



## How Handle Recruitment used LinkedIn data to remove geographical barriers, identify new talent pools, increase engagement, and remain personable during a pandemic.

### Success story

Historically, people have assumed that when someone is looking for a new job, all they care about is reducing their commute, getting paid more, or desire a more high-profile position.

A recent Great Brands Survey by Handle Recruitment shared that top talent wants to work with ethical brands, work in a business with a strong diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) strategy, and to have shared values with leadership. But that's not all. Skilled professionals are also seeking a better work/life balance, more pay, a reduced commute, and hybrid working. Great candidates want the right job and not just a job.

Handle Recruitment specialises in hiring top talent for companies within the creative industries, such as music, media, TV, and entertainment. "We work with great brands that candidates want to work with," explained Richard Turrell, Director of Marketing at Handle Recruitment. "Our business is focused on quality – quality of experience and quality of service. That's client experience, candidate experience, and colleague experience, it is what sets us apart from other recruitment companies. It's important that everyone has access to the tools they need to achieve their desired outcomes and stand out, especially when the demand for talent is incredibly high."



## Challenge

### Building relationships in a challenging market

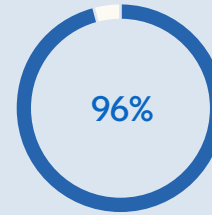
Handle Recruitment has eight divisions – legal, sales, HR, finance, marketing, technology, office support and design – all tied together by the industries they support. Each team connects and engages with their audience in a different way and each division has different requirements, and different strategic objectives.

For example, one division could be candidate focused, another could be client focused, and another could be entering a period of growth and hiring. This means the business must be flexible and adaptable. So, when the pandemic hit, the London-based organisation had to find a way to connect and maintain strong relationships with all stakeholders – clients, candidates, and colleagues. It had to maintain its personal approach whilst navigating a new recruitment landscape, which included fewer face-to-face meetings.

Gill Bell, Executive Director at Handle Recruitment, said: “We were operating at a time where everyone – agencies and in-house talent teams – were struggling to connect and engage meaningfully with talent. We opted to use LinkedIn to build more sophisticated relationships, using the platform in a more considered way than your average recruitment or in-house team.”

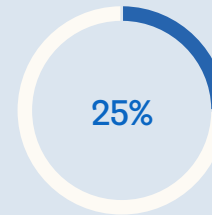
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## Results



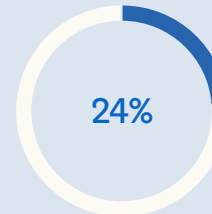
### LinkedIn Recruiter InMails

Increased accepted InMails by 96% year on year



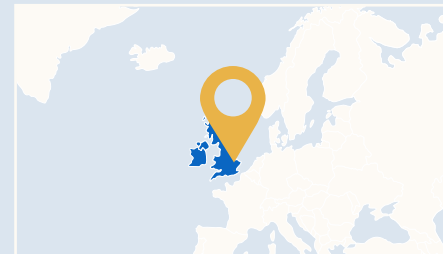
### LinkedIn Job applications

Increased job applications by 25% year on year



### LinkedIn Career Page followers

Increased company followers by 24% year on year



## Solution

### Using tools to develop quality relationships

LinkedIn helped Handle to prioritise quality and support their consultants. The platform helped Handle to achieve its key aim – to make people in the workplace happy and productive by giving them the tools they need to do their jobs effectively.

“Over many years our relationship with LinkedIn has been organic,” Emma Dadswell, Business Operations Director commented. “But in early 2020 we made the decision to become an Enterprise customer. This commitment means everyone has access to a LinkedIn Recruiter licence, everyone has access to InMails, everyone has access to Job Slots, and everyone has access to Talent Insights. Our priority is to ensure that we provide the tools an individual needs to fulfil their potential.”

Handle’s investment was a big commitment. Richard added: “We are a unique business – we do not have traditional on-desk recruitment KPIs, and our key metric is whether our people are happy and productive. We focus on that, confident that commercial success follows and with 43 years of profit we are confident that it is the right approach!”

According to Gill, traditional KPIs cause some recruitment companies to focus on numbers rather than quality. She explained: “If people work solely to KPIs, there’s a risk that they become mechanical, particularly when you operate within a market like the one we are operating in now.”

Handle Recruitment’s divisions connect and engage with each of their audiences in a different way. Gill said: “There are many ways which we use LinkedIn to interact, engage, and connect with our audiences – candidates, clients, and colleagues – with hugely positive results.”

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**Gill Bell**

Executive Director at  
Handle Recruitment

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## Using data to refine strategy and increase engagement

Emma and Richard describe the support as “incredible” and “fantastic”. “The commitment we have given LinkedIn is reciprocated,” Emma added. “Client services organise regular sessions to make sure that we can adopt new ways of working as the tools evolve. LinkedIn will always suggest approaches and techniques based on our recruiters’ needs and provide bespoke support.”

For example, LinkedIn recently supported Handle Recruitment with an advertising campaign that increased awareness of how they help people find new roles at great brands. Richard continued: “Working closely with the LinkedIn marketing solutions team, we ran a considerable media spend ad campaign. It was an incredible experience and generated great results. By working in partnership, we were able to refine what we were doing on a regular basis by focusing on the opportunities we identified.”

LinkedIn data played a key role. The data fed into Handle’s activity and helped Handle to create targeted campaigns, justifying ad spend at the same time.

Richard described how Handle Recruitment has used LinkedIn to great advantage. “We were operating in a ‘candidate short’ period of time. LinkedIn advertising spend is often earmarked for B2B activity but we decided to focus on candidate attraction to raise our awareness with potential candidates to great effect. Instead of completing forms we wanted people to speak to our consultants, so we promoted them as specialists in the niche roles they already support. We also used LinkedIn to further engage our HR community. We have a Community Manager that looks after HR, talent, and culture professionals and provides exclusive access to interview content, insight, and events - we have also recently launched a mentoring framework. We used the LinkedIn campaign to engage an extra 4,000 people that joined this community.”

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**Richard Turrell**

Director of Marketing at  
Handle Recruitment

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## Opening up access to new talent pools

Thanks to LinkedIn's partnership approach, Handle Recruitment was able to tweak the ad campaign. Results – such as click through rate – were 3X the industry benchmark.

Gill continued: “We’re constantly exploring different ways of making strong connections, rather than going down a well-trodden path that simply fires out job adverts to the same destinations.”

Gill explained that Brexit and the pandemic has changed the talent landscape in the UK. Talented professionals have had time to reflect. As a result, there has been a shift in where talent pools are located.

“When the pandemic hit, lots of clients pressed pause on recruitment activity. When they hit play, everyone started hiring at the same time. That had an enormous impact on the recruitment market.”

“As much as the pandemic reduced our opportunities to physically connect with our audiences and meet face-to-face, it has also reduced geographical boundaries as more of our clients are now open to remote and hybrid working. We’re no longer restricted to sourcing talent from the London area and LinkedIn enables us to connect with so many people.”

Emma concluded: “LinkedIn Talent Insights provides invaluable data-led knowledge allowing us to locate hidden talent pools and identify potential opportunities. LinkedIn empowers our consultants, as it enables them to interact with candidates and clients and build relationships by using this knowledge. Talent Insights has been important. Recruitment can often be done on instinct but LinkedIn tools generate genuine insight and which supports our decision making.

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**Emma Dadswell**

Business Operations Director  
at Handle Recruitment

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