- EBook -

Recruitment Marketing

What it is and who is it for?

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Introduction

What is Recruitment Marketing?

Recruitment marketing is a process that uses the same methodologies in marketing to attract talented candidates, not customers. Its purpose is to promote the employer brand of an organization, not its commercial brand. ‘Why do I need it if my HR department takes care of recruiting?’, you may ask. The difference is that recruitment only focuses on current or future hiring needs; recruitment marketing is a much broader function that aims to bring out the best in your organization. The end goal is to make your brand a desirable place to work for at all times.

Let us have a look at a side-by-side comparison between recruiting and recruitment marketing:

	Recruiting	Recruitment marketing
Outlook	Reactive: is initiated only when a hiring need becomes acute.	Proactive: is an ongoing process of promoting the company; it doesn’t stop just because all job vacancies were filled.
Relationship	“1-to-1” as candidates are contacted and evaluated individually	“1-to-many” as it doesn’t target specific people but buyer personas.
Layout	Managed by one department within the organization	Managed by multiple departments within the organization
Person in charge	HR professional, recruiter, hiring manager	Talent manager, talent acquisition manager, recruitment marketing manager, HR professional, people manager.

It’s no secret that the most talented people don’t search for jobs. In many industries, such as tech, it’s the other way around. For savvy recruiters to win the talent war, the key is to adopt that more strategic mindset to attract and retain the right people for their organizational needs.

For recruitment marketing to work, it needs to be done strategically and usually in collaboration with the marketing teams. As for the end goal, its purpose is to build a talent pipeline of top tier candidates.

> “Recruitment marketing extracts your current recruiting activities and improves them, making them more efficient by connecting the dots in between. Its purpose is to create an engaging, highly customized candidate experience.”

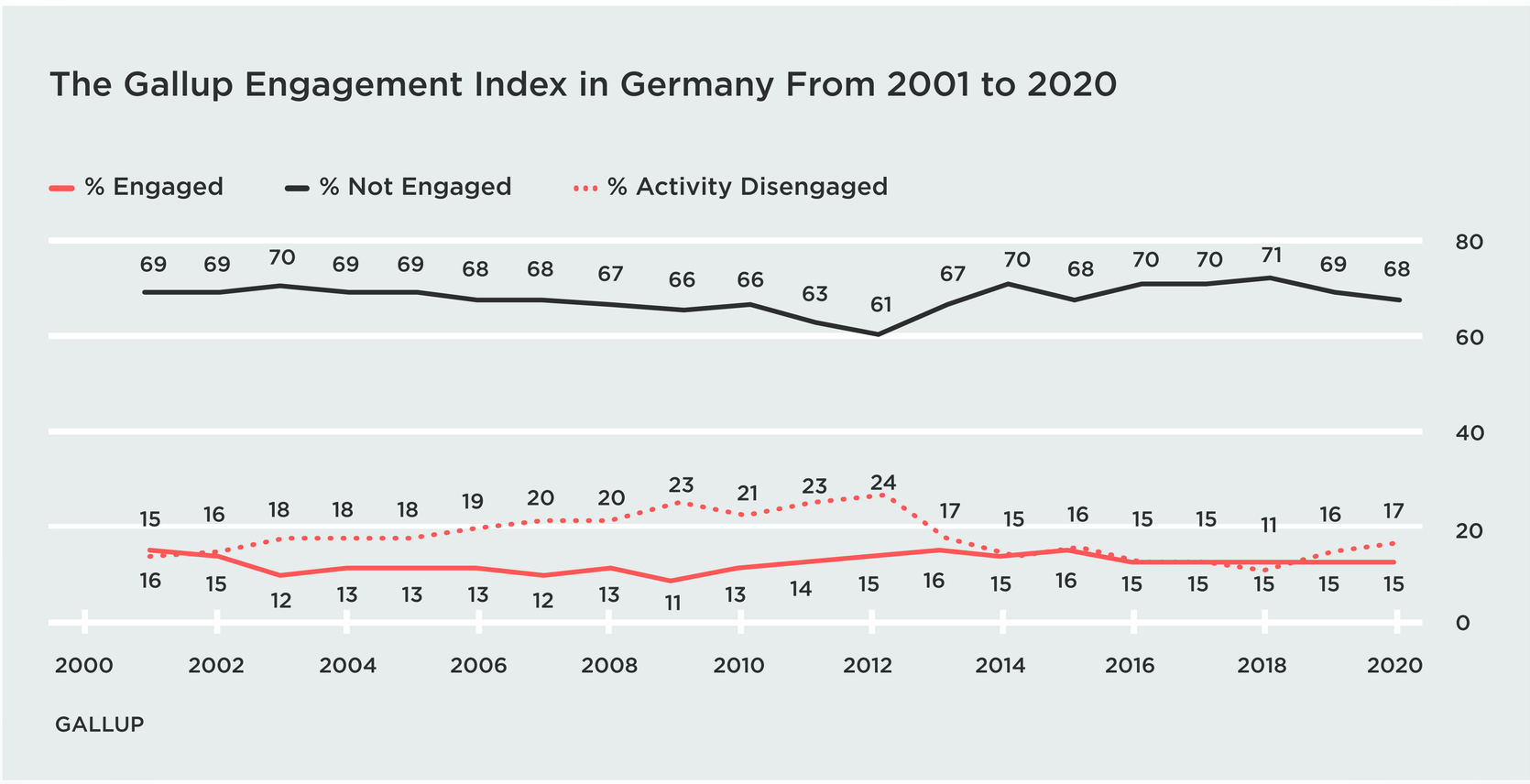
In terms of the benefits, recruitment marketing will help you:

