FitFirst®
TECHNOLOGIES

Changing the Face of an Industry

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The Agri-Food industry is essential to the economy. It influences many sectors across the food supply chain, including primary agriculture, food and beverage processors, food retailers and wholesalers and food service providers. The industry directly or indirectly employs close to a million people in Ontario, yet these employers are poorly perceived by the public.

The Agri-Food industry is widely misunderstood as having low-paying and unfulfilling jobs; however, realistically, it provides many interesting and well-paid careers from entry to executive level.

Because of this twisted perception of the industry, many companies in Agri-Food suffer from a lack of applicants, a chronic shortage of workers and unfilled, open positions. In the Fall of 2022, to help remedy the situation, the Province of Ontario made Grants money available to Food Processors who employed more than 50 people. The goal of the program was to stimulate pilot projects explicitly designed to address the industry's chronic Attraction and Retention issues.

Two mid-sized Employers applied for a grant and engaged Fit First® Technologies and TDG Marketing to build a pilot project framework to create a sustainable pool of applicants for work in the industry. All associated work needed to be completed within eight weeks ending November 30, 2022.

The Approach

The two Applicants involved in the project were Burnac Produce Limited and Confederation Freezers, both based in Ontario.

Burnac Produce Limited is Canada's largest and most advanced produce distributor, with **307 employees** in 3 locations.

Confederation Freezers has been serving clients' temperature-controlled warehousing needs for nearly 50 years and has **252 employees** in 3 locations.

TDG and Fit First were selected to provide a solution to the attraction issue based on their experience and expertise in driving recruitment solutions. TDG Marketing has deep roots in recruitment marketing, and Fit First® Technologies provides high-volume behavioral job-matching technology for the purpose of better-guiding people toward the opportunities to which they are best suited.

TDG built a website for the pilot project called Jobs that Feed (www.jobsthatfeed.ca). The site was designed to be informational and attractive to the target visitor – anyone out of work, between jobs, or seeking to enter the workforce and curious about opportunities in the Food Processing industry.

While the site was under construction, TDG sent film crews to the participating employers' locations to interview real people in real jobs, documenting their career journey from the hire date to their current position. The resulting stories are compelling and paint a very different mid-to-long-term picture of what might be possible for new entrants beyond the first entry point.

Meanwhile, Fit First® worked with the employers to configure the behavioral job-matching platform to their needs. The plan was to use marketing efforts to drive people
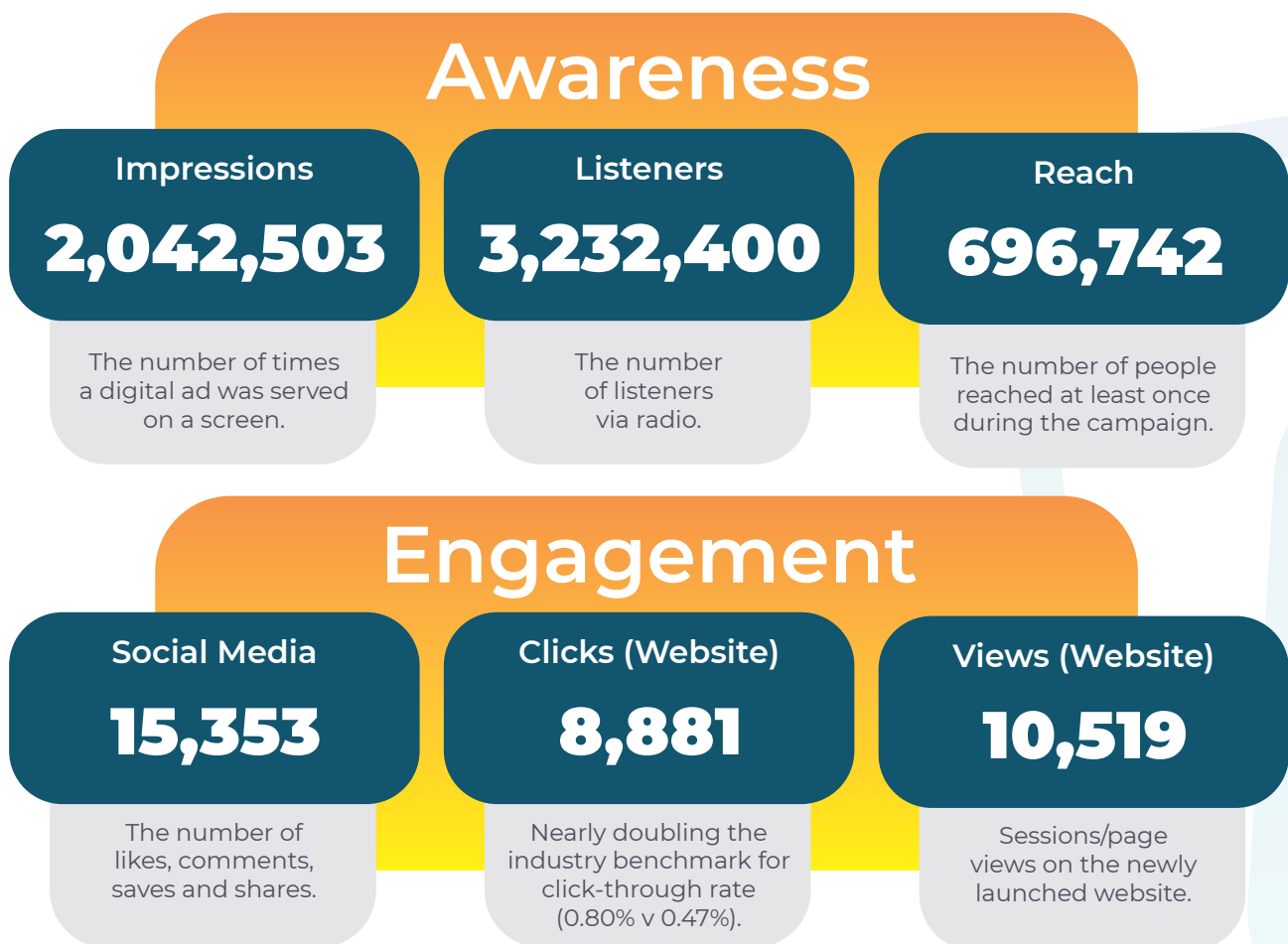
to the newly launched website, where they could browse open positions, search by geographic location, and apply directly online through Fit First's application tracking system. Applicants would be brought through a patented job-matching process, allowing employers to sort candidates based on their likely fit for not only the job they applied for, but other openings as well.

