Perfect Fit: A Communications Strategy for KPMG Recruiting
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NEED/OPPORTUNITY / KPMG is a knowledge-intensive, people-based business that operates in the highly competitive Canadian professional services market. To meet client demand and drive business results, KPMG needs to attract the best and brightest employees from an increasingly limited talent pool. Forecasts show that staffing will only become more challenging in the future. Over the past five years, KPMG has faced an average annual attrition rate of 15 percent. This number promises to increase as close to 15 percent of KPMG’s workforce and 20 percent of its partner group are poised to retire in the next 10 years. In addition, external factors such as the demographic changes in Canada are resulting in a shrinking labor market and a decline in membership of the Canadian Chartered Accountant (CA) profession; thus, recruiting is a key business priority for KPMG.

A major source of new hires for the firm is Canadian universities. Representing over 50 percent of new hires in 2007, these 400 recruits are central to KPMG’s business model and to how the firm responds to its clients. Put simply, KPMG cannot function as a business without its college campus recruits.

Competition for high-performing students has always been fierce among public accounting firms, who offer virtually identical work experiences and compensation packages. Traditionally, these firms were the only options for students looking to earn a CA designation. However, in 2007 the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants radically expanded the rules regarding who could train future CAs. With these new rules, accounting students could now choose to gain the experience they needed for their CA outside of the traditional public accounting firms. This meant that KPMG had to work even harder to recruit an audience already overwhelmed with recruiting brochures and job offers.

To help the firm reach its audience and drive recruitment, the KPMG communications team needed to create a campaign that spoke to students on their level, addressed topics of interest and used media that appealed to their demographic. Since the recruiters had frontline access to the students, it was critical to the success of the campaign that the campus recruiters were in full support of all of the components.
INTENDED AUDIENCE(S)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>BACKGROUND RESEARCH CONDUCTED</th>
<th>DESIRED OUTCOME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary audience:</td>
<td>Canadian university students</td>
<td>Campus Recruiting Focus Group Findings 2005</td>
<td>Potential campus recruits apply to KPMG based on a positive impression of the firm and the campus recruiting campaign.</td>
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<td>Potential campus</td>
<td>Majority enrolled in business programs</td>
<td>Campus Recruiting Focus Group National Findings 2006</td>
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<td>recruits</td>
<td>Generation Y with an average age of 21</td>
<td>National Campus Recruiting Overview 2007</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People and culture are the key factors when selecting an employer</td>
<td>Desktop research, including published articles and studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Want a “friendly work environment” and “good people to work with”</td>
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<td>Value work-life balance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Want to be viewed as individuals</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Secondary audience:</td>
<td>Primary point of contact for students</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Support the campus recruiting campaign by delivering it consistently across Canada.</td>
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<td>Campus recruiters</td>
<td>Decentralized group from 33 different offices</td>
<td>Informal feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strong understanding of KPMG’s practice areas</td>
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<td>Confusion around branding and messaging</td>
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<td>Want to be consulted on all recruiting issues</td>
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<td>Often skeptical of national initiatives</td>
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<td>Desire for creativity</td>
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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES / The overall goal of the Perfect Fit Campus Recruiting Campaign was to help the firm attract top talent.

Campus recruiting business objectives:
- Target: 5,500 unique applications
- Target: campus hire acceptance rate of 75 percent

The campaign objective was to have potential campus recruits apply to KPMG based on a positive impression of the firm and the campus recruiting campaign.
- Target: Over 75 percent of recruits respond positively to the campaign.
- Target: Increase visits to campus recruiting web site by 10 percent.
The campus recruiting team campaign objective was to engage campus recruiters and achieve support for the campaign.

- Target: 60 percent of recruiters report personally liking major components of the campaign.
- Target: 60 percent of recruiters feel the campaign contributes positively to recruitment on campus.
- Target: 100 percent of recruiters participate in the recruiter launch event.

**SOLUTION OVERVIEW**

In order to meet these goals and objectives, the communication team produced a campaign with multiple components designed to resonate with its target audiences—potential campus recruits and campus recruiters. Research has shown that work-life balance, a friendly work culture and respect for individuality are key elements in appealing to potential recruits. Therefore, the campaign centered on the key message that KPMG is a “Perfect Fit” for recruits, meaning that KPMG is a firm that fits with your life both at work and at a home.

**FIT MAGAZINE**

The cornerstone of the campaign was *FIT Magazine*, a glossy lifestyle magazine that integrated students’ professional and personal interests in an entertaining and informative manner. Designed to appeal to recruits’ desire to be viewed as individuals and achieve balance in their lives, story topics ranged from how to shrink your eco-footprint to the travel diary of an international secondee in Australia. The high-impact, colorful layouts and conversational tone were a dramatic departure from KPMG’s traditional collateral, and helped KPMG cut through the clutter and distinguish itself from the competition.

**SLIP-SHEETS**

In order to meet the request from both target audiences for local content, the communication team created customized print-on-demand slip-sheets, which included 21 local profiles featuring information on KPMG offices across Canada.