- Improve employee retention
- Build a trustworthy, strong employer brand
- Reduce hiring costs
- Develop a qualified talent pool
- Increase overall candidate experience
- Build & nurture candidate relationships (e.g. for future hires)
- Keep current employees engaged

To understand WHY recruitment marketing matters, let us first have a look at the importance of employee engagement.

The state of employee engagement in Germany

Gallup has been keeping an eye on workplace experiences in Germany since 2001. In general, recessions, technology, and as of recently, a global pandemic, would have some sort of impact on employee experiences. In some ways, Covid-19 had some contribution. Burnout and stress rates spiked. Surprisingly, it didn't have any impact on employee engagement. In Germany, the engagement rate hasn't changed at all in the past two decades, and the percentage of engaged people at work is somewhere between 11% and 17%.



In the context of productivity, the incapacity to meet employee needs may appear irrelevant. It's no secret that Germany is one of the world's largest exporters and numerous German products are known for their high-quality. However, there are industries facing tremendous turnover and skills gaps.

68% of the German workforce are not engaged and 15% are actively disengaged; a percentage that indicates that the level of frustration people have at their jobs could damage the company they're working for. This segment alone costs between 96 billion EUR and 114 billion EUR per year, according to Gallup estimates. As for the cost drivers for the active disengagement, these are:

- Burnout: 50% disengaged vs 26% engaged
- Absenteeism: companies love an average of 288 EUR per day for each employee that doesn't come to work
- Poor ambassadorship: only 8% of disengaged employees would recommend their company to a friend
- Turnover: out of 41% of actively disengaged employees, 19% are on the market searching for a new job

With the costs of disengagement so high, how can German companies become an employer of choice? The key is to prioritize more on candidate experience. According to **LinkedIn,** “companies with solid employer brands receive 50% more qualified applicants”.

Expert advice!

Dr. Karolina Kettler
Senior HR Manager

POPCORE

“Never forget about the people with whom you started a company. It’s very easy to forget when new people with more experience come in. It’s great that you’re focusing on recruitment and growth, but make sure to include old employees in redesigning the structure of your company, as well. Never let them behind.”

Don’t wait for disengagement to kick in - get your recruitment marketing strategy in check

Taken separately, recruitment marketing and marketing have their own sole purpose. Traditional marketing deals with crafting strategies to promote a company’s products, services, and tell the overall story of the organization. Recruitment marketing tells the story of your company culture, your workplace, and ultimately, your employees.

In general, the strategies may leverage the following methods:

- Events (e.g. hackathons, webinars, conferences)
- Videos (e.g. employee testimonials, company videos)
- Interviews (e.g. employee interviews)
- Content (e.g. blog posts, ebooks)
- Creative social media campaigns

Regardless of your strategy, the ultimate goal is to increase company awareness, boost your employer brand, and communicate your values openly so that you can attract people that resonate with them.

Why do you need a strategy?

