

Best Example of Marketing Engagement

- 1. What were the key challenges faced by your organisation in relation to this Award category? Include the positioning of your organisation in its sector and how these challenges were overcome. 250 words**

In August 2023, the small but dedicated marketing team were coupled up in a hot, stuffy room on the second floor of Talos360 HQ, discussing Christmas. Christmas, as you know, begins earlier and earlier every year, and 2023 was no exception. With the sun beating down and the office air con in predictable meltdown, winter was the hot topic of conversation around the boardroom table.

The key challenges?

1. How could we position Talos360, a B2B SaaS company specialising in HR tech, firmly in the Christmas narrative, and moreover, how could we make it engaging?
2. The HR tech space is notoriously saturated and extremely competitive regarding tech, engagement, and brand awareness. How could we make an ad that propels Talos360 into the limelight?

With so many Christmas adverts using all manner of protagonists to convey a brand's marketing message—think polar bear/Coca-Cola, Carrot/Aldi, and so on, Talos360 had to think seriously about who would front its Christmas campaign. Easy when you have award-winning HR tech at your disposal. Who else but Santa? Why? Because Santa has a problem. He's struggling to hire the right talent. He's losing elves to competitors and has massive problems with elf retention. So, what does Santa do? He uses Talos360 and saves Christmas '23.

After filming the ad, the team used YouTube to propel the Talos360 brand into uncharted waters. Running the advert from 28 November - 19 December, it attracted 56,000 views, 420,000 impressions, and 75,000 engagements.

Engaging – tick.

Brand awareness – tick.

249 words

- 2. Give details of the vision, innovation and creativity that underpins your Award entry – the things that differentiate you from other organisations.**

B2B marketing is a notoriously difficult nut to crack, even when you're armed with a nutcracker. However, that doesn't mean to say it's impossible. The vision, innovation, creativity, and a good dose of delirium back on that August day underpinned this Christmas marketing campaign from the very beginning.

Vision – We wanted Santa as the main protagonist. He was to be front and centre. As we’ve discussed, the real challenge was linking him to our product and creating a back story that, while fictional, was relatable to businesses everywhere.

Innovation – The innovative part of our marketing plan was having Santa pose as one of our clients. What better way to endorse our HR Tech? Even better, we placed his fictional ‘case study’ among other real-life case studies, lending it a credible air while being faux serious.

Creativity - This Christmas campaign is abundantly creative. The script, the focus, the set, the placement, the positioning - every bit of it was executed with creative flair, which it had to be, given its stringent budget.

The humour in the advert is striking, not just because of its creativity but also because of its divergence from competitors. Humour is in short supply in B2B marketing. We know; we’ve operated in that sphere long enough. However, we wanted to show our human side, at once differentiating ourselves from other organisations in our sector while positioning our brand as the brand that saved Christmas ’23.

And we saved it using our award-winning tech. Certainly different.

249 words

3. What measurable differences has overcoming these challenges made to your organisation? Give evidence of the impact in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

The twin challenges of engagement and brand awareness were significantly overcome during and immediately after this Christmas marketing ad. As you will see below, the detailed quantitative data illustrates just how much engagement the Christmas marketing advert received. However, to measure brand awareness and its impact, we used LinkedIn quantitative data from the time the ad was launched up to the end of Q1 2024.

Engagement impact

Between 28 November and 19 December 2023, we ran three major campaigns. Two paid and one organic.

YouTube paid quantitative data:

- Over 420,000 impressions
- Over 75,000 engagements
- 18% interaction rate
- 56k views
- 50k new viewers introduced to the Talos360 brand
- Average view duration 1:43 – total ad running time: 2:38
- Average percentage of ad viewed – 65%
- Total ad watch time – 1,600 hours
- Click-through rate – 7.4%
- YouTube video ‘Like’ vs ‘Dislikes’ – 95%

Facebook paid quantitative data:

- 11k Facebook impressions
- 9,114 Facebook video ThruPlays
- 1,200 landing page views

LinkedIn organic quantitative data:

- 5,392 impressions
- 4,050 views
- 122 clicks
- CTR – 2.26%
- 93 reactions
- 32 comments
- 62 reposts
- 5.73% engagement rate

The qualitative data is no less impactful.

Firstly, let's look at the feedback, starting with the big man himself:

'Talos360 has been the best present to myself this Christmas.'

