

Converting thought leadership into revenue



Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Headquarters: Palo Alto, California, USA | No. of Employees: 10,000+

Industry: Information Technology & Services



"At HPE, we're ushering in a new era: the age of insight, where we make all your data work for you, wherever it lives. This era will lead to services and products we can't yet imagine, and it will generate discoveries that elevate the greater well-being of every human on this planet."

Antonio Neri

President & Chief Executive Officer, Hewlett Packard Enterprise

HPE is a global, edge-to-cloud, Platform-as-a-Service company, built to transform businesses. To expand awareness and help more businesses understand how HPE can accelerate their growth, the brand designed a three-phased, online-to-offline marketing campaign with LinkedIn leading the charge.

The campaign that HPE conceptualised was branded 'The CXO Leadership Exchange'. It was supported by Intel, with the Economist Corporate Network (ECN), International Data Corporation (IDC) and INSEAD serving as knowledge partners.

The CXO Leadership Exchange

Phase 1
Feb 2019

CXO content marketing on LinkedIn

Using the LinkedIn presence of its APAC executive leadership, HPE drove thought leadership to build strong, meaningful connections with acquisition accounts.

Phase 2
May 2019

CXO roundtable series

From the new relationships formed, a total of 250 CXOs were identified and invited to a series of forums hosted by ECN and IDC in nine Asia Pacific cities to discuss digital transformation.

Phase 3
Nov 2019

CXO Leadership Exchange Programme

A select group of 40 CXOs joined a premier three-day programme to connect with peers, reflect on their organisation's digital journey, and exchange perspectives on digital transformation.



Results

+399

net-new relationships from target accounts

21%

increase in the number of mentions for the HPE brand

Exceeded estimated engagement by

250%

through an integrated organic + paid media strategy

500%

increase in LinkedIn Content Marketing Score and an average 28-point increase in Social Selling Index



The content connection

In the IT space, there is a sea of sameness. HPE sought to break through with an innovative CXO marketing campaign that would help open doors with new customers and increase sales from enterprises that have low Share of Wallet with the company. The objective was to create awareness of HPE's new solutions and generate annuity revenue from large enterprise accounts.

Kishore Modak, HPE's General Manager of Marketing for Asia Pacific and Japan, explains, "Our technology sales has traditionally focused on bottom-funnel tactics with limited success. So, this time, we decided to lead with content. As this was a one-of-a-kind content-driven thought leadership campaign, it was essential that we chose the right platform. LinkedIn was a natural choice because it promises a high-quality, brand-safe environment that our C-level target audience already uses and trusts."

"The results we got from LinkedIn far exceeded our expectations. Beyond the fantastic numbers, we gained insights into the kind of experiences that organisations are looking to create for their customers. We have been able to kickstart conversations with many key contacts that we are looking to sustain in the long run. These relationships are invaluable from a business perspective."

Kishore Modak

General Manager of Marketing, Asia Pacific and Japan,
Hewlett Packard Enterprise

This is how HPE did it:

- **Targeting with precision** – Leveraging LinkedIn's unique targeting capabilities, HPE created a custom audience of approximately 1,200 leaders from 450 priority accounts, focusing on CXOs and key decision-makers it had previously been unable to connect with.
- **Building a strong profile** – The LinkedIn profiles of the 30 HPE executives who participated in the campaign were refined to reinforce their positioning as thought leaders in their respective domains.
- **Personalising content** – Each HPE thought leader focused on engaging a specific segment of the target audience by sharing insights based on their area of expertise. Collectively, they published close to 500 posts and articles on LinkedIn.
- **Amplifying reach** – While HPE thought leaders focused on creating a compelling organic presence, the marketing team used paid media to amplify their efforts. LinkedIn's Matched Audience and Lookalike Audience features were deployed to grow the target list to 2,800 accounts. HPE then ran over 100 different Sponsored Content campaigns to serve relevant content to different target segments across Asia Pacific. This enabled HPE to have valuable interactions with 215,000 unique professionals, representing a remarkable 20% increase in Share of Voice.
- **Forming relationships** – Building on the content engagement, HPE thought leaders sent out connection requests to targeted decision-makers. Together, they made 399 new connections, effectively engaging leaders from 42% of HPE's target accounts.

The brand's success on LinkedIn not only set the stage for deeper relationship-building in the next two phases of the CXO Leadership Exchange, but also created a solid foundation that HPE can continue nurturing. Reflecting on the outcomes, Kishore said, "This entire campaign was built on our conviction that strengthening our leaders' professional network within our most strategic must-win accounts would drive more long-term business for the organisation. We are delighted that our leaders agreed with us (their social selling index is through the roof!) and that the results from LinkedIn support our claim. This was our first thought leadership campaign on LinkedIn but it's safe to say that it won't be our last."