Recruitment marketing builds a bridge between marketing and recruitment, connecting the dots and creating the backbone of a proactive strategy by helping you:

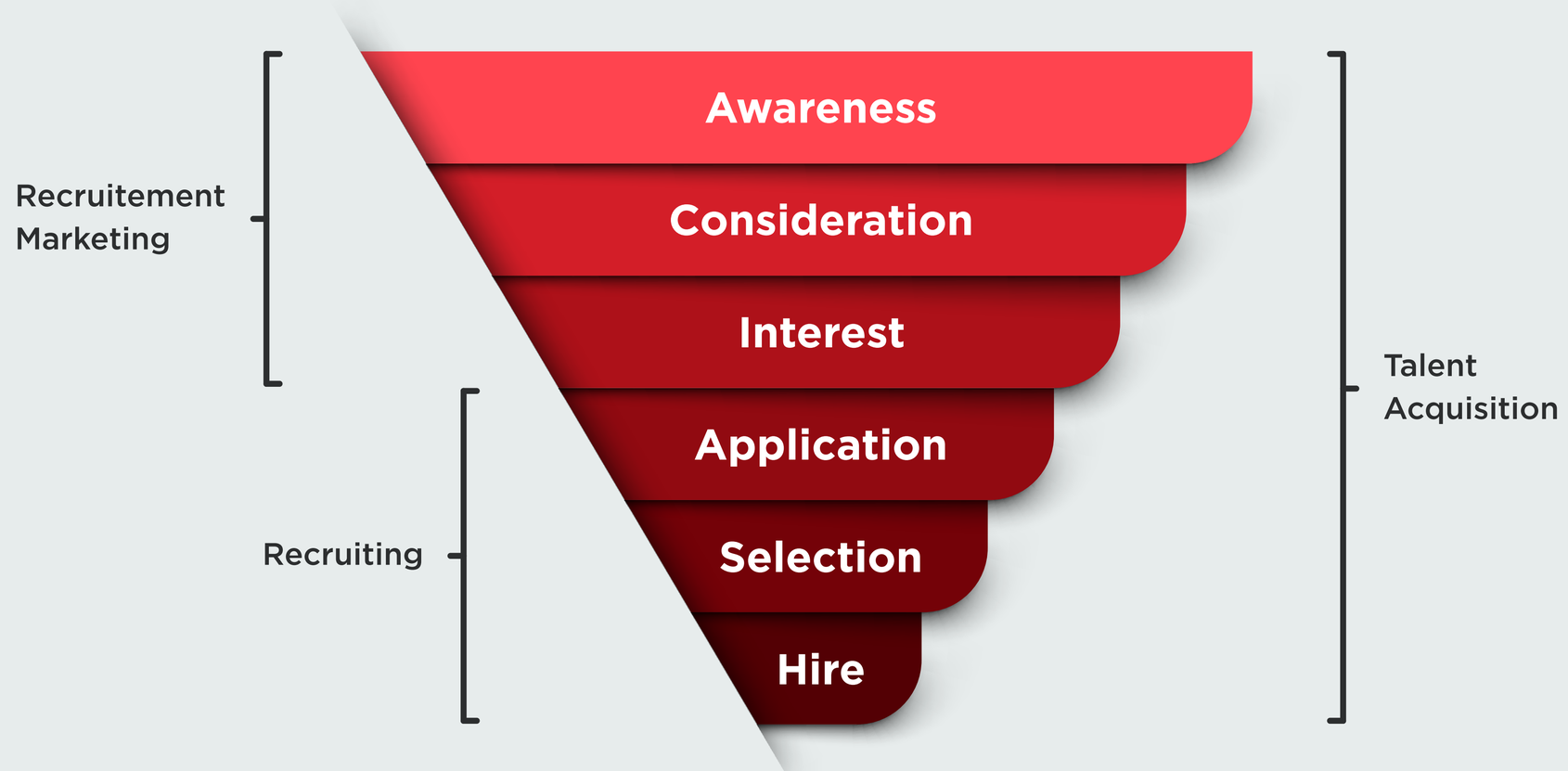
- Build an authoritative employer brand (that’s not just mass-market appeal)
- Segment candidates, dividing them into talent networks with custom campaigns and proper communication
- Appeal to your audience at-scale, recognizing what sort of content keeps them engaged
- Optimize your careers site, capturing and converting quality candidates
- Nurture talent pools, ensuring they stay warm year-round

“Recruitment marketing doesn’t bring MORE candidates. It brings BETTER candidates. With creative content customized to your ideal candidates, they can decide for themselves if they fit your company.”

