

Employer branding is not only about hiring

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Employer branding has been a widely approached topic in the last years. The motivation is pretty self-evident: by implementing proper marketing strategies, companies are aiming at attracting new qualified employees. Still, marketing is not enough. The core of any employer branding communication should be company culture.

Employer branding works as an integral part of a branding strategy. It is concerned with

- Improving the company's reputation
- Attracting potential candidates in the labor market
- Increasing the number of qualified CVs received
- Improving the loyalty of employees
- Engaging and retaining employees
- Improving the identification of employees with a company
- Lowering fluctuation and keeping healthy employee retention

Being one of its integral parts, employer branding should not be disconnected from the rest of the company strategy. Employees themselves perceive (marketing) activities performed by their employer - half-truth benefits listed in job descriptions written by the HR department may not work as desired. It is much wiser to engage employees themselves; a working employer brand should grow out of the company itself - its brand and culture. And the brand should grow out of employees.

By offering their perception, employees may provide meaningful insights into their thoughts on the employer as well as insights into their private lives. By knowing their free-time activities, preferred news and education sources, favorite YouTube channels or vacation destinations, marketers are able to prepare better-targeted campaigns to find and attract similar audiences outside of the company.

Common company message
The main goals, messages, target

groups, and communication strategies should be set at the beginning. No matter the company size, each C-level manager, employee or recruiter usually has his or her own perception of the company's purpose, vision, and goals. Therefore, all ideas within the company should be cleared and unified, and one common message agreed on. This message will serve as the main idea to build on and connect all sub-messages that are to be distributed throughout target groups.

importance from the point of view of the goals set.

Content matters

What matters the most is the content distributed. You may have finances, creative marketing department and hiring strategies, however, you may never reach the desired success without an appealing company culture. According to Gary Vaynerchuk, it works as an operating system and the core of any branding/hiring strategy - everything else are just supporting applications.

Just make a list of the company's successes, awards, benefits, events, future plans, and visions, projects you are working on. Give your employees a chance to become ambassadors of your brand both online and offline and make them create your content. By doing this, you will get an authentic and truthful content that may be appealing to your audiences - without much effort.

The other step should be to identify platforms that your target groups use - both online and offline - and distribute your content there. Platforms should be adjusted to the stage your audience is currently at - content shown to a person who has never heard about you should be different from the content shown to a person who is already familiar with your company.

From a marketing perspective, this approach relates to the SEE - THINK - DO - CARE framework, that divides you audience into four stages:

- SEE - largest addressable qualified audience
- THINK - largest addressable

qualified audience with some commercial intent

- DO - largest addressable qualified audience with loads of commercial intent
- CARE - current customers / employees

By using this framework, you should be able to identify the current needs of your audience and adjust your content accordingly. Still, creative banners on social networks may not be sufficient. Before launching any marketing activity, it is important to go through the basic marketing checklist to be sure the company is able to measure, optimize, and evaluate all its activities:

- Responsive website
- Continuous work on search engine optimization
- Implemented tracking codes
- Advanced audience segmentation and personalization
- Reasonable usage of marketing platforms
- Omni-channel strategy
- Optimization and evaluation of campaigns

The checklist relates to both internal and external communication - these should be interconnected and have some common content and graphical features (e.g. hashtags, messages, colors, etc.) to make sure one can associate and identify with the company's branding on any given platform.

Continuous evaluation and optimization of the content helps improve content quality and identify what your audience is mostly interested in. By analyzing all the available data, a company may improve its online and offline presence - with the aim of producing content that helps fulfill all employer branding goals set at the beginning, and create an appealing brand people want to be a part of.

Give your employees a chance to become ambassadors of your brand both online and offline and make them create your content.

There is never only one audience to target. Employer branding should be approached from broader perspectives - it is not only about future employees.

It is as much about existing employees, and their families; but also about students, graduates, local perception by the general public, and many more. All these target groups should get their own share in the branding activities according to their