MEDIANT
H E A L T H   R E S O U R C E S
The Subject Matter Specialists

How Mediant Health Built a Scalable Recruiting Engine

The staffing world is undergoing a transformation that is bridging gaps between technology, people and processes.

As the digital landscape becomes increasingly crowded and job seekers become more selective about opportunities, agencies and independent recruiters are actively testing creative ways to increase their audience sizes, build long-term candidate connections and become discussion leaders in the communities that they care about.

This dynamic has generated significant noise, causing the recruiting space to become inefficient and highly competitive. However, a clear set of talent solutions providers – ones with a dedicated commitment to marketing, analytics, and reaching audiences *faster* – are coming out ahead.

Consider the story of the health IT staffing firm Mediant Health Resources as a source of inspiration. The company has built a self-sustaining, predictable recruiting engine by focusing on three core initiatives. The following interview with the firm's president, Michael Primorac, explores this journey.

Phase I: Prioritizing Strategy Above Tactics

Mediant Health Resources was established several years ago with a team whose experience spans decades. As the digital recruiting landscape has evolved, rather than simply 'reacting' to shifting client and candidate demands, the company turned to LinkedIn to build a long-term system – one that prioritizes a core set of building blocks to optimize results for the long term.

LinkedIn: What challenges were you hoping to solve?

Michael: The talent marketplace is continuously evolving – which means that we need solutions that enable us to stay nimble and adapt. In 20 years, we've seen dramatic shifts in how we interact with clients and candidates. Back in 1994, people were *faxing* resumes. There were no tracking systems – no CRMs. We used a system that was basically a candidate Rolodex. Then Applicant Tracking Software (ATS) systems came along – and that was great too. But like its predecessor, these tools became obsolete. In fact, our needs began to outpace the systems that were available on the market.

Unless you're constantly in the database, massaging that data, and keeping the systems up to date manually, ATS systems will always be bruised by bad data – creating a fundamental (and frustrating) disconnect with our candidate pipelines.

We needed a system that could help us adapt to the digital landscape and grow to the next level, while enabling us to work as a team using internal processes.

LinkedIn: What inspired you to take the leaps with our platform that you did?

Michael: We were drawn to LinkedIn because the platform is unavoidable. It's where everyone is. It's self-updating, which means that you'll always know if someone is changing a job. You have instant access to information – and candidates – in near real-time.

This speed – and access to information – has enabled us to compete in ways that we previously couldn't. We're one of hundreds of healthcare recruiting firms and LinkedIn has enabled us to strategically, systematically, and quantifiably amplify our brand awareness. In less than a year, we've gone from zero to more than 6,000 company followers.

Compare that to our direct competitor – they've generated a smaller number of brand followers. Yet they have more than 1,900 employees. Our team is just a few hundred.

Phase II: Unifying the Brand-Building Process

Top candidates are always in demand. They're often happily employed, and many need to be convinced that a new opportunity is worth their time and interest. That's why recruiters and staffing consultants need to build a high-impact, high-performing brand – to create a targeted approach that fully captures candidates' attention.

LinkedIn: Can you walk us through your approach to brand building?

Michael: We tried something that is atypical of a lot of companies in that we looked beyond our website as the core platform for branding. There are many branding and marketing firms that stress the importance of SEO and bringing audiences to your website. Yes – these perspectives are valid, but we're competing against multi-million dollar brands. LinkedIn provides us with an ideal platform to showcase our capabilities.

Our marketing communications agency, Brandigm, created a great website for Mediant. But beyond that, the agency created our LinkedIn content and seamlessly integrated the two along with providing easy access to relevant LinkedIn Groups. Any prospect, key influencer or client can visit the site to validate who we are or learn about all our capabilities. So we continue to build brand awareness and value every day.

Our approach to recruiting is to follow the candidates. That's why LinkedIn has become the hub for *all* of our talent sourcing. My goal is to drive as many candidates as possible – even our website visitors and direct inquiries – to LinkedIn. Our website is seamlessly integrated with our presence on LinkedIn.

LinkedIn: Is this approach working? Are you gaining visibility? Are candidates responding to your LinkedIn brand?

Michael: We had twenty-five applicants yesterday. We had about fifty applicants on Wednesday. Tuesday we had about seventy-five applicants. Monday we had about fifteen. These numbers continue to increase on a monthly basis.

LinkedIn: Why do you think you see these results on LinkedIn vs. other networks, including your own website?

Michael: LinkedIn empowers us to engage in natural, organic conversations with our target audience. We're incredibly specialized in the electronic medical records (EMR) and health IT space – there are many LinkedIn Groups of passionate professionals who are looking to explore these topics.

We use these Groups to build our brand and cross-promote job postings in a conversational setting. That's why our tagline is "The Subject Matter Specialists." We also invite promising potential candidates to join Mediant's official LinkedIn Group.

LinkedIn: How has this system helped your business?

Michael: We respond to our clients with great candidates faster. We've amplified our track record for success. Last year, we received 6 RFPs. This year, as of August we have received 22, and by the end of the year, we'll be doing one per week. More and more customers are calling Mediant.

The results we're able to generate have empowered us to win against big brand names in the staffing space. Those are companies that have thousands of employees. What LinkedIn enables us to do is compete on an even playing field in a way that we previously couldn't. We're achieving the same results with a hundred employees that they're doing with two thousand, and we're garnering as much brand recognition as they are. It's a David and Goliath story.

Phase III: Relying on Analytics for Momentum and Guidance

Measurement is the heart of optimization. It's a rigorous commitment to metrics that empowers organizations to maintain a sense of discipline, build high-performing forecasting models, and uncover opportunities. Analytics have become a core part of Mediant Health's strategy.

LinkedIn: What does success mean to you?

Michael: We want our brand to grow and our messaging to generate an impact. We want to be perceived as the 'IBM' of our industry. Without a significant marketing effort, you just can't. LinkedIn changes all that. It really does. It's amazing.

LinkedIn: What metrics reflect whether you're making progress towards this ambitious goal?

Michael: First of all, I look at how many people are visiting my profile to gauge my influence levels among prospective candidates. For instance, within a 90-day period my LinkedIn profile will typically generate more than 5,000 views.

I also measure impressions on our LinkedIn Company Page to see whether our content is inspiring interest among our target communities. For example, we have one minute animated videos there, created by our agency, to help engage potential consultants. What's important to us is that the level of engagement has grown significantly within the last year. I also look at impressions generated per unit of time – for instance, one recent Company Status Update generated 3,000 impressions, 36 clicks, and 14 interactions in under 20 hours.

LinkedIn: What about activities that capture your business's bottom line?

Michael: We measure ROI in terms of applicants per day and engagement in terms of follower-growth on our Company Page – and of course, growth in job applications over time. All of these metrics have seen a positive uptick.

We used to lose on big projects. I saw whom we lost to, and it made sense. We lost to brand names that had been around for a while that I would've chosen too.

Now, we're beating them. Now, we're in the same conversation as them, or now we're being chosen alongside them, which is great. At the heart of it all is a scalable, sustainable recruiting engine.