rockcontent

Korn Ferry Case Study

Korn Ferry Engages Audiences and Improves User Experience with Data-Driven Content. With a large sales cycle, Korn Ferry aimed to create compelling content for the whole buyer's journey. They also wanted to understand how users engaged with their content, instead of just offering them to the same prospects multiple times. They transformed static white papers into interactive calculators, white papers, maps and quizzes. Data collected from each tagged element allowed the marketing team to build future campaigns based on topics that users found more interesting while engaging with the interactive experiences.

KORN FERRY

COMPANY
Korn Ferry is a management consulting firm headquartered in Los Angeles, California. It was founded in 1969 and as of 2019, operates in 111 offices in 53 countries and employs 8,198 people worldwide.

INDUSTRY
Human Resources

USE CASE
Brand Experiences

PRODUCT USE
Ion

CONTENT FORMATS
Calculator, eBook, Quiz, White Paper

THE COMPANY

Korn Ferry is a global organizational consulting firm. It helps companies design their organization – the structure, the roles, and responsibilities, as well as how they compensate, develop and motivate their people. This includes helping organizations select and hire the talent they need to execute their strategy. Korn Ferry's nearly 7,000 colleagues serve clients in more than 50 countries.

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THE CHALLENGE

Korn Ferry features three unique business lines: Korn Ferry Executive Search helps businesses attract executive talent, Hay Group aids businesses in organizing, aligning, and rewarding employees, and Futurestep delivers professional talent that builds leadership.

With three groups focusing on all areas of the corporate talent spectrum, Korn Ferry's marketing team is often tasked with creating insightful content for decision-makers from a wide array of dissimilar industries, from industrial companies to healthcare organizations. Korn Ferry hoped to help each piece of its content find the right customer at the right time without becoming redundant, according to M. Foley, Global Campaign Manager, Digital Marketing for Korn Ferry.

"For many parts of our business, there's a long buying cycle. People don't decide on major talent investments in a day or from one Tweet," Foley says. "It's long-term content exposure and engagement that reinforces the credibility of our solutions—and ultimately sets up potential clients to have meaningful conversations with our sales and consulting teams."

And while Korn Ferry hoped to generate new leads, gated content was often cumbersome and only provided basic contact information without insight into which parts of their content audiences found appealing.

In order to drive engagement, Korn Ferry partnered with Ion to create interactive content that yields relevant data without off-putting forms or serving the same content to the same customer multiple times.

"Everyone's getting emails all the time and seeing ads all the time," Foley says. "We don't want to bombard people with stuff they're not interested in—or worse, that they've already seen, but just without hitting some arbitrary conversion point."

THE CONTENT

In order to battle content overload while still offering useful insights to their target audiences, Korn Ferry repurposed some of its existing whitepapers into interactive experiences. Analyzing user engagement on interactive chapters, quizzes, and calculators gave the Korn Ferry team a clear picture of which parts of the content different audiences found most compelling.

For example, Korn Ferry created a whitepaper called "The Trillion Dollar Difference," with an aim toward quantifying the unseen value of human capital. A simple form gating the content may have provided the marketing team with contact data, but it wouldn't paint a clear picture of which findings and pain points described within the whitepaper were resonating with audiences. Adding interactive elements meant better engagement, better insights, and ultimately better leads.

"When we broke the whitepaper into interactive chapters, we could see for ourselves which sections were getting the most love," Foley says. "Adding interactive maps and quizzes to each chapter also meant we could observe when people were invested in the content and answering questions."

THE DATA

The engagement insights Korn Ferry received were an excellent indicator of audience interest, and feedback from interactive elements helped Korn Ferry better tailor future content to their target personas' individual needs without sending redundant or repeat messaging.

"We also wanted to connect with those who wanted more than thought leadership, to understand their needs by taking into account the content they'd already consumed," Foley says. "Interactive content helped us to improve the audience experience by bridging the gap between what clients had already seen versus what they might want to see."

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THE USES

Korn Ferry used data from its interactive content in conjunction with Marketo, an Ion integration partner, to create better-focused, data-driven solutions for user-centered marketing resulting in more impactful, and useful, marketing communication.

"Sending a firehose of data to Marketo simply slows down processing, not to mention blowing open the door for false positives," Foley says. "But we're now able to tell Marketo who has engaged with which content. Then we can take it to the next level and send clients more of the content they're interested in."

One way we accomplish this is to isolate the high-value interaction points in the content. Not just a click on the Chapter 2 tab, or some other navigational signpost – but instead, we hand off to Marketo the high-value actions like exploring an interactive map or infographic. I'm all for optimization, but in our case, a click on navigation should live within its native system (Ion).

Of course, that's easier said than done when balancing cross-platform integrations—send too little data, and you can't tailor the customer experience; send too much, and it's ultimately useless. With Ion, we can make strategic choices to curate the data we send to Marketo to better manage and improve the long-term user experience."

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THE LONGTERM

The benefits for customers are two-fold: we can identify and create content that's more relevant to them, while also avoiding redundancies.

Most consumers hate being chased around the internet by recurring ads and are hesitant to give out too much personal data that would minimize the redundancy. Korn Ferry is on the cutting edge of using interactive content to give audiences fresh experiences that never feel intrusive.

"When we get data that says someone has interacted with a video or blog we don't want to send them an email linking to the same content," Foley says. "If you've already seen this, why would I send you what you've already consumed?"

Ultimately, Korn Ferry hopes to integrate interactive solutions into the greater tapestry of its content offerings, from once-a-year flagship campaigns featuring a host of different contact points to smaller thought leadership projects. Their goal is simple: to improve the audience experience with relevant content that never feels repetitive.

"We're really just trying to improve people's experiences," Foley says. "When we can see what's performing best, we can make our content better."