

EXTRACT



December 2020

# A Christmas Case Study

Emerging Trends Programme





## Introduction and context

It's almost impossible not to be intimidated by Elliot Scrooge. As the co-founder and CEO of Ebeneezr—one of the UK's fastest growing software providers—Scrooge is a titan of the London fintech scene.

“We're not just providing a service,” Scrooge told us when we interviewed him for this report. “Our raison d'être from day one has been to disrupt the entire debt collection market through cutting edge, cloud-native, digital-first solutions.”

But his occasionally unconventional business practices have also made him one of Silicon Roundabout's most controversial figures. For example: At a time when other billionaires have been publicly pledging to donate their wealth to worthy causes, Scrooge has always been openly disdainful of philanthropy.



**Ebeneezr**



*Elliot Scrooge ranked world's least charitable person fifth year in a row*

The Guardian, January 2020



*'Worse than a workhouse!' Former Ebeneezr employees speak out*

The Sunday Times, March 2020



*New poll finds billionaire Scrooge less popular than the coronavirus*

Daily Mail, June 2020



## Bringing in the consultants

Growth abounds in the North Pole market, but we think there are three things that firms looking to grow in this market need to address.



Rob Cratchit, Ebenezer's Head of HR, was concerned about high rates of staff turnover and low morale among employees. Unless something was done, there was a danger the company would lose market share to their biggest competitor, Copperfield Solutions.



Fortunately, Scrooge remembered that his old business partner Jake Marley had recently launched a new consulting firm: Marley & Associates.

While it didn't have the scale of its larger competitors, the firm had already established a name for itself through innovative thought leadership; e.g., their much-discussed white paper entitled "Please Sir, May I Have Some More: Reimagining Childhood Nutrition For The Twenty-First Century."



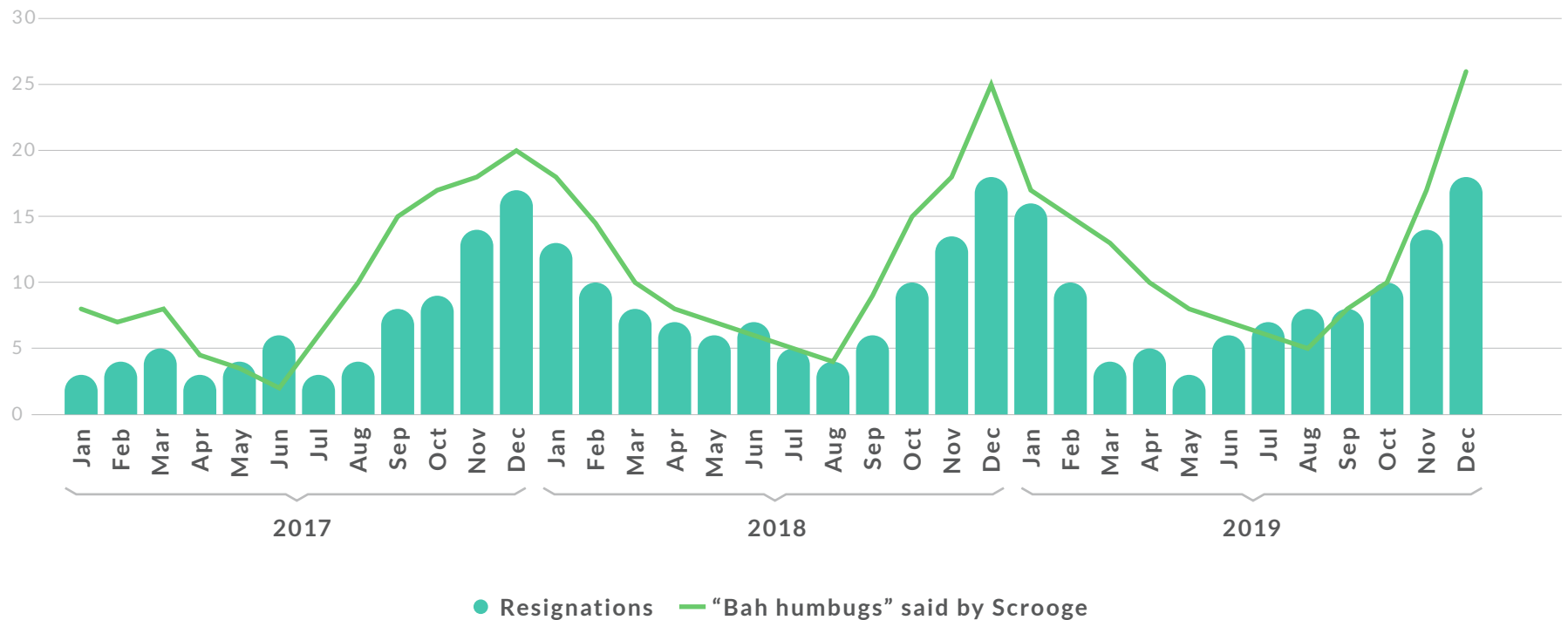
Marley & Associates didn't have much capability in the HR consulting space—but the firm did have access to an extensive, spectral ecosystem of freelance consulting ghosts. Marley arranged for three of these ghosts to visit Scrooge and help him fix his morale problem.



