

# manhattangroup®

Hospitality's Recruiter of Choice

## Success Story: MANHATTAN GROUP



Engage with over  
half a million  
followers



Used social to  
become the most  
followed recruiter  
on Twitter



Growing  
average of 8,000  
new monthly  
followers



Increased an  
executive search  
firm's market  
share significantly

### How Axel Became One of the Most Successful and Influential Recruiters Worldwide

Would you believe us if we told you that one of [the top three most influential social media voices in Australia](#) isn't a celebrity, pop star, or politician, but a hospitality recruiter?

In just five years, [Axel Koster](#) has built a loyal following of over half a million followers from scratch. By creating a unique online personality through authentic conversation, Axel's messages have resonated with his audience. Today, he is [the most followed recruiter on Twitter](#), and in the top one percent of the most viewed LinkedIn profiles.

Axel gains a growing average of 8,000 new social media followers per month. Today, we find out who Axel really is and why he has celebrity status on social media. How did Axel get there so fast and how does this improve business for the recruiting firm he represents?

Axel is the General Manager at [Manhattan Group](#), based in Melbourne, Australia. Manhattan Group is one of the top hospitality recruiting firms for executive roles worldwide. In 2009, the CEO of Manhattan Group, John D. Ortnier, recognised the growing importance of social media for recruitment (especially when connecting worldwide) and tasked Axel with building a strong web presence.

Intrigued by his overall success, we chatted with Axel to learn the secrets of how he built up his personal and professional brand, developed a winning social media strategy, and used his influence to make Manhattan Group one of the world's top recruiting firms.



## 1. Personal and professional branding

It's hard to believe, but Axel was originally skeptical of the value that social media would provide him and the Manhattan Group. Slowly but steadily, Axel began to analyse market trends and realised social media was a huge opportunity and could play a vital role in getting their brand message out and connecting with a global audience.

With the first few hundred Twitter followers, Axel decided to create branded hashtags and establish his voice. #AxelJob was created for broadcasting any of the Manhattan Groups open positions.

As a lively, positive, and energetic individual, Axel decided to come up with #AxelHappy. The #AxelHappy tag is used to share inspirational and motivational quotes on a daily base. Over time, clients and job candidates started turning to #AxelJob on Twitter and LinkedIn instead of job boards.

The more helpful content he shared with his following—whether interesting content, job opportunities, or inspiration—and the more he engaged in conversations and RTs, the greater his following and influence.

Once his social media follower growth shot past a few thousand, he began looking for a platform to help listen, engage, and track his growth. "Once I found out about Hootsuite for combining all of my social media accounts to stay organized, everything just took off," says Axel. From the get-go, Hootsuite helped him stay engaged. He could schedule his jobs and inspirational messages allowing him to engage with his followers in real time. This is all because the streams and tabs layout made conversations easier to view and manage. "Some of my greatest relationships are entirely online," he says.



"Social media is about listening and helping, rather than telling and selling."

*Axel Koster,  
General Manager, Manhattan Group*



Social Savvy - Voted #1 in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

## 2. A winning social media strategy

Manhattan Group represents talent in 91 countries, so reaching a wider audience has been important from the beginning. "Social media brings your world closer to you," he says. "But you need to reach and appeal to all of those different audiences—and across several platforms."

Interesting, relevant content is only one piece of Axel's strategy. He also treats every social channel as a unique platform for connecting with people and uses hashtags to encourage specific actions from his audience. The core of Axel's social strategy across different channels is simple: "Twitter is for marketing and branding, Facebook is for friends, and LinkedIn is for business."

His Twitter and LinkedIn activity markets the firm's opportunities through job postings and is also used to brand himself (and by translation, the agency) through other engaging content. More specifically, LinkedIn has become an essential professional platform for recruiters. This is where Axel connects with prospective employees, employers, and influencers in recruitment. LinkedIn profiles help recruiters quickly learn about potential candidates and is the one space where recruiters, employers, and employees can connect all together.

To put things into perspective, Axel is in the top one percent of most-viewed profiles, often receiving over 30 LinkedIn invitations and 200 notifications every day. He has also started coaching and teaching to help companies and individuals successfully communicate on social media channels.

"Ask yourself, what do you want your audience to get out of your content and how will you make that clear? It's all about content, NOT numbers."

*Axel Koster,  
General Manager, Manhattan Group*



### 3. Use influence to gain partnerships and clients

Social media can be an effective and targeted recruiting and hiring tool, but only when used properly. Candidates now know exactly where to look when searching for career opportunities, and successful recruiting firms such as Manhattan Group are spending less time and resources with better results.

Many of Manhattan Group's clients are on social media. Using Hootsuite, Axel can send a quick direct message to a potential candidate, and connect immediately—anywhere in the world. Before social media, they would send an email or call to connect. "Today, we can get business quicker, and have smoother, more pointed conversations in an instant," he says. "Agencies can be instantly connected to anyone, anywhere."

#### Final Takeaways

Axel's success as a recruiter comes from a distinct and unique way of branding himself in the social media arena. He's found the sweet spot where sharing great content, being highly engaged, and knowing different audiences has paid off in impressive growth.

In just a few short years, Axel has built up a community of over a half a million highly engaged social media followers. His influencer-status on social media has not only helped Manhattan Group gain significant market share online, but also helped him establish a strong personal network of clients and job candidates. He is now one of the most successful and trusted recruiters in the Asia Pacific region, and even worldwide.

"Serious recruiting agencies with a strong social media presence are rapidly gaining market share, and those without, are missing out."

*Axel Koster,  
General Manager, Manhattan Group*

Start developing your recruiting strategy on social. Try Hootsuite Pro today.

