ONE CALL NOW EBOOK

Using the Power of Technology to Grow Your Staffing Agency

One Call Now

Technology is constantly advancing, at an accelerated rate. Every time you turn around, there's a new gadget to buy, a new program to implement, or a new website to use. This is the case in your personal life as well as in your business. It can be daunting if you let it be, and more than a bit overwhelming, especially in business. How do you keep up with it all? Is your current technology outdated or obsolete? Is the competition getting the better of you because of it? Is your company not as successful as it could be, or not as efficient, because you're behind the times?

Technology can be a powerful tool for your staffing agency. In fact, it's more like an entire toolbox. There are all different tools at your disposal that can be used in different ways, to accomplish different goals. The right technology can enable growth in your company and provide you with a competitive advantage. And when used properly, it helps you to do more with the resources you have. But the key is, "when used properly." Like any tool, the technology you employ in your company is only as good as the ways you utilize it and your proficiency with it. To that end, here are a few technology ideas to consider.

The Cloud

One of the biggest ways that technology is changing is with virtualization. You used to have to perform all of your business actions, transactions, and interactions from a computer console in an office. Now, with the rise of mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones, you can conduct your business from anywhere.

That's where cloud computing comes in. It stores all of your company's data virtually, allowing you and your employees to access it through a network, rather than on a specific device. There are all sorts of uses for this in the staffing industry. It gives your employees the flexibility to work from anywhere. They can check in to request work, update their employee profiles, or even clock in at a job, all from their own devices. They can also update information seamlessly across multiple devices, saving changes in the cloud to be accessed instantly by anyone else who needs it.

This in turn expands your potential client base as well. With a cloud-based system for tracking and maintaining your employees mobilely, you can staff companies that send workers out into the field, rather than just ones that commute to a single location. You can stay connected with your employees wherever they are and help your clients to stay connected with them as well.

In addition, cloud computing allows you to maintain a virtual IT staff, rather than employing one in-house. With all of your data accessible remotely, they can keep your system running smoothly from across the country. They can also implement security measures, to ensure that no one has more access than they need. A security system protects your data by segmenting it. So your employees have access only to their own accounts and the data that directly affects them. Clients, on the other hand, might have slightly expanded access with regards to their own company's doings, and admins would have unfettered access to the entire system.

Messaging Services
and Notification Systems

E-mail is rapidly becoming outdated as a method of communication, especially in business. In a recent survey by Robert Half Technology, 54% of chief information officers said that within the next five years, they expected e-mail to be surpassed in use by real-time communication methods such as instant messaging, chat forums, and document collaboration.

It's hardly a surprising statistic. In today's fast-paced world, sometimes you can't wait around for someone to respond to your e-mail. You need to reach them right away and get their response in real time. And nowhere is this more true than in the staffing industry. Which is why a messaging service and notification system are essential for staying in touch with both your employees and your clients. There are all sorts of situations that require you to keep more directly connected than e-mail allows, including...

FILLING OPEN SHIFTS.

Emergencies happen. Maybe someone got sick, or had a car accident. Maybe they just plain didn't show up for work. Whatever the reason, you need to get someone to fill their slot immediately. Now, in the old days, you would call people one by one, hoping someone was around to take your call, and that that person was also available to come in on short notice. By the time you found someone and got them to the site, half the day could be gone. Now, however, you can reach out to your entire available workforce at once with a text message. The first person to respond gets sent the job details, and they're off to work in minutes, rather than hours.

MEETINGS.

When you use e-mail to send out an announcement for an important meeting, most of the people you send it to probably won't respond, or even read the message all the way through. If you send it out en masse, it may even end up in some people's spam folders. How do you reliably find out which and how many people you can expect at your meeting? Send the announcement via instant message and gather responses in real time. You can also send the announcement with Google Docs and include spaces for people to sign up with their name, contact info, preferred meeting time, and other important information. In certain circumstances, you could even use a private chat forum to hold the meeting virtually.

