

Humanising a corporate brand

A Megaphone & Quill Case Study



Good storytelling is good business

Megaphone & Quill Case Study

An innovative staffing company was struggling to grow because of an image problem among potential recruits. To bring this vital audience on side, it would have to present itself as more authentic, more honest—and more human.

Background

Many companies must speak to multiple audiences, often including individuals as well as other corporates. Each audience type requires a different approach, and being able to switch between them can make the difference between failure and success.

That was certainly the case with this client, a hybrid training and staffing firm. Its pioneering business model involved recruiting cohorts of recent graduates and training them as software developers to meet the precise specifications of its corporate clients, among them some of the world's best-known brands.

Challenge

The company's message resonated with its corporate clients, who responded well to hard metrics like lower hiring costs and increased retention rates.

But that was only half the equation. To succeed, the company also had to recruit enough trainees to meet the demand. And in this respect, it was struggling.

Among potential recruits, the company had an image problem. From online sentiment analysis, it knew that it was seen as faceless and overly corporate. Worse, many young people suspected it of being a "scam": A promise of a free lunch that was, as many of them said in so many words, "too good to be true."

This reputational issue was suppressing recruitment to such an extent that the company found itself having to furlough some of its trainers, despite growing demand from the client side.

The company hired Megaphone & Quill's A.J. Wilson, an experienced ghostwriter, to help burnish its image among potential trainees.

A more human face

Megaphone & Quill's resident storyteller, A.J. Wilson, crafted a series of feature articles highlighting the company's impact on specific, named people.

Using skills he learned as a political speechwriter, A.J. was able to tell each individual's story in the first person and in their own, authentic voice.

What the company needed, A.J. realised, was to offer social proof. Potential recruits needed to see that the company had helped people like them. This kind of proof could not come through statistics. It had to be communicated through stories.

A.J. set out to create a series of profiles of the company's trainees and employees, to be presented in each person's own voice.

With years of experience quickly capturing the voices of a wide array of clients, from British diplomats to U.S. Army veterans, A.J. was well placed to achieve this.

When learning an individual's authentic voice, face time is essential. To this end, A.J. interviewed volunteers from the company's workforce, as well as former trainees who responded to a survey about their experience with the company.

With each of his interviewees, A.J. worked to highlight their unique story and how it reflected the company's culture and the value of the training to its recruits.

For example:

- + A former trainee who had gone from bagging groceries to working on cybersecurity for a major bank.
- + An autistic employee who, having been told he would never hold down a job, found an employer who treated neurodiversity as an advantage.
- + A poetry graduate who discovered a parallel passion for the language of code.

A.J. presented these stories as a feature series, with each article appearing under the byline of each interviewee.

To address the suspicion that the company's promises were "too good to be true," A.J. took care to emphasise how challenging the curriculum was, as well as how it unlocked opportunities for those who persevered.

This approach helped shift the company's reputation and boost recruitment, allowing the company to continue growing.

A boost to recruitment

Presenting the company in a new light

The feature series was posted prominently on the front page of the company's website, accompanied by images of the named authors that helped to showcase their diversity and boost the social proof value of the content.

The series presented the company in a new, more human light. Potential recruits were reassured. Sentiment around the company improved, contributing to record high recruitment.

Key results

1. Compelling web content, laser-targeted to its intended audience.
2. Increased recruitment, supporting the company's business model.
3. Improved online sentiment, contributing to an image boost.
4. A more versatile brand, capable of appealing to different audiences.

Social proof via storytelling.

When people see themselves reflected in an organisation's communications, its impact grows exponentially.

Presenting this client through the lens of relatable human stories helped land a message that previously had struggled to get through.

About us





We help leaders communicate with clarity and confidence.

A.J. Wilson is a *New York Times* bestselling ghostwriter who has written for leaders in both the UK Parliament and the U.S. Congress. He knows a thing or two about cutting through the noise.

Rachel Madan's 25-year comms career has seen her advising everyone from big banks to world-famous art galleries. She's built a reputation for turning even the most technical concepts into inspiring messages.

We'd love to work with you.
Drop us a note at
hello@megaphone-quill.com

What we offer

What to say

We help you craft a consistent corporate narrative that will resonate with your target audience.

- + Narrative & message development
- + Briefings & talking points
- + Speechwriting
- + Op-eds, articles, & books

How to say it

We help you sound like the best version of yourself: Confident, polished, authentic, and persuasive.

- + Speech & presentation coaching
- + Influence & persuasion training
- + Executive presence workshops
- + Comms strategy

What you say matters. So does how you say it.

We take care of both.

Our executive communications expertise combines writing, coaching, and strategy.

Thank you!