**CAMPUS RECRUITING WEB SITE**

The campus recruiting web site provided information about KPMG’s programs, including programs designed to help employees achieve a balance between work and life. A key element of the 2008 campaign was the inclusion of video galleries on the site, which featured people from across the country sharing their personal stories about life at KPMG. Much like *FIT Magazine*, the content of the videos was balanced between personal and professional life.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

To target the Generation Y audience, the campaign included a KPMG YouTube channel, which featured videos that gave students a real-life look at KPMG’s people, programs and culture. The social media program was also designed to get recruiters actively involved in creating content for the national campaign. They were provided access to three Flip Video cameras, and the communication team created a customized YouTube guide with advice on how to create content for the channel, literally placing recruiters in the director’s chair.
ON-CAMPUS PRESENTATION
A new on-campus presentation was created for recruiters to use at all KPMG information sessions. While the outline of the presentation was set, recruiters were able to customize the information for their local market. Notes were included with the slide deck; however, the presentation was not scripted in order to allow recruiters to be creative in their presentation style. In order to ensure messages were consistent across the country, the section describing “What is the Perfect Fit?” could not be customized. The presentation was 75 percent shorter than in previous years to allow for what the students wanted, which was more time to network with recruiters.

RECRUITER LAUNCH
A virtual campaign launch was held for recruiters in August to build enthusiasm and ensure that everyone was familiar with all elements of the campaign before heading out to campuses. The launch presentation walked recruiters through the unconventional FIT Magazine, the updated web site, the streamlined on-campus presentation and the new YouTube channel. Discussion was held about what the Perfect Fit meant and how to convey this message to students. Recruiters were encouraged to ask questions and share ideas.

CONCLUSION
Each element of the Perfect Fit campus recruiting campaign was designed to give students a sense of KPMG’s people, programs and culture, and to reinforce the message that KPMG is the Perfect Fit for recruits. In order to appeal to a media-savvy Generation Y audience, new and creative solutions were employed, including a lifestyle magazine, a YouTube channel and videos on the KPMG web site. The communication team designed, led and executed each element of the campaign.

During the development phase of the project, the communication team engaged recruiters by asking for their feedback on people to interview for the magazine, the YouTube channel and the web site video project; ways to improve the on-campus presentation; and how to customize slip-sheets for their local markets. These consultations allowed recruiters to be part of the creative process and provided opportunities for the communication team to clarify how each part of the campaign reinforces the overall key message of Perfect Fit.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES / TIME LINE
The campaign was created on a tight time frame. Discussions began in February 2008, and the project was delivered on 1 September 2008.

BUDGET
Based on the cost of similar campaigns created by other KPMG member firms, which totalled over CDN$150,000 (excluding printing), the communication team was approved for a total budget of CDN$100,000. By minimizing the use of external suppliers and leveraging in-house talent, including internal graphic designers, the communication team was able to keep costs low and come in under budget at CDN$87,003.28.
CHALLENGES
The communication team overcame several challenges throughout the course of the project, including:

- Internal resistance from recruiters who were skeptical about national initiatives and not always clear on the Perfect Fit’s key message. The communication team addressed this challenge by engaging recruiters in each element of the campaign and delivering the comprehensive recruiter launch.

- The design and content of FIT Magazine had to balance the need for a new high-impact format that would appeal to Generation Y, with a requirement to meet KPMG brand guidelines. The communication team consulted the KPMG’s creative services and brand & regulatory compliance teams in order to develop materials that met both objectives.

- A requirement to produce materials in English and French added complexity to the project. To ensure that both English and French campaigns launched at the same time, the communication team consulted with the translation group early in the process, kept them updated on the project status and delivered final copy for translation months before the deadline for the campaign launch.

- KPMG faces a great deal of geographical diversity with 33 offices across the country. To ensure representation of the different regions throughout Canada, KPMG people from various parts of the country were interviewed for FIT Magazine, and others were flown to Toronto to appear in the career videos on the campus recruiting web site. In addition, the campaign included tailored slip-sheets that could be printed locally. The communication team ensured that every city received a customized office profile to help them market their office to their local audience.

MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION / The communication team built in a formal evaluation process for the campaign that focused on three key measurement tools:

2. Perfect Fit Campus Recruiting Marketing Feedback Survey Results, 2008
3. Campus Recruiting web site analysis (Web Trends), 2008

By combining these three metrics, the communication team was able to gain valuable feedback from a variety of perspectives, including targeted audiences of potential campus recruits and campus recruiters.

Campus recruiting business results. With respect to business results, the campaign was a total success, with both application and acceptance rates exceeding the targets that were set.
Results for primary audience of potential campus recruits. According to survey results and KPMG web site analysis, the campaign was well received by the primary audience.

- Eighty percent of recruits responded positively* to *FIT Magazine* (5 percent over target).
- Ninety-one percent of recruits responded positively* to the campus recruiting web site (6 percent over target).
- Eighty-nine percent of recruits responded positively* to the on-campus presentation (4 percent over target).
- There was a 26.5 percent increase in the number of visits to the campus recruitment web site (16.5 percent over target).

Results for secondary audience of campus recruiters. While there was still some resistance from campus recruiters, the majority supported the campaign. Below are the results of an internal campus recruiting survey:

- On average, 60 percent of recruiters liked the major facets of the new campaign and agreed with the statements that they liked *FIT Magazine*, the new campus recruiting web site, and the on-campus presentation, meeting the target.
- Sixty-six percent of recruiters agreed that the marketing materials positively contributed to the recruiting process, exceeding the target by 6 percent.
- All recruiters attended the recruiter launch event.

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*denotes a ranking of good, very good or excellent