

# Microsoft takes ABM to the next level on LinkedIn

Combining tailored thought leadership with bespoke persona-based targeting generated 863 leads from Microsoft's target accounts at a CPL 60% below benchmark





Microsoft has a mission to empower people and organisations to do more, providing not just technology but innovative solutions for business. A tailored demand-generation campaign took its Account-Based Marketing (ABM) to the next level on LinkedIn, showcasing the difference Microsoft could make across lines of business. The campaign dramatically increased both Share of Voice (SOV) and account penetration, generating 863 leads at a cost per lead (CPL) 60% below benchmark. This included engaging senior Business Decision-Makers at 53 Enterprise-level accounts, 30% of whom had not engaged previously.

### Why LinkedIn?

- · Granular targeting capabilities
- Proven platform for Microsoft's ABM programme
- · Visibility into lead quality and relevance

### The Challenge

- Grow Microsoft's penetration of its 2,000 target accounts by generating net new contacts and leads
- Increase awareness of Microsoft's broader innovation offer
- Reach beyond the IT department to engage senior decision-makers responsible for different lines of business
- Increase Microsoft's SOV

#### Solution

- Sponsored Content promoting eBooks on the role of digital and AI in healthcare, retail and banking
- Integrated LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms
- Parallel Sponsored Content exploring skills development for enterprise-level businesses
- Persona-based targeting approach using bespoke combinations of job titles, job functions and skills

#### Results

- The campaign generated 863 new leads from Microsoft's target account list, with 43% of these director level or above
- Senior Business Decision-Makers at 53
   Enterprise-level accounts engaged with the campaign, with 30% doing so for the first time
- The cost per lead (CPL) was 60% below the UK tech benchmark
- Microsoft's penetration of key accounts grew 26% quarter-on-quarter
- SOV increased from 30% to 40%
- The click-through rate (CTR) for LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms was 32% above benchmark with completion rate 68% above benchmark



# Tailored content to empower organisations

For Microsoft, the move from awareness to demand generation aligned with its mission to help people and organisations achieve more. "We were trying to showcase the practical aspect of how we can help," explains Alissa Warne, Digital Marketing Manager for Microsoft UK. "We wanted to demonstrate our understanding of what they're going through and what their priorities are."

Microsoft developed two parallel Sponsored Content tracks that demonstrated this understanding of target accounts in different ways. The team created in-depth eBooks for key sectors, exploring the 10 most exciting AI applications in healthcare, how digital is transforming retail, and how financial services can leverage the power of AI. At the same time, it created Sponsored Content for enterprise-level businesses, exploring key emerging skills. "This was the first time we had used LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms within an ABM campaign," says Alissa. "It was an opportunity to generate net new leads for our global engagement programme that we could then nurture."

## Reaching the other 'rooms in the house'

Microsoft recognised that influencing the way that organisations use IT has to involve engaging stakeholders beyond the IT department itself. Its ABM programme is designed to surface innovation needs across lines of business. "Historically, our organisation has had a relationship with IT decision-makers," says Robin Taylor, Digital Marketing Lead at Microsoft UK. "However, the role of line-of-business leaders in the purchasing decision is of increasing importance – it is critical that we reach and engage all of the other 'rooms of the house' and the broader buying committee."

LinkedIn data proved the key to unlocking these other rooms. Alissa worked with the LinkedIn team to develop custom personas that could be reached through targeting by different combinations of job title, job function and skills. "We could reach specific job titles like business development managers but also use skills to reach all relevant people in an area like cybersecurity," she explains. "We could deliver the most relevant content by layering in industry targeting, which experience has shown us works really well on LinkedIn."

This combination of granular targeting and tailored content delivered exactly the type of net new contacts that Microsoft was looking for. The LinkedIn campaign increased the penetration of accounts by 26% quarter-on-quarter while growing SOV from 30% to 40%. It engaged senior Business Decision-Makers at 53 Enterprise-level accounts, almost a third of whom (30%) had not engaged with previous Microsoft campaigns.

In all, the campaign delivered 863 new leads across the target account list at a cost per lead (CPL) 60% below benchmark for the UK tech sector. And those new leads showed Microsoft to be engaging where it mattered in those other rooms of the house: 43% were in roles at director level or above.





"This campaign was a success not just because of the number of leads we generated but because we were able to generate those leads at a senior level and reach beyond the IT department. We've succeeded in increasing our account penetration and we're now planning to run these demand generation ABM campaigns on a quarterly basis. LinkedIn is an ideal fit with our global engagement programme because of our ability to deliver in-depth, tailored content that can engage and nurture across different lines of business."

**Robin Taylor** 

Digital Marketing Lead, Microsoft UK

