

KPR Case Study

MRINetwork

How to Launch Without Getting Lost

Background

MRINetwork (formerly Management Recruiters International), one of the largest recruiting organizations in the world, approached KPR about launching its website. The company aimed to match its massive scale – 4,500 recruiters working in affiliates all over the globe – with a site powerful enough to exceed the capabilities of the established job-search sites like Monster.com. MRINetwork's site, BrilliantPeople.com, routes candidate resumes worldwide, giving applicants feedback from its network of recruiters and matching them with job searches currently underway.

Challenges and Opportunity

It's an exceedingly crowded and confusing category from the media's point of view. Other sites had separated themselves from the pack by spending millions of dollars on advertising. MRINetwork looked to KPR for more cost-effective ways to create exposure for BrilliantPeople.com.

Conventional wisdom said the media would likely cover the launch of a major player, but in a crowded field publicity would quickly become tough sledding after the first blush of news had worn off.

In addition, a straightforward "launch" story left us as just another player in the over-exposed field of Internet recruiting, a story that would benefit the entrenched competitors more than a Johnny-come-lately, whatever our point of difference. We needed a strategy that would revitalize the subject, not just launch the site.

Strategy and Tactics

We started by reaching out to the top 10 reporters covering careers/workforce in the traditional and digital media. These preliminary conversations told us three things: 1) These reporters, even if they did our launch story, would not devote many column inches to the promise of Internet recruiting; 2) They were predisposed to think the whole Web recruiting process was flawed since few candidates seemed to actually be landing jobs that way; 3) They equated presence on broadcast media with being a serious player in the scramble for market share.

So we decided not to "launch" the site at all. Rather, we served up an MRINetwork



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executive to talk about what was wrong (and right) in Internet recruiting. Instead of waxing poetic about the promise of Web job-search sites, he would discuss the practical impediments in its current form. We knew our top target reporters had expressed interest in this angle on the story.

Results

While satellite media tours are known for breaking mostly in secondary and tertiary markets, we captured 12 morning news show segments in the country's top 20 markets (two shows in Los Angeles alone) and a total of 48 segments in 31 markets. So many producers requested airtime with our spokesperson that we had to extend the satellite feed an hour to accommodate them all.

In every interview MRINetwork's CTO was able to mention, often at length, how the company's new Web site had begun to solve many of the problems he had raised with Internet recruiting.

Two hours after the satellite interviews ended, we had set up interviews with The Wall Street Journal, Internet World, and the influential digital column Tech Watch. USA Today named BrilliantPeople.com "Site of the Week." In the end, nine of our top target reporters did the story, followed by more than a hundred others.

Rather than flogging a tired storyline, KPR's media approach opened up an entirely new avenue of discussion in the subject area. It led reporters to tackle questions that played to our client's strengths as well as highlighting MRINetwork's new website in a positive context. The publicity trickled down to every single key geographic and industry market in which MRINetwork does business. Traffic to the company's Web site was double its forecasts. Most important, the top franchise offices gave great feedback on MRINetwork's media presence helping them compete with the big rivals, actually driving business results.