LinkedIn’s New ‘Let’s Step Forward’ Ad Emphasizes Small Steps Toward Career Progress

LinkedIn’s ongoing “In It Together” campaign has pivoted to reflect current events a few times since its January 2018 debut, and its latest shift is aimed at helping remove the stigmas associated with unemployment.

“Brand marketing isn’t just about marketing,” Peter Maxmin, vice president of LinkedIn’s global brand, told Adweek. “We’re seeing real traction on the product side in terms of momentum around how we help members through situations such as massive employment. We’ve been on this journey for a number of years, and it’s a journey we will always be on.”

“Let’s Step Forward,” a new campaign spot, debuted in the U.S. last Saturday during game four of the World Series, making it LinkedIn’s first new TV campaign since the pandemic became a reality, prompting new remote production processes such as using video collaboration platforms like corporate sibling Microsoft Teams.

Maxmin pointed out that LinkedIn’s last campaign before Covid-19 delivered the message that there are millions of jobs out there, and members could find the one that was meant for them, but “the situation has dramatically changed.”

“Professional progress isn’t something where you leap from one place to another: It always starts with a single step,” he said.

The goal of the creative was to help destigmatize unemployment

and reassure members of the professional network that while big steps may be the dream, small steps help them move forward and give them opportunities to change their circumstances.

“Massive unemployment and job losses are taking a huge toll on professionals,” Maxmin said. “There still seems to be a stigma about unemployment: 84% of Americans believe this, and 67% believe it will affect their ability to get hired.”

LinkedIn pointed out that more than 40 million people search for jobs on its platform every week, and roughly three members are hired each minute, adding that there are approximately 2.4 million open jobs in the U.S. that don’t require four-year college degrees.

The professional network introduced its Open to Work feature in July, allowing members to let others know they are seeking employment, and early adopters—3 million members have activated Open to Work—are receiving 40% more InMails from recruiters and are 20% more likely to receive messages from the community, according to LinkedIn.

The new spot continues LinkedIn’s emphasis on community, sharing real insights from members about how they have turned to each other to move forward, and aiming to portray an optimistic tone while remaining realistic and taking current circumstances into account at the same time.

“We are trying to balance the reality of the moment, but not over-index how difficult things are,” Maxmin said. “It’s really important to have a sense of hope and optimism.”

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