The three essential steps in recruitment marketing that come before strategy

First thing’s first: don’t judge people until you’ve walked a few miles in their shoes. Excellent advice for anyone, in general, and highly applicable in recruitment marketing, too. Getting into the head of your candidates, understanding how they feel and how they think when engaging with your company can help you make the recruitment process smoother and more efficient. The right way to do it is by **mastering the candidate journey.**

Recruiting vs. **Recruitement Marketing**



You can’t (and shouldn’t) develop a recruitment marketing strategy without understanding the journey of your candidate first. It’s the 3-stage process of the job seeker. Awareness, Consideration, and Interest. Similarly to the “customer journey” seen in traditional marketing, candidates also go through various stages when searching for a new job. To some degree, they must be treated as customers. Every stage in the journey involves some sort of action that you need to take. It’s meticulous, but it’s the best approach when the end goal is to get a 1-on-1 job interview.

Expert advice!

Maike Hartung
Employer Branding Manager

commercetools
Next generation commerce

“Employer branding comes from within. To me, employer branding accompanies the employees throughout their whole work life at a company from the first day that they actually build the desire to work there, through the application phase, through the recruiting phase, the onboarding phase.”

Here’s why:

- It compels recruiters to assess and reassess the candidate experience. Studies show that 60% of candidates have dealt with a negative candidate experience at some point in their lives. Out of that percentage, 72% talked about their bad experience, either in person or online. For companies, it’s an opportunity to analyze how negative feedback can be improved to eventually boost recruitment efforts.
- It gives recruiters an opportunity to reevaluate the path candidates go through, starting from the Awareness stage all the way to Hiring.

And now let’s dive deeper into the three stages:

Step #1

Awareness

The aim of this step is to build awareness around your company and let your candidates know more about your employer brand. This can be done in numerous ways like:

- Job posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, or websites like Glassdoor, Indeed.com
- Job ads (e.g. paid ads on Facebook, Google, LinkedIn)
- Other social media campaigns (e.g. landing page campaigns, meet-ups, hackathons, conferences)

Takeaway

Do your best to delight your target audience, nothing more. Proactive promotion of your employer brand on social media is critical for people to SEE you. At this stage, you shouldn’t focus too much on getting applicants. Remember, it’s a “get-to-know-me” process that takes time and patience.

Step #2

Consideration

The aim of this step is to get potential candidates to see your company as their next employer. To achieve that goal, every piece of content published should give them more information about your business. In general, the very first time people notice your ads for example, they won't dig deeper. That's why you need to be ready ahead of time. Every article, landing page, ad, or blog post that is recruitment marketing related must have CTAs directing potential candidates to your career website. Share with them valuable information about your culture, company mission, vision, and values. Your careers website matters, but we'll talk more about this subject in the following chapters.

Takeaway

The smoother the path from Awareness to Consideration, the greater the chances you'll have to engage potential candidates on to the 3rd step - Interest.

Step #3

Interest

The aim of this step is to convince potential candidates to act and start applying to your job openings. You've given them enough time to know your employer brand in the Awareness and Consideration stage, and think of you as a trusted employer. Now it's all about maintaining the interest.

Takeaway

1 in 5 candidates will not apply to a job opening if the application takes over 20 minutes (CareerBuilder). Lengthy applications will have a negative experience on the candidate journey. Here's what you can do to make things easier:

- **Test the application process for all jobs posted. Verify links, typos, and ideally, ask for feedback from someone who works in a similar role at your company. Otherwise, you could be missing out on important details related to the candidate experience.**
- **Make the application process mobile friendly. According to Glassdoor, 58% of candidates today use their smartphones to find new jobs. But unresponsive, faulty pages lead to 53% fewer applications.**

Expert advice!

David Thompson
Employer Branding Consultant
& Director

EMPLOYER BRANDING made easy

"If you don't have a great story to tell, or you have but you aren't telling it well, you are going to struggle to find talent. It doesn't really doesn't matter what sector you're in at the moment. It's gone beyond being a nice-to-have, and it's now an absolutely critical pillar of any resourcing strategy."

How to create a recruitment marketing strategy

If you want your company to attract top talent, you need a bulletproof recruitment marketing strategy. However, for it to work the focus should be on people who are on par with your company culture. It's no secret that hiring qualified candidates has become increasingly challenging, especially in the ever changing tech field.

