Community Strength – Exclusive, invitation-only online club of 1210 IT leaders (as on 2nd September, 2013) mostly top prospects and G2000 companies
- Community strength 5 times more than the goal
- High Profile membership - Director level and above: 80%+; CXOs: 25%
- Participating Organizations – 70% from organizations with >10,000 + employees
- 110+ Fortune 500 companies
- Warm leads generated from the engagement activities



## Solutions:

The entire program was structured into four steps –

- Attracting and recruiting the community members
- Engaging the members
- Optimizing the program
- Capturing and monitoring results

The solutions used were LinkedIn Custom group, partner messages, Join Group ads, Banners, Text Links, Custom group artifacts like video units, polls etc.

### LinkedIn as a digital marketing solution:

LinkedIn has been an integral part of HCL's overall digital marketing strategy. LinkedIn's Marketing Solutions was the stepping stone towards establishing HCL's commitment to establishing thought leadership through a captive community; where HCL brand advocates can be nurtured and groomed for significant business benefits going forward.

### Offers excellent reach and credibility:

LinkedIn provides a perfect mix of reach and credibility required for B2B organizations to expand their horizons from a business and branding point of view.

Some of the benefits of engaging with LinkedIn Marketing Solutions:

- Professional credibility
- Seriousness
- Efficient Targeting
- LinkedIn Audience Recruitment tools
- Accountability
- Great Feedback mechanism

### Deeper Engagement:

HCL effectively utilized custom group features like Manager's choice, video unit, article banners, and text links. Discussion threads on various business-technology subjects including CIO leadership were successfully initiated in the community. CIO ST Interactive cracked a unique medium of community engagement with periodic CIO webinars on industry agnostic topics usually contemporary business technology topics.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn group page for 'Straight Talk Interactive'. The header includes the LinkedIn logo and a 'Join & Register for Straight Talk Interactive Webinar Series' button. Below the header, there is a 'Dear Fahna,' message from Paul Hemp, Editor of CIO Straight Talk. The message discusses the evolution of the CIO role and mentions a webinar featuring Peter Dew, CEO of CEVA Logistics. A 'Join Straight Talk Interactive' button is prominently displayed. To the right, there is a 'Featured Discussion' titled 'Preventing the Extinction of the CIO' by Peter Dew, CIO of CEVA Logistics. Below this, there is a 'Join Group' button and a note that '1210 members have joined this group.'

## Program Optimization through LinkedIn

### Recruitment tools:

A mix of LinkedIn audience recruitment tools were employed to optimize the program and get the desired response on the marketing dollar spent. These metrics allowed right budget allocation to the right solutions.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn group page for 'Straight Talk Interactive'. The header includes the LinkedIn logo and a 'Join & Register for Straight Talk Interactive Webinar Series' button. Below the header, there is a 'Discussion' section with a post by Gary Baker, Director of IT / CIO for the Society of Manufacturing. To the right, there is a 'Manager's Choice' section featuring a post by Rob Hornby, MD, Alex Partners, UK ex-CIO, Wealth Mgmt, CIO Actual. Below these, there is a 'Most Popular Discussions' section with a post by ZNetNet titled 'Five lessons from a CIO Innovation workshop'. To the right, there is a 'Latest Updates' section with a post by Oll Press titled 'On the "chronic conflict of innovation vs stability" - maybe it's time for CIOs to embrace chaos. Maybe stability has been overrated and CIOs...'. The page also features a 'Click to expand' button and a 'Share group' button.