## Phase 1: Historical data analysis

First to visit Scrooge was the **Ghost Of Consulting Past**. “He was a real old-school consultant”, Scrooge said. “He set up camp in a conference room down the hall from my office, and I’m not sure I ever saw him leave it. I’d show up in the mornings and he’d already be 30 slides deep into a new PowerPoint deck.”

The ghost of consulting past spent his time analysing historical data to find patterns in staff turnover. The ghost noticed that there was a spike in resignations every Christmas—and presented this finding to Scrooge and the rest of the leadership team as part of a six-hour workshop.





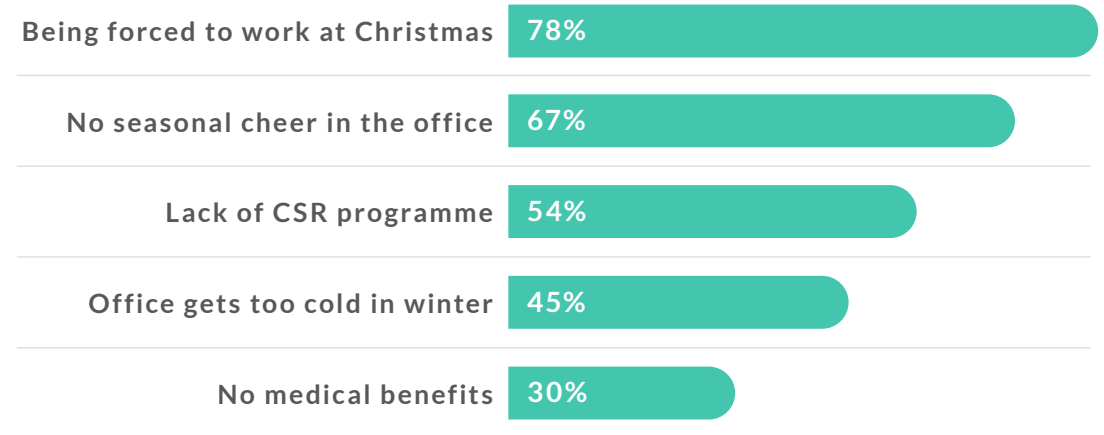
## Phase 2: As-is assessment

Next came the **Ghost Of Consulting Present**. This consultant had a very different way of working, according to Scrooge. “We held most of our meetings over Zoom. The one time she did come to our office, she refused to sit on any of our furniture, and insisted on bringing her own beanbag chair and exercise ball instead.”

This ghost spent her time interviewing stakeholders at every level of the company, asking them to identify the problems behind these recent morale issues.

When she shared the outputs of these interviews with Scrooge, he started to realise the full scale of the problem. “It was a real eye-opener,” he told us. “It forced me to think very hard about my role in creating a positive working environment.”

### Top issues identified by employees



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Source Information Services Ltd  
20 Little Britain | London | EC1A 7DH  
UK +44 (0)20 3478 1207

US +1 800 767 8058  
[info@sourceglobalresearch.com](mailto:info@sourceglobalresearch.com)  
[www.sourceglobalresearch.com](http://www.sourceglobalresearch.com)

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