



COMARCH

How LinkedIn filled the Comarch business pipeline two years ahead of schedule

Using Sponsored Content and Sponsored InMail for demand generation transformed awareness, helped close major deals, and established the IT solutions business as a trusted partner to the retail and travel sectors in France.

Comarch first launched in France 12 years ago. However, the IT solutions provider had struggled to build awareness of its brand - and its value as a digital transformation partner. **Switching demand generation activity to LinkedIn transformed the profile of the business and filled its pipeline with unexpected speed.** Chief Marketing Officer Matthieu Lacroix estimates that marketing on LinkedIn has cut two years from the time needed to build a sustainable business in France.

Le retail devient hybride, qu'en pensent et qu'en attendent les Français ?
<http://bit.ly/2vdeEN4-link>

Chaussures & Vêtements

62%
Des Français achètent autant en magasin que sur internet

Bright colours, attractive imagery and powerful statistics proved the most engaging combination for Comarch Sponsored Content

The Challenge:

- Generate quality leads at scale
- Reduce cost per lead (CPL)
- Build awareness and reputation as an expert IT partner
- Build sales pipelines for the retail and travel/hospitality sectors

The Solution:

- Key audience segments identified through LinkedIn data
- Premium research-led content promoted through Sponsored Content and Sponsored InMail
- Close integration with sales team for follow-up of contacts

Why LinkedIn?

- Unique reach amongst a high-quality business audience
- Range of advertising formats for generating and nurturing demand
- Quality of LinkedIn profile data and targeting

Results:

- Nielsen research showed significant increase in brand awareness and perceptions
- LinkedIn campaigns generated over 600 high-value leads at a dramatically reduced cost per lead (CPL)
- Despite the long sales cycle, more than five major deals have already been closed as a result of leads generated through LinkedIn
- LinkedIn leads have provided Comarch sales teams with an extensive network of contacts across retail and travel/hospitality businesses

Leveraging timely, relevant insights to drive demand

Growth for the Comarch business in France had been restricted by a lack of brand recognition. "Our business has long experience helping clients unlock growth and profitability through digital innovation," explains Chief Marketing Officer Matthieu Lacroix. "However, we're a Polish company and we hadn't been able to raise awareness levels and recognition of that expertise within France. Partly as a result, it was costing us a lot to generate leads - and lead quality was not particularly good."

Matthieu knew that **he needed a platform and a strategy that could create the relevant awareness that Comarch needed, while still driving the leads required to establish a successful business.** That's when he reached out to LinkedIn. "It was all about the quality," he says. "We had tested a lot of different options and LinkedIn was the only way to generate the relevant, quality leads that our business needed at an attractive CPL. The depth of the data and the fact that it's up-to-date makes it so much easier to target effectively."

Working with the LinkedIn account team, Matthieu developed a strategy that would generate leads while also establishing credibility and expertise. "It wasn't just about awareness," he says. "We needed to be seen as experts with valuable knowledge to share: the type of company that a business would want to work with for ten years or more."

Comarch had created White Papers to use in lead generation in the past, but Matthieu and the team now took a more value-driven and audience-centric approach. "We commissioned research to help retail businesses understand their customers' expectations, and which therefore represented valuable insight for them," explains Matthieu. "But we didn't just produce a research report - we broke out the most impactful statistics to use in our Sponsored Content on LinkedIn and drive impact and awareness as well as leads. We had constraints on our budget, but by releasing research at the most relevant times of year for our target businesses, we could generate a lot more impact."

Combining touchpoints for impact throughout the funnel

Comarch offers a broad range of solutions in retail, travel, hospitality and other sectors - and so the ability to segment the LinkedIn audience and deliver personalised campaigns



Comarch invested in original research that provided valuable insights on customer expectations of digital retail

for different groups was crucial. Matthieu worked with Comarch's LinkedIn account team to identify these key segments and test different combinations of parameters for targeting them. "It was straightforward to test the effectiveness of different targeting approaches, and then switch investment to those that performed most strongly," he says.

Testing different targeting approaches helped to manage Comarch's cost per lead (CPL), as did learning from the effectiveness of different creative styles. Marrying impactful statistics with attractive imagery and bright colours proved by far the most effective combination - and so the team invested in more content of this style and switched away from sombre backgrounds and smaller fonts.

Matthieu rates the combination of Sponsored Content and Sponsored InMail as critical to Comarch's success in balancing awareness and lead generation. "Sponsored InMail was our most effective format for driving leads," he says. "But we could also see the engagement that we were generating through Sponsored Content - and how this was building the relevant awareness of our business that made those leads valuable."

The importance of integrating different touchpoints wasn't restricted to advertising on LinkedIn - it also applied to how Matthieu's marketing team worked with the sales department. "You can do the best advertising campaign, but if there's no co-ordinated follow-up action it's likely to be a waste of time," he says. **Comarch's 10-strong sales team used LinkedIn Sales Navigator and other sales platforms to identify key influencers within accounts, track their engagement with the campaign, and follow up to start conversations.**

"The big change for our business has been how we've built our sales networks," stresses Matthieu. "We not only have a sustainable business pipeline for both our retail and travel business units, but I'm now confident that our contact network means we're discovering all of the relevant opportunities for our business. We've got a long sales cycle that can easily last nine months, but despite that we've already closed between five and ten deals as a result of engagement that began with our LinkedIn campaign. We are between two and three years ahead of where we would have been without it."

"In the past, we had struggled to balance the need to generate leads with the need to build awareness and recognition – but our activity on LinkedIn naturally achieved both. We're now two to three years ahead of where we would have been without marketing on LinkedIn – and we're in a position to build on that momentum with LinkedIn video campaigns to drive even stronger awareness of our brand and expertise."



Matthieu Lacroix
Chief Marketing Officer
Comarch France