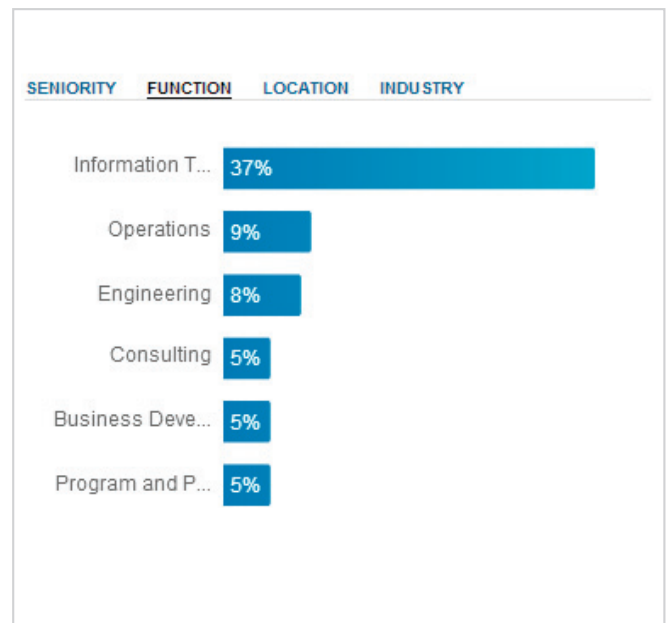
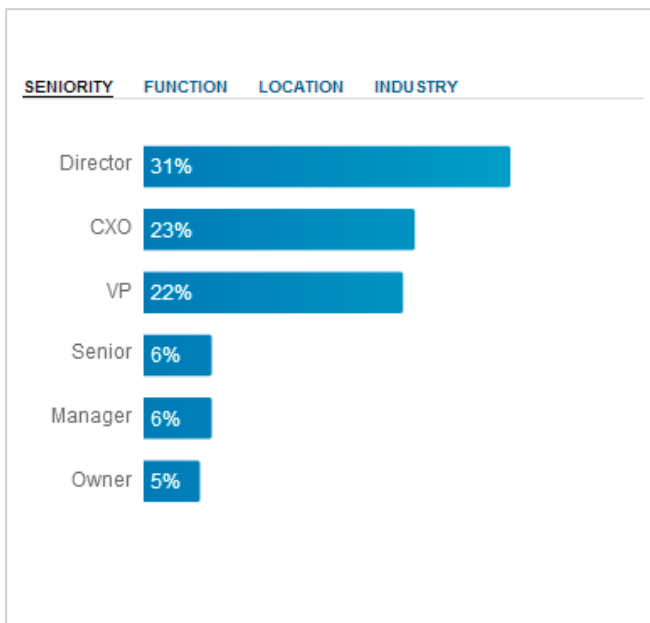
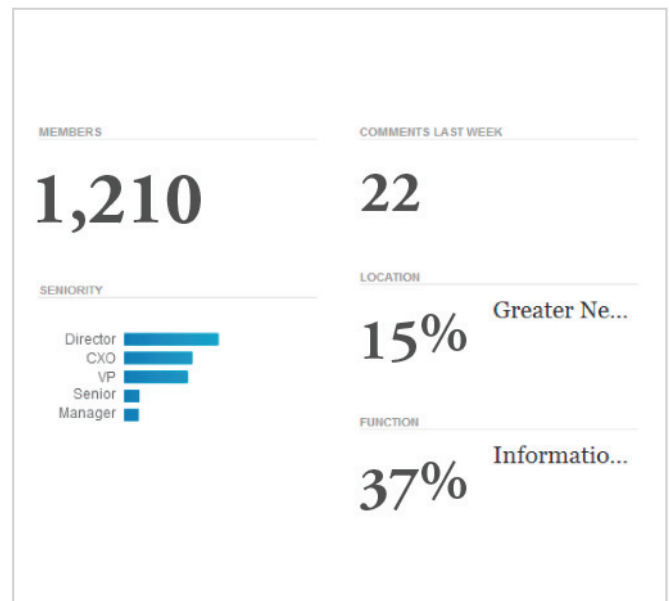
The screenshot shows a LinkedIn video player for 'Straight Talk Interactive'. The video is titled 'Second Advantage Vivek Ranadive, Chairman'. The video player includes a play button and a 'Click to expand' button. Below the video, there is a list of speakers: Martin Leach, CIO, Michel Langlois, and David Harkness. The video player also features the 'Straight Talk Interactive' logo and a 'Click to expand' button.

## Results:

With the right targeting and right channels of promotion, the strength of the community reached 5 times of what was decided as a goal. With the attraction of the desired profile audience, the engagement picked up significantly with more than 10% of community members participating actively in various micromarketing initiatives like webinars, magazine on special topics big data and mobility to name a few. Warm lead generation was also was one of the positive outcomes of the engagement plan.

With these positive results, HCL plans to continue the engagement plans by establishing deeper relationships with the members and integrating their offline efforts with the custom group activities.

Visit CIO Straight Talk Interactive on LinkedIn at:  
<http://partner.linkedin.com/ciostraighttalk>



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