Sponsored Content helps Sage seize a moment for payroll software

New legislation requiring all employers to collect income tax from pay left French businesses facing a major administrative burden – and put pressure on their payroll systems. Sage turned this into a powerful opportunity for establishing thought leadership, building brand awareness, and accelerating its growth in the sector. Sponsored Content first raised awareness of the requirements, and then delivered a downloadable guide to help meet them. It prompted businesses to consider their payroll options, and generated leads at less than a fifth of the previous cost.

Challenge

- Raise awareness of the new withholding tax requirements for all French employers
- Provide support and reassurance for Sage's existing customers
- Prompt other businesses to consider their payroll options – and demonstrate Sage's support and credibility
- Build awareness for Sage's payroll solutions

Solution

- Sequenced Sponsored Content targeting HR and payroll functions within businesses of 200 employees or fewer
- Landing page with value-adding information about the legislation, to support existing customers and others
- Retargeting of engaged prospects with a downloadable compliance guide, and integrated LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms

Why LinkedIn?

- Strong performance of previous Sage campaigns on the platform
- Trusted professional content platform where businesses turn for advice
- Ability to segment audiences by function and business size, and retarget based on engagement

Results

- The campaign generated over 700,000 impressions in just six weeks
- Organic sharing multiplied its impact by 20%
- The number of leads generated exceeded the target by 4x
- Cost per lead (CPL) was less than a fifth of Sage's previous average CPL

Timely thought-leadership turned a challenging new payroll law into an opportunity to build Sage's brand, reinforce existing relationships and generate quality leads at a fraction of the previous cost.

Turning challenge into opportunity at scale

New legislation requiring all French employers to collect income tax by withholding it from their employees' pay represented a significant challenge for many businesses. Sage recognised it as a moment when support for its existing payroll customers would be crucial – but also as a valuable opportunity for driving growth and establishing a thought-leading position.

The ability to deliver sequenced content to a specific target audience on LinkedIn was the key to achieving this dual objective. *"We used learnings from previous LinkedIn campaigns to develop our approach,"* explains Sage's Media Manager, Mélanie Protard. *"We developed a brand-to-demand strategy with two layers that we activated at the same time. This way we could support existing customers and establish thought-leadership and awareness, while retargeting any prospects who engaged with lead-generation activity."*

Generating demand by adding value

The first layer of Sage's Sponsored Content strategy targeted HR and payroll professionals in businesses of 200 employees or fewer, with content to raise awareness about the new requirements and how it affected them. Sage then retargeted those who engaged with a downloadable compliance guide. Integrating LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms generated qualified leads from the organisations most affected by the new law, who were actively considering the suitability of their existing payroll solutions. *"This generated highly relevant leads while also providing great content for our sales teams to reach out to businesses using Sales Navigator,"* says Mélanie.

Targeting a timely moment of opportunity for thought leadership produced spectacular results. The campaign generated over 700,000 impressions with earned media from organic sharing increasing its reach by more than 20%. It then translated this engagement into 4x the number of leads targeted by Sage, at a cost per lead (CPL) that was less than a fifth of that achieved previously.

"The withholding tax campaign has been a huge success in terms of both brand awareness and lead generation. We reached and exceeded all of our objectives and demonstrated the value of paid social as a lead generation engine."

Mélanie Protard
Media Manager, Sage

LinkedIn