CORPORATE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

It's always a challenge to keep employees informed of the latest policy changes. This is true for any company, but even more so for a staffing agency, as you need to worry not only about changes to your own policies, but to those of the companies you staff. If there's important news, you need to get the word out to a specific subsection of people and make sure they receive the memo. A notification system is able not only to send out the same message instantly to a specific group of people, but to get documented receipts from each one, in order to let you know that they got the message.

There are all sorts of other ways your company could benefit from messaging services and notification systems as well. Clear, immediate communication is necessary to the survival of your company in a thousand different ways. These systems make that communication as easy as possible, to facilitate business. One Call Now offers a full suite of Messaging Services and Notification Systems for the staffing industry.

Website and Social Media

In this day and age, no matter what your business is, if you're going to be successful, it's essential that you build a significant online presence. As a staffing agency, this is especially true for you, as you don't just need to build up your organization's visibility, but also to be able to connect with other companies, whom you provide staff for.

The first step in building an online presence is, of course, a website. This is your company's home base. It gets your name out there and shows people what you're all about. It gives you a specific place to drive your customers and potential customers. More than that, it allows potential workers to connect with you. The economy being what it is, a lot of people are looking for work, and many of them are turning to staffing agencies. When they find you, it's important that you make it easy for them to get in touch with you. Let them apply with your agency online, upload their resume and basic information, and get into your system for processing and later use.

Have another section of your site for companies looking for staffing and recruitment help to get in touch with you as well. Give them a place to specify what they're looking for and how you can best provide for their staffing needs.

Your website needs to be visible, functional, easy to understand, and easy to use. It should also be well-designed and attractive to look at. These things may seem obvious, but you'd be surprised at how many companies don't do it—or who try to do it and fail. It helps to hire a professional web designer to work with you. An expert with web experience can help you build a site that's welcoming and helpful—something that can guide visitors to what they're looking for and to the things you want them to find.

In addition to a website, you also need to build a significant presence on social media. Now, there are a lot of different networks out there. You don't need to worry about all of them. Only focus on the ones that can help you connect with potential recruits and clients. A Facebook page can be useful for posting links to helpful Internet content—e.g. blog posts, informative articles, etc. A Twitter profile can provide a platform for you to give followers brief announcements and updates on what's going on in your company. But it's doubtful that, as a staffing agency, you'll be posting to Instagram or Pinterest.

However, there's one social network in particular where you'd be wise to invest a fair amount of time and effort: LinkedIn. Being that it's geared specifically towards acquiring and maintaining professional relationships, in the staffing industry in particular it can be an immensely beneficial resource. You can use it to scout profiles and resumes and find promising new recruits. You can use it to connect with potential clients who need your services. And you can use it to keep abreast of what's going on in your field, and in business and employment fields in general. Knowing what's going on in the industry, as well as the industries you represent, will better equip you to place people in jobs that benefit both them and the company.

You can also use LinkedIn to build your agency's reputation. Post helpful and informative links, join groups and get involved in relevant discussions, answer questions and help people with their problems... These things will help you to establish your company as a trusted expert in the staffing field.

Content Marketing

Content marketing, as touched on earlier, is the practice of creating blog posts, articles, videos, and more to post on your company's website. Do a little research and figure out what specific topics your potential customers are interested in. And more importantly, what search terms are they using to look for those topics. Then write a blog post or an article on that topic, with those search terms sprinkled a few times throughout the text. This is called keyword density. A higher keyword density helps to ensure that, when people Google those search terms in the future, your site is one of the top results to come up.

Producing regular online content can help your staffing agency in a number of ways. The main way is that, when done properly, it can bring online attention to your company and draw in both potential clients and potential recruits. Having a lot of content increases your site's visibility and thus your circulation.

In order to start content marketing, the first thing you need is a blog. You can start one for free on Wordpress or another popular blog site. Once your blog is in place, you need to start posting on it. A couple of times a month is good. A couple of times a week is better. Statistically, the more often you blog, the better your website traffic will be. For one thing, Google's search algorithms favor sites that have been updated recently and regularly, in order to promote the distribution of fresh, current content.

So you've got your blog topics by examining popular keywords. But even so, what do you actually SAY about these topics? The best option is to offer helpful advice. Provide tips on how to land that perfect job... or on how to find that perfect job applicant. People turn to Google for help with a particular problem. If your site can provide them with the solution to that problem, then they'll be more likely to trust and respect you going forward, which in turn makes them more likely to sign up with your agency.