Santa Claus, Founder, *Santa's Workshop*

Fictional qualitative data aside, he's a genuine flavour of the engagement the advert received, primarily on LinkedIn:

- 'So much love for this' – Ruth Corney, Project Manager at Emota
- 'Talos360 – can you ask Santa where my Raleigh Chopper is from Xmas '93???' – Mike Newman, Recruitment Manager at Everyman
- 'This is so hilarious and engaging' – Laura Hargreaves, Managing Director
- 'This is brilliant' – Alex Ellis, Owner of School Spider

Brand Awareness impact

In just over two weeks, this marketing campaign introduced over 50,000 new people to our brand. What was planned on that stuffy August afternoon met and exceeded expectations well into 2024. Most importantly, maximised brand exposure contributed to increases in organic website traffic from the time of the advert launch and beyond Christmas and into January - a normally quiet month for any business. At its peak, website traffic was up on October figures by a colossal 106%.

Further evidence of increased brand awareness can be gleaned from LinkedIn metrics dated between 28 November 2023 – 31 March 2024:

- Tues 28 Nov – 4,916 impressions
- Fri 1 Dec – 12,363 impressions
- Mon 1 Jan – 16,725 impressions
- Thurs 1 Feb – 18,858 impressions
- Fri 1 Mar – 25,543 impressions

400 words

4. Detail the business case including the associated costs and financial benefits where possible resulting from overcoming these challenges.

Of course, what was cooked up that August afternoon had to be presented to the board. The business case explained how we would set up the ad [with Santa posing alongside legitimate client testimonials], how we would position our product, the objectives for the campaign, and the anticipated benefits.

Since this marketing campaign was to be fundamentally an engagement and brand awareness piece, any financial benefit would be hard to quantify and not part of the overall objective. Consequently, the budget set aside for this Christmas marketing campaign was a stringent one - just £1000. The advert was to be promoted across YouTube and Facebook, with the £1000 budget split 750:250.

However, despite financial benefits being excluded from the overall campaign objective, such was the advert's impact on organic website traffic, which increased by 106%, financial benefits could, in fact, be quantified. For example, on average, Talos360 receives 4,000 organic website visits and around 4,400 paid-for clicks a month, costing around £4 per click. With an organic website increase of 106%, Talos360.co.uk received 8,240 organic visits, 4240 above average, while PPC, on the other hand, was down 17%, representing a saving of £14,508...

Brilliant ROI and Christmas clearly come early.

200

5. Give both internal and external testimonials to support your Award entry.

The testimonials, both internal and external, were ample:

Internal:

- 'Brilliant Christmas video from our talented marketing team. Well worth a watch.' – Stephen Rundell, Founder
- 'Amazing work from our brilliant marketing team. I still can't believe we managed to get Santa on board.' - Tim Clifford, Brand Evangelist
- 'Epic' – Dean McGlone, CFO
- 'You don't get a better testimonial than this.' – Lyndsay Chapman, People Director
- 'Absolutely brilliant.' – Laura Court, Account Manager
- 'Endorsed by the big man himself.' – Steven Hammill, Account Director

External:

- 'Brilliant advertisement.' – Gabriel Sivris, Head of HR Greece at Daiichi Sankyo
- 'Today, I received a blooming blinder of an email from Talos360. I don't use their services, and I'm not paid to promote them, but I felt that I simply had to share their 'Santa HR' video as 1) it made me giggle and 2) it was fabulous to get an email that showed a company's

personality rather than another invite to yet another webinar/report/podcast that has been carefully crafted to sound interesting enough not to ignore but not specific enough to be of use.

Bravo Talos. Should I come looking for a HR recruitment system in the future, you'll be on my list!' - Julia Ruane, Communication Specialist

199 words

6. Finally, summarise why you have entered this Award and why you think you should win.

We've entered this award because our 'Santa: A HR Story' represented a break from other Talos360 marketing campaigns. Totally unique, blending humour with real-life HR recruitment pain points [minus the elves], Talos360 placed its advert before 50,000 new people, simultaneously raising brand and product awareness.

Furthermore, this campaign represented our first-ever foray into YouTube. On a limited budget, the paid-for metrics are outstanding and far beyond those we imagined at the ad's conception back in August 2023.

However, the most outstanding aspect of this campaign was its organic impact. Take the colossal 106% increase in organic website visits, for example, or the 625% increase in LinkedIn followers immediately after the ad launch [though eventually settling on +87.7% by the end of Q1 2024] - both are incredible.

Why should this campaign win? Aside from the stunning metrics already detailed, this campaign should win because our marketing team consists of just five people. And from those five people with limited resources, Talos360 produced a glossy, polished, funny, and informative marketing engagement piece that made an impression on 420,000 people and, more importantly, helped Santa solve age-old issues, undoubtedly saving Christmas 2023. No thanks are necessary. We just did our bit!