In almost every industry, companies depend on developers; and that makes the recruitment process even more intricate. 86% of employers argue that skilled programmers are tough to find. In Berlin, it takes about 50 days to hire one developer. And if you're looking for someone who is also culture fit, the process can take longer. To win in a demanding and overly competitive market, the key is to develop a customized recruitment marketing strategy; a flexible strategy that can adapt to different scenarios and circumstances (hey there, Covid-19!).

Start with the basics, stay focused, and be delightful!

Create a recruitment marketing plan

Let's assume that your company has developed a trusted employer brand and an amazing work culture. What comes next? This is where planning enters the scene. Your plan should answer the following question: what's your goal? And please, don't say that it's attracting, hiring, and retaining 10 full-stack developers in 3 months. Make it SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, & Timely.

For example, you should consider smaller goals to get closer to THE goal, like:

- Increase engagement for the employer branding content you post on social media
- Increase the amount of applications from social channels
- Improve candidate engagement in the hiring process
- Increase company awareness in a specific city
- Increase your company following on LinkedIn

In this phase, it is important to be realistic. Stay organized, measure the response you get, and improve as you go.

All eyes on amazing content for each candidate persona

For your plan to start working, make sure it's targeted. Building your candidate persona is crucial at this stage in the process. WHO is (are) your ideal candidate (s)? Think about some core characteristics of the prospects you wish to convert into candidates. Feel free to use the template below:

BIO

Who is your candidate persona?

- Age
- Position
- Title
- Salary
- Location
- Education
- Experience
- Social background

GOALS

Reasons to change jobs?

- Life goals
- Career inspirations

JOB SEARCH BEHAVIOR

How do they look for jobs?

- Active or passive
- Mobile, desktop, friends, family...

PERSONALITY

What are theur main personality trait?

- What would their psychometric analysis show?

MOTIVATION

What motivates them?

- Firm's reputation
- Mission & vision
- Values and norms
- Organizational culture
- Pay & benefits
- Projects & innovations
- Work environment
- Learning & education
- Colleagues and managers

FRUSTRATIONS

What frustrates them?

- Why do they want to change jobs?
- Barriers to change current jobs

CHANNELS

Where do they look for jobs?

- Social Media, referrals, job boards, career sites...

SKILLS

Their primary skills & attributes?

- Area in wich they have most knowledge and experience

INFLUENCERS

Who influences their decisioins?

- Family & friends
- Partners
- Current employer and colleagues
- HR managers, recruiters, CEOs
- Future employee and future colleagues

CONTENT & RESOURCES

Which and who's information will they trust?

- Job ads on job boards
- Social Media jobs and posts
- Corporate sites and career sites
- Current employees and leaders
- Talent networking events

Following the candidate persona step, move on to crafting amazing content for each individual persona. Introduce them to company culture and **showcase your EVP**, the backbone of any employer brand strategy. Why would anyone come work at your company? What makes you different from other market competitors? Sure, salary and benefits play an important role, but financial incentives alone won't help with retention.

After defining your goals and personas, the next step in your strategy is to create amazing content that resonates with multiple areas of your ideal candidate's journey. The days of the basic Career Page are long gone. Of course, posting job openings is still a critical component. But don't expect candidates will just click and apply. They won't.

Aim at various types of content, like:

- Blog posts (e.g. trends, how-to's, benefits of..., top 10 X ..., company news)
- Infographics
- Weekly/monthly newsletters
- Videos
- Events (e.g. webinars, conferences, hackathons)
- Job ad copywriting
- Creative landing pages

Speaking of creative landing pages, we created the coolest awareness campaign for Mambu. We developed a game called "A Mambu Game of Work-Life Balance".

Our goals:

01. Internal

Increase engagement among Mambu employees

02. External

Raise company awareness on social media

Let's figure out a creative concept for you!

Keep in mind: You'll want to develop an arsenal of amazing employer branding & recruiting content for your candidates to see you. Make it frequent, targeted, high-quality, and creative!

Choose the right channel for your target audience

What channels are mostly preferred by your candidate personas? Which ones do they share and comment on the most? Figuring out these insights will help you stay focused. You want a long-term strategy that can also help strengthen your employer brand; a brand that eventually does all the heavy lifting, and that's attracting the people your company needs to build a sustainable workforce for the future.