Blog posts aren't the only thing you can do to boost your site's visibility. Another natural source of content for a staffing agency is videos. This wouldn't even require a significant amount of effort. You probably already have a number of videos that you're required to show to your applicants as they register with your agency. And there are no doubt other, more specific videos that you show depending on the company you place them with. There are the chemical and equipment safety videos, the sexual harassment and good employee conduct videos, and others.

Standard procedure for many staffing agencies is to bring recruits into a room with a television and show them a DVD. This can get cumbersome. It would be much easier to upload all of those videos to YouTube, and/or your own website, and have recruits watch them on their own. Add an online form for testing their comprehension of the videos, and you've not only streamlined your employee training process, you've added several pages of content to help draw people in to your site.

In addition to blogs and videos, there are many other forms of content you can explore in order to increase your visibility and bring people in. You can have webinars, infographics, even a podcast. Be creative. Determine what it is your target audience wants, then figure out the most efficient and effective way of delivering it to them.

Once you've created your content, you need to distribute it. This is another place where a presence on social media is helpful. As you post new content, share the links on your various social media channels, so your followers can see it. You can also submit it to a number of content-sharing websites, such as Reddit, Diggs, or StumbleUpon, which are specifically geared towards spreading content to the people who might want to see it.

You can facilitate sharing by your audience as well, by including a social media widget on each page of content you produce. You've seen those little buttons on the sidebar of a webpage that allow the viewer to share the page to their Facebook page, Twitter, Google+ account, etc. The easier your content is to share, the wider circulation it will have.

Customer Relationship Management and Marketing Automation Software Platforms

In the staffing industry, people are your business. You make sure that each of your employees has a job and each of your clients has a staff. And more than that, you continue to make sure that those employees are doing well in the jobs they've been placed in. Are they a good fit for that company? If anything happens, if anyone needs anything, you're the facilitator. In short, you need to keep everybody happy.

To do that, you should have some form of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software platform. CRM helps you organize and maintain all sorts of data on clients and employees and keeps you connected with them. You can program it automatically to receive data from your clients such as employee time sheets, and convert that into payroll info. It can keep track of scheduling, so that you know which employees have been placed with what companies, how long they're scheduled to work there, and when you next need to find them a new job and/or your clients a new employee. It helps you manage all of your professional relationships at the touch of a button.

A similar type of platform is marketing automation software. It can have customer relationship management applications integrated into it, though it's geared more towards reeling clients in. It's designed to gauge the interest of your potential customers and respond in a certain way based on their actions and interactions. Someone fills out a form on a landing page on your site, asking for more information about your services? It automatically sends them an e-mail. A new client is interested in having you staff their offices? It alerts you, so that you can contact them directly.

Marketing automation integrates your content and sales and everything in between into a single platform that helps you generate leads, determine how sales-ready those leads are, nurture them until they're ready to take action, and then get them to sign on with your agency.

Integrating CRM and marketing automation can help you leverage new and innovative ways to sell to new customers as well as manage existing ones. It provides you with a central contact database of both leads and clients that can be organized and categorized however you want, making it easy to enact a seamless transition from one to the other.

There are also opportunity management applications that help you keep track of the details of the job or jobs the client needs done and even identify opportunities for repeat business. You can then follow up with clients automatically once a job is done and make sure they don't forget about you for their future staffing needs.

Marketing automation and customer relationship management software are both extremely useful, extremely versatile tools. They help you keep your company organized and allow you to meet your clients' needs more efficiently, so that you can expand your business and keep everybody happy.

Conclusion

The staffing industry is changing and evolving. The technology that's available to you right now allows you to do things with your company that you wouldn't have dreamed of 10 years ago. You have more opportunities, more freedom as you work with both clients and employees, and a chance to expand your business and accomplish more without being overwhelmed trying to maintain it or inundated with data. The possibilities are limitless. But only if you keep up with the technology that's available to you.

The right technology will help you keep your employees happy, your clients staffed, and your business thriving. The tools are there. How you use them is up to you.