

Chatbots: The Future of Recruitment

Accelerate your talent search with
SharpSpring, Facebook & ChatFuel



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About the Author

Greg Dungan is a graphic designer, author, and the owner of Two Creative Digital Marketing (twocreativedigital.com). Over the last two decades he has marketed everything from childcare centers to retirement communities while offering a refreshing, data-driven accountability to his clients. His personal mission is to encourage others, bring measurable results, and be more concerned with finding solutions than he is about being right. Greg currently lives in Fairfield, Ohio with his wife and family.



I got started using chat integration because I wanted to win a client. I received a call one afternoon from a friend whose business I had been trying to win for years. He needed my help filling positions at his company. He was using another agency at the time, but I knew if I could outperform them, I could win the account, so I accepted.

Our goal was threefold:

1. Increase the number of employee applications
2. Speed up response time to applicants
3. Collect contact information for remarketing

I began researching the available platforms and, of course, what the competition was using to attract job applicants. Once I saw that Facebook Ads held the best potential for success, I knew I had a shot. I had run lots of Facebook ads in the past, and I was confident that I could win there (especially since the other agency was using a “post it and forget it” model for posting jobs).



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It was around this time that Facebook released the ability to run Facebook Messenger Ads. This new feature allowed me to run an ad on Facebook that, when clicked, would send the user directly into a Messenger chat instead of sending them straight to a landing page to fill out a form. This was going to be a game changer.

The ease with which people could now respond to our job ads instantly increased the number of applicants. By immediately engaging the applicant through chat, we could speed up the response process while still maintaining the ability to screen for qualified people. We could also try to get the opt-in through Facebook Messenger by directly asking for their contact information so we could schedule an interview. But we weren't out of the woods yet.

Challenges Along the Way

The first problem I ran into was that someone on our side had to respond to the chat. This meant that someone from our agency would have to remain logged into Facebook all day, ready to respond whenever a chat came in. This wasn't going to work because the person in charge of responding was not going to be in her office all day every day, let alone available to answer chats at a moment's notice.

The second problem I encountered was what I called the mobile form issue. Because of the need for an opt-in solution, I was running Facebook



ads that sent people to landing pages where they would be encouraged to fill out a form to receive more information. The problem was that the vast majority of our traffic was coming from mobile devices, and users were reluctant to fill out the forms on their phones.

Finally, we still needed to shorten our response time. With Facebook Messenger Ads, we were down from days to hours – but in order to fill all of the open positions, we were going to have to try for minutes.

Bringing in the Bot

I knew we would need some kind of automated method for responding to these chat messages. While looking around at different solutions, I came upon a free platform called ChatFuel. ChatFuel allowed me to build a custom response bot that could answer basic questions and retrieve contact information from applicants. There was a bit of a learning curve, but it wasn't that bad. I just started fiddling around with the tools, and before I knew it, I had created my first chatbot.

The best part was that I was able to deploy the bot through Facebook Messenger, which meant that I could use my existing ads. The bot would completely take the place of the landing page. It would respond to the chat request, collect contact information, and answer basic questions. This eliminated the need for applicants to fill out contact forms over mobile (people may not have wanted to fill out a form on their phone,