Before getting started, do a little research. Facebook, for example, uses interest-based and demographic targeting, as opposed to LinkedIn that is focused more on professional targeting (e.g. job title, seniority, place of work, and industry). In the DACH area, there's a **battle between LinkedIn and Xing**; both of them are very strong professional platforms. While LinkedIn has 15 million users in the DACH area, Xing has 18 million.

It's up to you to decide where you want to be! Just make sure to choose the right channel for your target audience. With over 11 million followers, IBM is one of LinkedIn's most influential technology brands. The company uses LinkedIn to share employee stories, company developments, trends, and a lot more. IBM even has a separate LinkedIn page for its company culture called "**Life at IBM**".

Expert advice!

Noa Levav
Recruiting and Employer Branding Manager

Productsup

"I think employee experience, in general, should be prioritized whether a company is 100% remote or based in the office."

It’s not a written rule that your company should be on LinkedIn, or only on LinkedIn. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube can also work. You just have to figure out which of the channels mentioned are appealing to your candidate persona.

Delight passive candidate with proactive attraction

As painfully as it may sound, sometimes the best candidates for your available roles are taken. Passive candidates are just as valuable (if not more) as the active job seekers. In highly competitive industries, you’re chasing after people who are perfectly happy in their current positions. The goal here is not to hunt or chase them, but to delight them with proactive content.

Make yourself visible, attractive, and plain irresistible! A lot of companies are stuck in a reactive mindset. They do a campaign based on need and they stop as soon as that need is filled. Or worse, they’re in a hurry to fill a role, so they do it with the applicants that they have, whether or not those applicants are qualified. That’s not the way to sustainable, scalable growth for your company.

Switching from reactive to proactive recruitment is all about getting in front of passive candidates. It’s about nurturing relationships and establishing connections with THE TAKEN. The more you focus on strengthening your employer brand and building awareness around your organization, the better chances you have to spark interest. You want top talent to see you, check up on you, read & share what you post. Do it consistently enough and you’ll get on their radar. Do it one in a while and you’ll never be noticed.

Revamp your Careers Page

A Careers Page is so much more than a section of your company’s website where you post job openings . It should be your best tool for nurturing your employer brand. There’s no point in promoting any content anywhere if your CTA doesn’t take them to an awesome Career Page. That should be the HEART of your employer brand.

In fact, 64% of active job seekers argue that a well-crafted career page is a valuable resource when looking for a job. To make yours high-quality, give candidates a story and a good reason to make a decision in your favor.

Cool tip

Use Google Analytics to measure time spent and bounce rate on your Careers Page. Are visitors spending 20 seconds on your page, or 2 minutes? If it’s 20 seconds, you’re definitely not engaging them and in this case, some serious tweaks need to be done. But if it’s 2 minutes, it means you’re interesting. Don’t be disappointed that nobody applied. It’s about how long they stayed on the page to read and get to know your company.

Expert advice!

Johannes Wichmann
Employer Branding Manager

NEW WORK

“What we probably share most across all our brand is our EVP, which kind of reflects our beliefs, where we want to work and also what we want to communicate to the outside. And we try to create an environment in each of our brands where everybody can be true to themselves and be the person that they really want to be.”

Spotify has done a great job at humanizing the company's employer brand with its Careers Page. It includes a slogan at the very beginning and a video featuring real employees sharing from their work experience at Spotify. Also, they have the company mission and vision clearly stated, as well as a special section called "Life at Spotify", dedicated to their company culture. Overall, it's clean, user-friendly, and human.

Steps to take to build a WOW Careers Page for your company:

- Your company messaging should be adapted to your Careers Page
- Tell your story in different ways (e.g. video, employee stories, testimonials)
- Be clear about who you are - don't make your company description too fluffy
- Write your content with candidate persona in mind
- Be honest when walking about perks
- Make your page mobile friendly
- Beautiful design shouldn't be overlooked (e.g. office images, people images, cool graphics)
- Make the application process smooth and easy
- Don't go overboard with your CTAs

Now that you have some idea of what recruitment marketing is and how to craft a recruitment marketing strategy that sparks interest, let's dive into the benefits of using recruitment marketing technology to attract top talent.

How to define & measure the success of a recruitment marketing campaign?

By now, you should have some understanding of what recruitment marketing is and why it matters when looking to hire top talent. Now let's detangle the concept of a recruitment marketing campaign - what it is, why you need one, and how to measure success following its completion.

What is a recruitment marketing campaign?

