

# Stevens Institute of Technology Case Study

Reaching key audiences with  
LinkedIn Ads and Partner Messages



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Michael Schinelli, Assistant Vice President for  
Marketing and Communications, Stevens Institute

## Raising awareness of degree programs

Founded in 1870, Stevens Institute of Technology is located in Hoboken, N.J. just a stone's throw from midtown Manhattan. The school is well known for its engineering and science undergrad and graduate degree programs – but as it began to roll out exciting new graduate programs, its marketing experts realized that Stevens needed a boost in awareness, especially among professionals considering going back to school for M.B.A. and other graduate degrees.

“Our new graduate program, Business Intelligence and Analytics (BI&A), is the first program of its kind in the New York area, and one of only about 12 in the world,” explains Michael Schinelli, Stevens Institute’s assistant vice president for marketing and communications. While the school has 43 different graduate programs, Schinelli decided to focus marketing efforts on the new BI&A degree, along with Computer Science, Financial Engineering, Systems Engineering, and M.B.A. graduate programs – “our top performers,” Schinelli says.

## Challenge

- Raise awareness of degree programs
- Drive inquiries from prospective students
- Create a brand presence in professional online community
- Deliver messages to hard-to-identify graduate degree candidates

## Solution

- Deliver Partner Messages to regional LinkedIn members
- Target display ads to relevant LinkedIn Groups
- Launch self-serve pay-per-click LinkedIn Ads for message saturation

## Why LinkedIn?

- Tech-savvy, professional audience
- Ability to create brand presence across online community
- Members self-identify interests and future career goals
- Targeting by geography, education level, jobs, and group affiliations

## Results

- CTRs up to 12% for Partner Messages
- 21% open rate for best performing Partner Messages
- Increase in information requests for new degree program
- Building conversations with precise audiences

Stevens Institute was conducting display advertising campaigns on popular career websites, as well as retargeting campaigns via ad networks.

"All of these campaigns offer different benefits at different price points," Schinelli explains. "However, the retargeting conversions don't come from websites where we had a brand presence, and these campaigns didn't offer ways to carefully target the audiences we needed to reach. We wanted to have an affiliation with a professional network on which we could create a share of voice about Stevens, and could saturate the messaging more frequently."

## Combining the power of LinkedIn marketing tools

Schinelli saw the opportunity to create this brand presence on LinkedIn, using a combination of marketing tools: Partner Messages, display ads, and self-service pay-per-click LinkedIn Ads. "With LinkedIn, we wanted to test the benefits of a 360-degree campaign," he explains. "We wanted LinkedIn members to see our messages more often, hopefully in different ways. The brand objective was to be recognized across the LinkedIn network as a premium provider of the programs we offer."

The marketing goal, he adds, was to encourage people to click through to Stevens Institute's inquiry form – the first step toward making a formal application for a degree program.

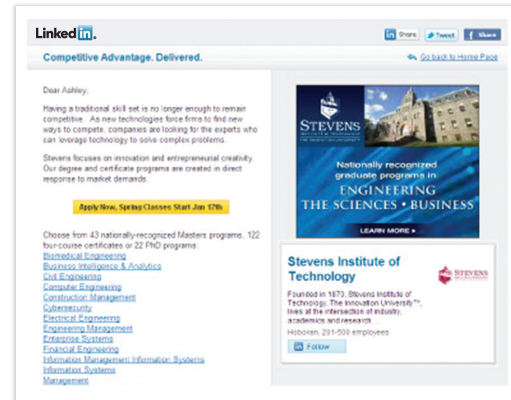
For Stevens Institute, a key advantage of advertising with LinkedIn is its targeting capability – and specifically, the fact that its members indicate their career goals and interests beyond just the jobs they've held. "They don't just say, 'This is what I used to do, or this is what my company calls my job,'" Schinelli says. "They join LinkedIn groups not only based on what they're doing today, but based on jobs they'd like to get in the future, or tasks they'd like to get better at."



LinkedIn display ad for Stevens Institute degree program

## Connecting with tech-savvy professionals

For Partner Messages, Stevens Institute targeted LinkedIn members without graduate degrees in the New York City metropolitan area, using a pitch about building technology-related skills. For display ads, the school targeted New York area members with group affiliation and job functions relating to the degree programs it is marketing, such as Computer Science and Financial Engineering.



LinkedIn Partner Message from Stevens Institute

Since launching its advertising on LinkedIn in mid-2011, the Partner Messages have achieved open rates as high as 21% and clickthrough rates as high as 12%. During the campaigns, LinkedIn became one of Stevens Institute's top 10 referral sites to the school's graduate admissions department – leading Stevens to shift some of its media budget from Career Builder to LinkedIn.

The campaign around the new Business Intelligence and Analytics degree has helped Stevens Institute build mindshare and drive more inquiries for information about the program, Schinelli says. "That's good to see for a new launch," he explains. "LinkedIn is helping us reach the tech-savvy, business-minded individuals that we need to connect with. Being able to target geographically as well as by group affiliation, and developing the brand presence, are really adding up."

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