

IMA[®] optimizes its targeting efforts on LinkedIn with continuous analysis and refinement



Location: Montvale, New Jersey
No. of Employees: 251-500 | Industry: Accounting



“LinkedIn was really helpful with the job title targeting, the industry targeting, field of study—all those things help us make sure we’re honing in on the right audience.”

Thomas Verderber
Supervisor of Business Analytics, The Gate



Challenge

- The Institute of Management Accountants (IMA[®]) is a worldwide association of accountants and financial professionals that offers the CMA[®] (Certified Management Accountant) certification, an internationally recognized and highly respected professional credential that supports advancement to the highest levels in the field.
- As part of its overall goal to encourage more individuals to register for the certification exam, IMA sought to increase the number of signups for its email list, which provides information on how to qualify and prepare for the challenging exam. To help achieve those goals, IMA tapped **The Gate**, their agency of record for advertising.
- Immediately, **The Gate** sought to optimize its efforts and make every dollar of the budget count. “We want to make sure that we’re reaching the right people who will be interested to sign up and learn more about the CMA certification,” says Thomas Verderber, Supervisor of Business Analytics at **The Gate**.



Solution

- Because the CMA certification is known as a stepping-stone to high-level, higher-paying positions in accounting, IMA used several combinations of LinkedIn's custom targeting—job titles, accounting-related titles, and related fields of study. One targeting criteria included individuals in the accounting and finance field who had looked for jobs on the platform within the previous 30 days.
- “The mindset’s already there—it’s just a matter of picking that out, which we were able to do,” says Verderber. “What was especially great was how often it was updating. It wasn’t just anybody who just ever searched for a job.”
- As the campaign went on, the team was also able to identify and remove segments that showed less interest. “Job titles that didn’t seem to be clicking or engaging at all, we went ahead and just pulled those out,” says Verderber.

Results

- IMA saw a 513% increase in email signups compared to the year prior. LinkedIn also accounted for 41% of the total email signups (excluding paid search) in their most recent campaign.
- Due to the success of the email list campaign, IMA is considering moving additional budget to LinkedIn for their upcoming campaign. “We’re very happy with how things have been going and definitely look to continue with that,” says Verderber.

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Actionable insights on an ongoing basis

- The ability to continuously evaluate engagement and refine targeted segments on LinkedIn helped the team optimize its strategy. “On a monthly basis, we would dive through each of the segments and see what job function or job title wasn’t clicking and we would negatively target them,” says Verderber.
- Data showed fewer clicks and signups from accounting professionals further along in their careers. “People who are maybe in that upper bracket, upper-tier in their career, might not be looking to enhance it or might not feel like they need to,” says Verderber. “LinkedIn actually helped confirm our theory where we were seeing that anyone above a manager level wasn’t really clicking as much.”

The need for different approaches

- IMA’s strategy included targeting lookalikes and individuals who indicated they were Open to Education, but the initial results from those segments weren’t encouraging. However, the team recognized that the messaging and content might just need adjustment.
- “When we initially started, I believe all we used were statics,” says Verderber. “I would like to recommend trying that again with videos because that audience might be a little more upper-funnel. I definitely want to give that another shot because that would help expand our reach.”

Leveraging LinkedIn expertise

- IMA and The Gate worked closely with LinkedIn experts via regular meetings and updates throughout the process, which helped them structure their strategy and leverage all of the LinkedIn tools that were appropriate for their needs.
- “Having a good relationship with your reps—I think that’s a really big thing,” says Verderber. “Keeping the communication there, just so you are aware of all your options.”



“We definitely met our goals this year... not only just doing better from an overall standpoint but being more efficient than the years prior.”

Thomas Verderber
Supervisor of Business Analytics, The Gate