

Muck Rack pursues LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms with exceptional success



Location: New York, NY | No. of Employees: 51-200 |
Industry: Public Relations & Communications



“We’re reliably getting ‘warm’ leads on LinkedIn from key personas who are interested in our content. They’re the highest quality downloads we’re getting from a source that isn’t our own email marketing.”

Lindsay Sugarman
Senior Growth Marketing Manager, Muck Rack



Challenge

- Muck Rack was founded as “LinkedIn for journalists;” a free service for journalists to create a portfolio and showcase their work, and to provide info on what kinds of stories they’re looking for. Today, the platform is also a public relations management platform, helping PR professionals build relationships with journalists, send customized pitches, monitor news, and quantify their impact.
- As it grows and its platform evolves, Muck Rack needs to continue to foster engagement with both sides of the media. Their marketing team primarily focuses on attracting PR professionals to use their full PRM (public relations management) platform, where they can connect with journalists, monitor news, report on coverage, and collaborate with team members from one central hub.
- For years Muck Rack had grown mostly organically, via word of mouth, and through partnerships, but in 2020, it made its foray into LinkedIn Ads and paid strategy. The company chose LinkedIn not only because it offered direct access to a valuable professional audience, but because of the many robust marketing tools available. To attract more marketing qualified leads (MQLs) and sales qualified leads (SQLs), Muck Rack launched a series of paid lead-gen campaigns around high-value, data-driven content.



Solution

- To drive high-quality leads from a well-targeted audience, Muck Rack orchestrated several campaigns centered on high-value content, to run throughout the year. This included first-party surveys of PR professionals and journalists, longform ebooks, and more, gated behind LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms for a seamless user experience (from ad to download).
- “We kicked off with LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms, which are one of the smoothest experiences for folks on the platform,” says Lindsay Sugarman, Senior Growth Marketing Manager at Muck Rack. “Our team’s biggest challenge right now isn’t driving traffic—it’s converting the right visitors into leads and SQLs, so lead-gen forms were a no-brainer for us.”
- The company also spent time experimenting with different offers (case studies, webinars, events) and ad types (including video ads and website traffic static ads), as well as syncing its CRM audiences with LinkedIn’s targeting tools. This careful approach to maintaining ad relevance allowed the company to cut through the noise and speak directly to PR professionals in need of the tools Muck Rack offers.



Results

- The combination of precise targeting, high-value offers and LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms was a winner for Muck Rack. The company saw prolific engagement throughout the year, resulting in an increase in MQLs and SQLs, new customer deals and low cost per lead, culminating in exceptional ROI.
- In a stunning example of its success, Muck Rack saw results just one quarter into 2020. “In Q1, we launched new lead-gen campaigns to custom audiences for an ebook download,” says Lindsay. “We brought in 300 MQLs (high quality/marketing qualified leads) from the campaign and saw a 299% ROI from net new deals sourced by LinkedIn ads.”

The company grew its LinkedIn newsletter, [Muck Rack Weekly](#), to over

50K

followers in one year

In one year, LinkedIn Ads helped influence

55

new customer deals, at ~2,000% ROI

Advertise content that provides value to audiences

- Muck Rack identified LinkedIn as the best place to appeal to professionals who would get the most from its platform. In doing so, it positioned itself as an authority by offering high-value information and insights, indicative of what users would experience after partnering with the platform. This thought-leadership approach was an instant hit with PR professionals, who thrive on opportunities to level up their skills, and data to inform their strategies.
- “We’ve found that our audience is most interested in downloading longer-form content like ebooks and exclusive research, straight from LinkedIn’s Lead Gen Forms,” says Lindsay. Muck Rack saw strong engagement with its forms, empowering it to create similar content with value-driven messaging. “People on LinkedIn are really interested in getting data or some kind of analysis that feels valuable, sharable, and exclusive.”

Ad variability drives better leads and lower CPA

- While its high-value content was an enticing proposition in and of itself, Muck Rack also believes in split testing its creatives and messages. “I’m usually testing five to seven variations of creatives or copy within a lead gen campaign. It takes some amount of patience, but it’s almost always worth it,” says Lindsay. “As a result, I know what colors, copy, and positioning works, and we can inform future content based on the creatives resonating most.”
- The result isn’t just more clicks and more qualified leads; it’s also a lower cost per acquisition and higher ROI value from lead-gen campaigns. The company is transitioning to an account-based marketing strategy, which typically means higher CPC and CPA rates. In mastering its ad refinement tendencies now, Muck Rack is taking a proactive approach to cost control as it ups the ante on paid advertising.

LinkedIn lends itself to strong CRM integration

- The success of Muck Rack’s targeted lead-gen efforts stems from its well-maintained, thoroughly integrated CRM. The company uses Hubspot to not only track performance and report on ROI from LinkedIn, but to create custom audiences based on lifecycle stage and lead status that make their targeting laser-focused. Integration with LinkedIn represents marketing automation at its finest.
- “We build dynamic audiences based on the status of leads in our CRM, which helps us target exactly who we want to reach,” says Lindsay. “For almost all our campaigns, we use a base layer of prospect lists that dynamically update and sync with LinkedIn. We also layer title, function targeting and company size on top of custom audiences, and confirm these are working by looking at LinkedIn’s handy demographics tools.”



“To date, LinkedIn has been one of the most exciting channels to develop, optimize, and report on, since we can clearly quantify our success through our CRM, and target our audience so precisely.”

Lindsay Sugarman
Senior Growth Marketing Manager, Muck Rack