

Workthing & Homebase

The Client

Founded in 1979, Homebase is the UK's second largest DIY retailer and part of the Argos Retail Group. The company has nearly 300 stores in the UK and serves over 1 million customers every week.

The Challenge

The challenge from Homebase was to recruit for a number of vacancies including retail sales managers. One of the biggest issues faced by HR professionals in the retail industry is how to reduce costs associated with regular staff turnover, which can be as high as 50%. Homebase was interested in finding a recruitment solution that reduced cost per hire but which also delivered a sufficient number of suitable candidates. The company had used a number of other online recruitment jobsites but found they were unable to deliver the right numbers of quality candidates.

The Partnership

Homebase decided to partner with Workthing and gave us the following brief in December 2002:

- 1 Recruit for a number of vacancies including retail sales managers for positions based in Thames Valley, Hertfordshire, North East London, Surrey, South West London, the North, and Ireland
- 2 Improve the quality of applicants to Homebase
- 3 Reduce recruitment costs

The Solution

The reason that Homebase chose to partner with Workthing was because we specialise in attracting quality candidates for core business roles, in particular those in the retail industry. To help meet Homebase's recruitment challenges, we devised a campaign that focused on targeting the right candidates for these specific roles and enhancing Homebase's employer brand.

Access to a pool of quality candidates: In an average month, 22,000 candidates working in the retail sector visit the Workthing site. This meant that a large number of people with the right skills and experience saw Homebase's vacancies.

To optimise the campaign, branded buttons featured on key areas of Workthing.com for retail jobseekers, directing them straight to Homebase's jobs.

Using our specialist knowledge of online media, Workthing arranged with Google, the leading search engine, a sponsorship of the key search phrases that jobseekers use when searching for retail positions. This enabled us to attract the greatest number and range of candidates from across the internet to look at Homebase's vacancies.



Enhancing Homebase's employer brand: It is vital that Homebase's employer brand communications position them as an employer of choice so they attract the best candidates.

- We produced branded company information pages which highlighted the rewards and benefits of working for Homebase.
- We sent HTML emails to selected candidates promoting Homebase as an employer of choice.

The Results

The campaign proved highly effective in meeting Homebases' objectives:

- Improvements in volume - Workthing generated 381 retail 'Sales Manager' applications over a four month period leading to 21 hires.
- Improvements in quality - over 75% of Workthing applicants progressed to interview stage. The quality of applications was significantly better than other key generalist and specialist job sites.
- 77% reduction in cost per hire over recruitment agencies - by advertising on Workthing Homebase made recruitment savings of £2450 per head.
- 31% reduction in cost per hire over press advertising - by advertising on Workthing Homebase has made savings of £395 per head.

Doug Haggart – HR Director, said:

“Workthing have become partners with us in bringing the right sort of people in to our business. For very little effort on our part we are able to attract, and employ a high number of quality candidates into our business, ranging from store staff level up to specialist roles.”