The Pilot Program
The website went live on November 1, 2022, and the pilot ended on November 30, 2022. The results over the month vastly exceeded expectations.

The marketing investments of creating engaging, industry-specific content for placement on the website and on selected social media channels proved to be a winning strategy. Radio ads in selected markets broadened the reach and reinforced the message of available high-quality and well-paying careers in the Food Processing industry, just waiting for the right people.

The marketing efforts were used to raise awareness and drive traffic/engagement. Results were excellent and delivered:

Awareness

Impressions	Listeners	Reach
2,042,503	**3,232,400**	**696,742**
The number of times a digital ad was served on a screen.	The number of listeners via radio.	The number of people reached at least once during the campaign.

Engagement

Social Media	Clicks (Website)	Views (Website)
15,353	**8,881**	**10,519**
The number of likes, comments, saves and shares.	Nearly doubling the industry benchmark for click-through rate (0.80% v 0.47%).	Sessions/page views on the newly launched website.

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The Results
The pilot achieved tremendous results within a very short window.

From a standing start on the first day of the month:

✔ 519 individuals applied for jobs within the 4-week campaign

✔ 314 completed the online assessments when applying

✔ 5 were hired, and applicants are continuing to be processed

Employers were quite frankly unprepared for the volume of applications. The applicant companies have asked for a Phase II, and other employers are seeking to join the program.

Beyond the Pilot
In the next phase, the marketing plan is to continue building content, add new pages to the website, include new markets as more employers join the mix, and reinforce it all by potentially layering in television commercials to build awareness, traffic and buzz further.

Fit First's platform amplified the marketing campaign's reach by pushing the open jobs onto major job boards, and their FitScore® technology made it easy for employers to hone in on the best candidates quickly and easily, saving time and accelerating the onboarding process.

Phase II will build out the User Experience for job seekers who visit the site by offering sophisticated career pathing tools. The behavioral job-matching software will provide the visitor with detailed, objective information about which entry-level roles they are best suited to (and why). It will also project them into a full industry-wide 'organization chart' to help them (as well as the participating employers) chart their possible growth path - be it in Operations, Sales, Marketing, Finance, HR or any other discipline in the industry. The overarching objective is to build and nurture the development of a talent pool for participating employers, with a longer-term objective of facilitating movement and career growth within the industry.

If you are interested in more information on how to participate in the Project, please feel free to reach out to us at info@fitfirsttech.com or call 1-800-513-7277 (toll free).

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