A recruitment marketing campaign is a concept; a cluster of your company's best attributes transposed into activities that will help strengthen your employer brand and position your company as an employer of choice in front of your target candidate persona (s).

Before kickstarting a campaign you need:

- Campaign SMART goals
- Candidate persona, aka your ideal candidate
- Unique campaign concept based on your UVP & targeted at your ideal candidate
- Personalized content you want to put out there, aka the activities
- The channels you want target
- A marketing budget

Expert advice!

Katrina Gnatek
Employer Branding Manager

taxfix

“Especially if you’re working in a startup environment, or sort of like a mid-stage company, your EVP is going to develop and mature with you. I think it’s absolutely something that you can’t just do once and call it a day.”

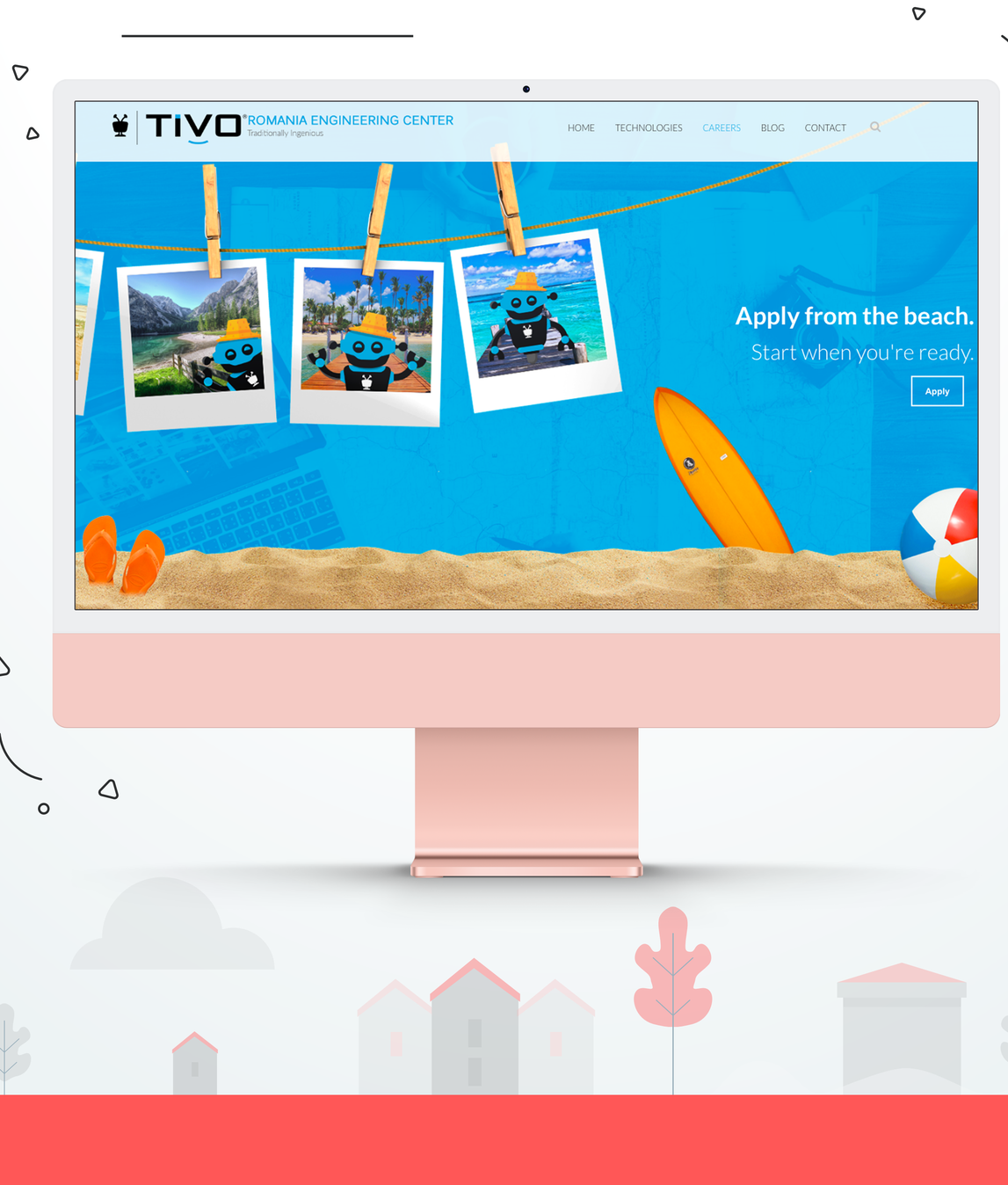
Why do you need a recruitment marketing campaign?

