

A Branders Publication

Employer Branding – Potential in Crisis

Employer branding is one of the most commonly quoted buzzwords in the war for top talent. The term is understood in as many different ways as it is used and is even frequently reduced to a job ad. We present an examination of the subject: task, relevance, process, and success factors.

The primary task of employer branding is to strategically position a company as an attractive employer in the long term, both for potential and existing employees. The key objective is not to design new employment ads, but rather to develop a strategic employer brand that finds expression at all points of contact – both visually and in terms of content.

An employer brand is based on the corporate brand and is specifically targeted to the employment market and the respective target groups. Employer branding focuses not just on staff recruitment and retention, but also has a positive effect on corporate culture and employee motivation, corporate brand positioning, and, last but not least, on a company's success.

Ambitious recruiting, even in times of crisis

Qualified up-and-coming talent is becoming scarce in many sectors. The demographic development reinforces this trend, independent of the state of the economy. Even in times of crisis, it is difficult to attract and keep the best employees once the right ones are found. Personnel quality has long been a decisive critical factor in competition, especially in a highly competitive environment. That's why one of the most important factors in a company's medium- to long-term success is the development of the brand into a strong employer brand.

Employer branding is an ongoing process. It does not happen overnight, and it is never completed. Various factors are decisive for success and must be systematically taken into account within the framework of an employer branding project. For example, it is necessary to incorporate existing strategic foundations (corporate strategy, brand strategy, personnel strategy, etc.), derive goals for employer strategy, and identify the relevant target groups.

The next step is to evaluate the status quo and need for action. It is important to assess such sources as market and employer surveys as well as competition analyses to obtain both an internal and an external perspective. A strengths and weaknesses profile, ideally developed in an interactive process that includes management, also serves as an important basis for developing an employer branding strategy.

This diversified foundation is used as the basis for company-specific job market positioning that can culminate in an employee promise: the so-called employer value proposition statement (EVP) expresses what makes the employer unique and can be used as an integral component of personnel communication, both internally and externally. Job market positioning constitutes the framework for the communications concept that establishes measures and key messages for each target group.

Unified brand experience at all points of contact

Whether surfing the Internet employment pages, reading through the job ads, visiting an employment fair, going through an application process, or working as an employee in day-to-day professional life: every individual point of contact with the potential or existing employer should express a unified attitude towards life. A successful employer brand is convincing due to its consistent, differentiating appearance – both visually and in terms of content – and is the only way to take full advantage of employer branding potential in all effective dimensions.

Employer branding projects: a recipe for success

Various factors are decisive for the success of an employer branding project. An interdisciplinary team –

representatives from the personnel and communications departments as well as product representatives – is just as key as upper management involvement. Furthermore, in order to minimize communication difficulties and efficiently pursue the overall approach, it is advisable to procure the strategy, contents, and design from one single source. The value of holding employee training sessions early on in the areas of personnel and communication, as well as providing practical aids for supporting the implementation of a new employer brand cannot be underestimated. Because the success of employer branding ultimately depends on employees who represent the employer brand and recruit the right individuals.

Finally, systematic employer brand monitoring provides the opportunity for ongoing improvements and continuous development in order to react to current target group needs and market conditions. Employer branding is a continuous process that is never finished – just like brand management itself.



Branders is a specialized consulting firm for branding. As a competent, independent consultant for small, medium, and large companies, Branders deals with brand strategy, creation, and management. The team of economic, psychology, and design specialists provides consulting for companies on all issues to do with branding. Branders also handles specific topics such as employer branding and international branding. Branders is currently working on projects in Switzerland, the US, and China.

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