

DFS Case Study

Conquering talent brand to attract talent



As the world's leading luxury travel retailer, DFS offers products across four pillars of luxury, ranging from fashion and accessories to beauty and fragrances, watches and jewelry and wines, spirits and tobacco. DFS was established in Hong Kong in 1960, and since then has built on its promise of being "The World Traveler's Preferred Destination for Luxury Shopping." Currently, DFS employs 9,500 people across 420 locations, predominantly in Asia, including Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, India, Indonesia and others.

Business Challenges

As a well-known retailer which boasts a global network, DFS was facing challenges within the recruitment arena. DFS operate with a regional framework, however the business lacked a consolidated source for candidates. Additionally, brand recognition was weak. In the eyes of candidates, DFS was seen as retailer, and candidates were more attracted to work for a brand.

To compete with other luxury brands in the market, two years ago, DFS turned to LinkedIn to improve brand awareness, amplifying its story as a luxury department store brand, and optimize the hiring process. "It would be difficult for our brand to stand along as a retailer without a strong employment brand and naturally, we wanted the best talent we could find in the marketplace, we wanted to be attractive to great talent and deliver on the promise when we recruit new talent," said Mark Sullivan, Global Vice President Human Resources at DFS Group Ltd.

Challenge

- Attempting to recruit without a consolidated source for candidates
- Lack of company recognition both in Asia and globally
- Difficulty in communicating the company's brand to employees and potential candidates

Solution

- LinkedIn Career Page
- Work With Us

Why LinkedIn?

- Optimize recruitment process with access to a global network
- Garner international brand awareness and assist in turning the company into a Talent Brand

Results

- Talent Brand Index grew from 8% to over 22%, in comparison with peers from lowest to second best
- Company recognition leading to potential employees actively seeking DFS placements
- A consolidated source for candidates on an international scale
- 20% growth in job applications

Streamline Branding

Executives at DFS experienced a paradigm shift in their thought process and approach. DFS shifted from local, regional thinking to a greater global mindset, by implementing a streamlined branding approach that reflected the company and its long standing history. "At the end of the day, we are a luxury retailer. We represent 700 brands globally, majority being luxury brands," said Mr Sullivan.

Effectively Build a Strong Talent Brand to Attract International Talent

Working hand in hand with LinkedIn, DFS established a strong talent brand, evident in the heightened regional company recognition, increase in Talent Brand Index and the growth in followers and engagement rate on LinkedIn.

Since adopting a LinkedIn Career Page, DFS introduced *Work With Us* campaigns with the objective of engaging followers. These campaigns led to great success, boosting the number of followers by three times.

DFS also experienced a 20% growth in job applications compared to the year before. A job opportunity on *Work With Us* caught the attention of a senior individual, who actively reached out to DFS and was employed for a position abroad which had previously been very difficult to fill. This was a true indication of the public's recognition of DFS as a brand, post the implementation of LinkedIn Talent Solutions. In addition to the notable growth in numbers, DFS achieved quality engagement rates with a 2-3% engagement rate on updates, approximately three times greater than the results from an average marketing campaign.

DFS also successfully raised its Talent Brand Index, particularly in comparison to its peers. The notion of a Talent Brand is defined as the highly social, totally public version of an employer brand incorporating what talent thinks, feels, and shares about your company as a place to work. LinkedIn's Talent Brand Index measures the strength of a company's talent brand and benchmarks it against peers. It allows the company to gain a better understanding of how professionals view the brand.

DFS significantly increased its Talent Brand Index against its peers, shooting from the lowest at 8% to over 22%, placing DFS in second place within its category. DFS' Talent Brand engagement also saw impressive growth; 83% of talent viewing DFS pages, following, or viewing jobs are interested in DFS as an employer.

"We are proud that potential talent now know about DFS and the prestige factor that our current employees cherish, a vast shift to our days prior to partnering with LinkedIn."



Mr Mark Sullivan

Global Vice President Human Resources
DFS Group Ltd

Driving Company Engagement From Within

To fully realize the benefits of LinkedIn, DFS's strategy is to foster its employee's ongoing interest and usage of LinkedIn through internal 'lunch-and-learn' programs. DFS noted that once the employees were familiar with the platform, they were willing to embrace and fully engage with all of its offerings. An indication of the internal support of LinkedIn is noted through the DFS corporate page on LinkedIn, which has garnered almost 2,000 employees.

This year, DFS has switched the focus from employer branding to recruiters, implementing further education and ongoing employee engagement to support the shift in direction. DFS hosts team-based competitions for recruiters to incentivize them, ultimately leading to increased usage, usability and utilization within the company.

Extending the Reach to Overseas Talent

DFS will shortly open its doors in Europe and with this an extensive recruitment process has begun. Due to recruitment programs on LinkedIn, DFS has had the opportunity to connect with potential candidates at recruitment fairs at key universities. The company states that there will be a great opportunity to work closely with business schools due to the initial interest and connections through LinkedIn in Europe.

Over the past two years, LinkedIn has assisted DFS in creating its very credible and outstanding Talent Brand. At the end of the day, DFS strives to engage the best employees they can find in the marketplace, DFS aims to be attractive to great talent and deliver on the promise DFS makes when they recruit any candidate. "We are proud that potential talent now know about DFS and the prestige factor that our current employees cherish, a vast shift to our days prior to partnering with LinkedIn," said Mr Sullivan.