The competition is killing you. The most qualified candidates are TAKEN. Your company culture is amazing but nobody knows that. You have a weak presence on social media. You have a need to hire a very specific category of people. The reasons could go on and on ...

For the past year we’ve been working closely with IT companies on their employer branding strategies. What we’ve discovered is that the trick is to give people the freedom of choice and the liberty to choose whenever they feel ready, without any pressure. For that, we create standalone employer branding campaigns targeted at a specific audience. We use creative concepts to convey the messages that describe the company best, highlighting what makes it different from other players in the field.

It’s not easy since, to be honest, many IT companies are quite similar and finding that unique value proposition is always a challenge – luckily, it’s worth all the effort. With standalone employer branding campaigns that consist of a creative concept, a landing page and a series of social media and Adwords ads (highly targeted), potential candidates learn what makes the company special and if they see it as a match for them, they contact the company when they are ready.

As a matter of fact, we did such a campaign for TiVo. The concept was based on giving people the liberty to start when they feel ready. No HR stalking, no pressure, no rush. The campaign was called “Apply from the beach. Start when you’re ready.”



Another important aspect that you can easily convey through standalone campaigns is your human side. IT companies are oftentimes viewed as big corporations where people don't feel that they're making a difference. Through a creative concept, that view can be changed.

One tried and tested way to get the right people on board is to show them what a great adventure awaits for them in the form of an exciting project where their skills make all the difference. To give you an example here, we've completed a co-branded campaign for youngculture and Pearson. Whoever felt like they wanted to work on a big project, could apply to join youngculture on a role that was part of the Pearson project.

How do you measure the success of your recruitment marketing campaign?

Whether we like it or not, we live in a hyper-competitive job market. Without a strong, detailed recruitment marketing strategy you can't really stand out. But how do you measure results? How do you know your campaigns are worth the effort? This is where recruitment metrics come in.

Metrics show you:

- Where you spent your budget
- Which parts of your campaign had the most impact
- What social channels are best for your candidate personas

In the lines below, we've detailed some key metrics your recruitment team must monitor to understand both success and failure. Some of them are easy to understand because they're based on tools, whereas others are more subjective and tough to crack.

01.

Source of hire

It helps figure out which of your chosen channels performed the best/worst. If you uncover that 70% of your new employees were LinkedIn followers and not Facebook followers from the paid ads you rolled, it’s a clear sign that Facebook is not a viable recruitment channel for your candidate persona.

02.

Social media engagement

Measuring engagement levels on social media gives you an idea of how your online presence performed on each selected platform. It’s an opportunity to assess your focus and establish where it’s worth being more active. Assess Impressions, Reach, CTR.

03.

Cost per hire

The most useful metric of all. It answers the questions - how much money did you spend on your recruitment marketing campaign to hire one candidate?

04.

Time spent on your website’s pages

It provides insights on the amount of time spent on your website, more specifically on the landing page you used for your campaign.

05.

Bounce rate

Visitor percentage that accessed your campaign’s landing page and exited to see other pages of your website

06.

Application by source

This metric will help you figure out which social channels performed the best/worst for your campaign

Expert advice!

Dr. Karolina Kettler
Senior HR Manager

POPCORE

“Nobody should stay too long in an organization where it doesn’t work. It’s like being in a toxic relationship.”

Conclusion

In a nutshell, there's a lot more to recruitment marketing than meets the eye. One thing's for sure: it's better than traditional recruiting because it combines several practices from HR with several practices from marketing to help you develop a sustainable strategy for the long-term. If you're looking to fill an empty position based on a temporary need and you're only willing to do it a few weeks per year, recruitment marketing is NOT for you.

In order to reap the benefits of a recruitment marketing campaign, you must acknowledge that it's a detailed process that takes time, money, and patience to render results. As a component of talent acquisition, recruitment marketing is a discipline that follows market trends and provides solutions for companies looking to overcome challenges and stand above the competition.

That being said, we hope you've found the information in this eBook useful and valuable enough for your business. It's never too late or too early to get started with recruitment marketing. Should you need help getting started, get in touch!

Kickstart your recruitment marketing campaign!