Linked in Talent Solutions

RMA Group Case Study



Founded in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1986, RMA has grown into a diversified group that works with governments, non-government organisations and private companies to deliver a wide range of essential products and solutions in developing and post-conflict markets. Its main areas of business encompass automotive solutions, heavy equipment, power generation and engineering services. The group also has a growing food business with fast-food franchises and airport restaurants in Southeast.

Business Challenge - Developing A More Proactive HR Function

Over the past six years, the RMA Group has been experiencing spectacular business growth with the opening of new markets and locations and the adding of new services and businesses to its portfolio. This has led to the company growing from a few hundred people a few years ago to about 5,000 today.

To keep pace with these changes, one of the things that RMA has had to do was to develop a more proactive Human Resource (HR) function. This led to the formation of a group HR department to provide centralised HR and recruitment resources for RMA's head office in Thailand as well as the smaller territories in which it operated. This was complemented by a local HR presence in some of the company's larger markets.

With RMA's rapid expansion, one of the key priorities for the HR Group has been recruitment. RMA needed people with very specific skillsets and experience who were prepared to work in developing and post-conflict markets, for example, places such as South Sudan, Liberia and Afghanistan.

Challenge

- Provide recruitment support for a fast-growing business
- Identify and hire candidates with very specific skillsets and mindset
- Enhance the company's employer branding

Solution

- LinkedIn Career Page
- LinkedIn Recruiter
- LinkedIn Job Slots

Why LinkedIn?

- Global outreach
- Allows for more targeted search and job advertisements
- Provides a platform for engaging prospects in a dialogue
- Helps build up employer branding

Results

- Managed to hire for 12-14 difficult-to-fill roles in the past 12 months
- Cost savings of between 50 per cent to 300 per cent per placement compared with agencies
- Increased brand recognition with 13-fold increase in the number of followers and a 36-fold increase in page views

In particular, it was looking for two groups of people - senior management who were able to move into these territories, set up operations quickly and develop the market, and technical specialists with experience in sectors such as automotive, energy or construction, and had the mindset to take on the role in the kind of territories where RMA operated.

Enabling Global Outreach in Talent Sourcing

As a company RMA, had a good network that it had been tapping into to recruit talent from relevant industry sectors. However, as Neil Russell, RMA's Group Manager for Talent and Resourcing pointed out, "With the growth of the company, we couldn't keep relying solely on our network. We realised that ultimately, we needed to get out there and source for talent more proactively beyond those people we knew."

Very often, RMA's target candidates would not be in the territory that the company was employing them for. "You could be finding a guy in Australia to work in Laos, or a Kenyan living in the United Kingdom to return to work in Kenya," said Russell. "We had to find a way to reach out to talent globally."

RMA also needed to strengthen its employer branding in the market. As Russell explained, "We needed to explain who we are and why we are an exciting place to work and develop a career."

While many industry-specific or geographically-specific job portals could help address some of these HR-related challenges, most of them tend to be fairly static web sites. "What we needed was something more interactive, which would allow us to put our message in front of the right people."

In May 2012, RMA brought LinkedIn into the picture. "What I saw in LinkedIn was the ability to reach out to candidates regardless of location, allowing us to present our message in a way that would pique the candidate's interest, and begin a dialogue with them," said Russell.

An Effective And Cost-Efficient Recruitment Platform

By using various search criteria or by engaging with certain groups on LinkedIn, RMA was able to focus on relevant industries and skillsets in its search. At the same time, LinkedIn allowed RMA to flag out opportunities across a wider group of people and let them pass these on to their own networks. "We were really surprised to find that in one instance, up to 150 people passed on our advertisement to other people on their networks."

Through these efforts, RMA was able to fill 12 to 14 roles over the past year. These have been the result of people responding directly to job openings advertised on LinkedIn, or the outcome of building relationships and engaging people through the social media platform. "What I saw in LinkedIn was the ability to reach out to candidates regardless of location, allowing us to present our message in a way that would pique the candidate's interest, and begin a dialogue with them."



Neil Russell Group Manager for Talent Resourcing RMA

Successful candidates included senior management professionals or very technical people, for example, a crash repair specialist with training qualifications to work on a project in Haiti. "Our requirements were so specific that I'm very happy with the number that we've managed to hire through LinkedIn," said Russell.

Another example, for a regional position based out of Bangkok, which also involved spending time in developing markets across Asia, RMA managed to hire someone from Australia who relocated his family to Thailand to take on the role. The company has also been successful in placing people into Afghanistan from various parts of the world.

The use of LinkedIn has also been cost-efficient as it was effective. "Hiring through LinkedIn is typically between 50 per cent and 300 per cent more cost effective than our previous channels. We are seeing a pretty straightforward return on investment there," said Russell.

Building Employer Branding

LinkedIn has also been helpful in positioning RMA as a brand. "With LinkedIn, what works is us being able to get our message out there and getting in contact with people," said Russell. "We want to be seen as an attractive place to work, but we want to be attractive to the right people. The responses we received via LinkedIn are generally what we have hoped for."

Since May 2012 the number of LinkedIn members now actively following RMA has grown from fewer than 500 to over 6,700. "The big positive for us is that we've managed to achieve some brand recognition out there now. People know who we are and our advertisements get flagged out to other people through referrals."

Views on the RMA Career Page have also increased from approximately 100 per month to over 3,600 over a period of 10 months. "The Career Page is still a work in progress for us. It's not simple enough to put up a Career Page and say 'This is it'," said Russell. "Our approach so far is that when we have people responding to us positively, we will establish a dialogue with them. We spend quite a bit of time talking to potential candidates and we use that as a filtering process."

"While filtering out the right people can still be a challenge, we are very comfortable with where we are with LinkedIn, knowing that we are getting our message to the right people."