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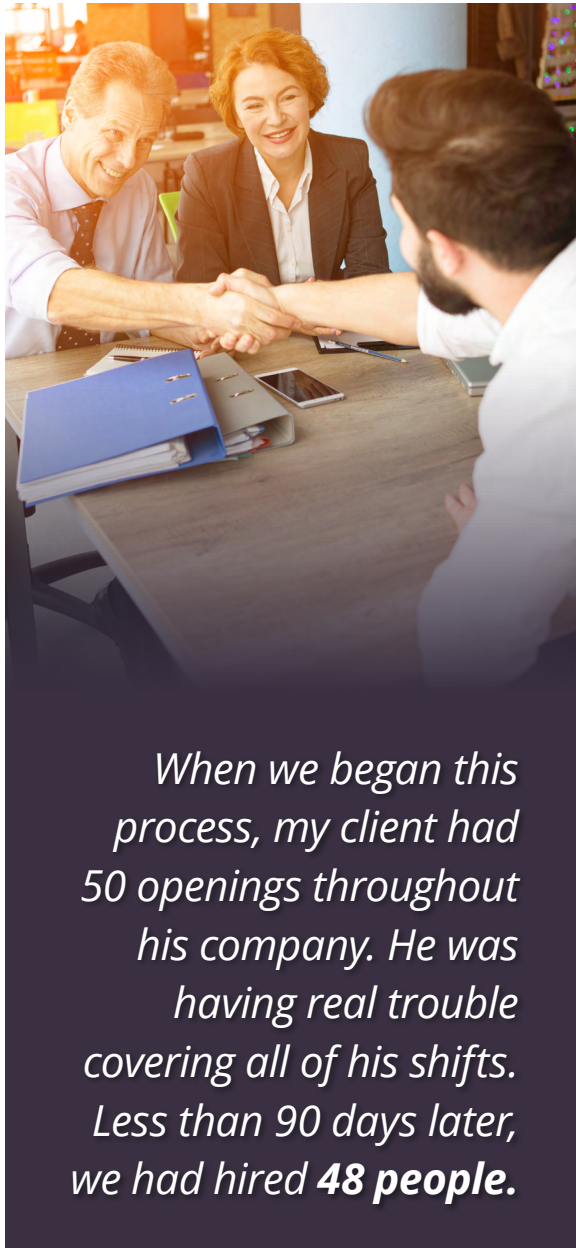
but they were generally glad to talk to the chatbot). Then, the bot would notify the appropriate HR representative via email, so that she could respond within a matter of hours.

Adding SharpSpring to the Mix

So far, everything worked well, but we still needed to shorten our response times. We also needed a better system for curating the contact information. At this point, all of the names, email addresses and phone numbers that we were receiving from applicants were only stored in the notification emails. We needed a CRM solution, and it wouldn't hurt to have some automation to go with it.

This is when I found SharpSpring. I had researched all of the other platforms, but I decided on SharpSpring because of its agency focus. I finally had the CRM I needed, and it came with great automation as well. Now, I just needed to figure out how to connect all of the other apps I was working with to the SharpSpring platform, so I reached out to SharpSpring's tech team and they introduced me to Zapier.

Zapier brought with it another learning curve, but like ChatFuel, it didn't take long to master. Soon, I had ChatFuel connected to Messenger, Messenger connected to Zapier, and Zapier connected to SharpSpring. All of the contact information that our applicants shared with the bot was now being safely and efficiently delivered into SharpSpring. Then, using



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SharpSpring's automation, each contact was assigned to a campaign and confirmed via an automated email response that they received within (you guessed it) just minutes of their chat conversation.

The Grand Finale

Using chat allowed us to do more than this client had ever done before in terms of recruiting. We had fully engaged leads with Facebook's powerful targeting functions, audience-building capabilities, and Messenger functions. We had overcome the obstacle of the opt-in form for mobile applicants with ChatFuel. And we had shortened the response time from days to weeks and finally to minutes with SharpSpring.

Furthermore, SharpSpring served as a home base for our strategy, helping us manage the hiring process far beyond initial contact. It allowed our client to go in and look at the lead record of any given applicant to see their entire interaction with the the client across all platforms, which helped with identifying the most interested and qualified candidates.

When we began this process, my client had 50 openings throughout his company. He was having real trouble covering all of his shifts. **Less than 90 days later, we had hired 48 people.** Needless to say, the other agency he'd been working with was quickly forgotten, and I won the client that I'd been after for so long.

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We also learned how to deploy these powerful tools in a way that would lead to greater things. We were able to expand the capabilities of these technologies to include other types of chat applications, other uses for automated emails, and new methods of targeting. We were also able to apply our new knowledge and skills to a variety of marketing processes, helping the business achieve results across the board.



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Two Creative Digital Marketing is a no-nonsense, customer-first company offering all aspects of digital marketing to a select stable of completely spoiled clients through trusted relationships and measurable results.

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