

ALABAMA
MEDIA GROUP

BUILDING
YOUR
EMPLOYER
BRAND

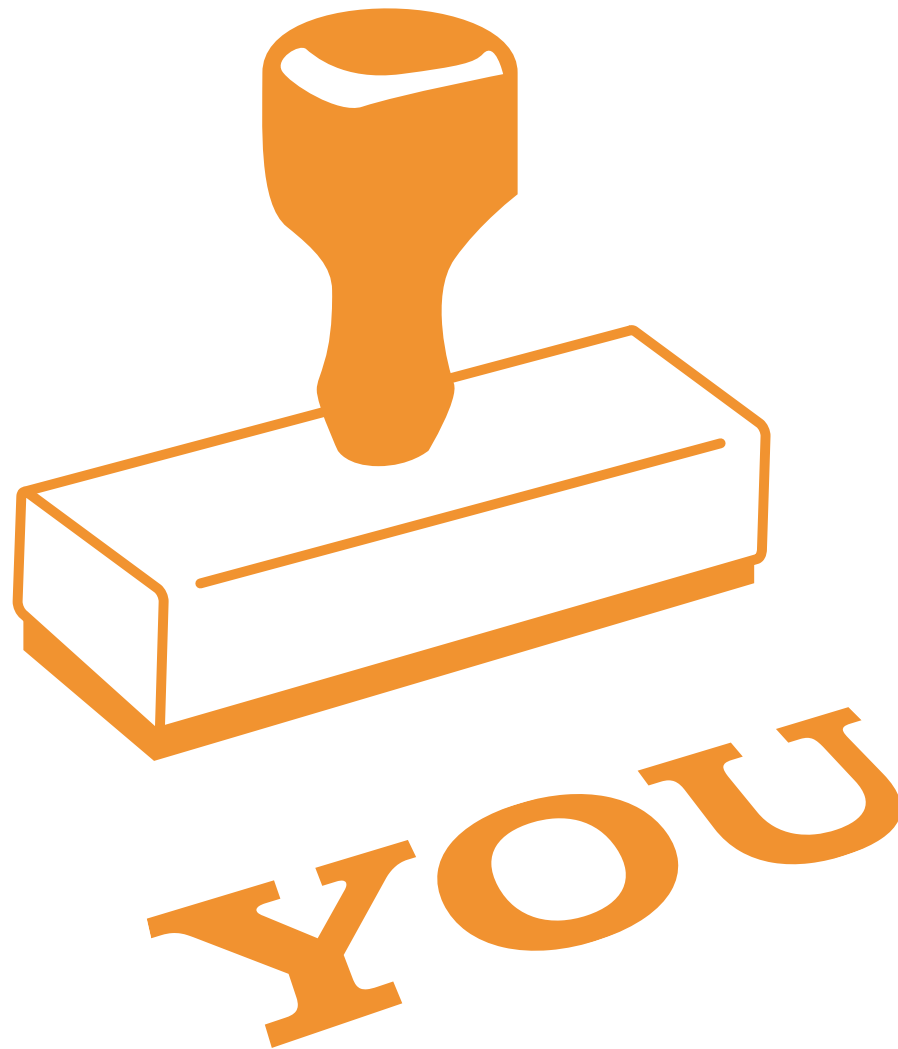
USE YOUR REPUTATION
AS AN EMPLOYER TO ATTRACT
AND RETAIN TOP TALENT



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37% OF CANDIDATES MOVE ON TO THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY IF THEY CAN'T FIND ANY RELEVANT EMPLOYER INFORMATION.¹



WHAT IS AN EMPLOYER BRAND?

Your company projects a brand, whether you mean it to or not. Your employer brand is the perception potential job candidates have of your company as an employer—it plays a critical role in attracting and retaining talent.

“Figure out what you stand for and how to communicate that on a regular basis, so you can build an audience that believes in your company and will want to work for you.”

— Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute

THE COMPONENTS OF AN EMPLOYER BRAND

A strong employer brand demonstrates your company's culture, mission and values. It gives potential and current employees reasons to want to work for you, and it creates a pipeline of informed prospects.



CULTURE

What is it like to work for your company on a daily basis? For example, is the workplace formal or casual? Do employees have the option to work remotely, or do you work in defined office spaces?



MISSION

What goals does your company have for itself and its employees? Are they written out in a mission statement? Are there achievements you can demonstrate?



VALUES

What operating philosophies and principles define and guide your company? How do they align with your potential employees' values?

TELL YOUR STORY

From your homepage to career opportunities, the content on your site and social media channels tells the story of your company and what it's like to work there. A clear employer brand will help potential hires self-select, making it more likely that candidates who apply will be qualified and well suited to your firm.

This doesn't just make your hiring process easier; it has tangible financial benefits. Human resources will be able to spend fewer hours hiring the right person for the job. Plus, your eventual candidates will see value in working for you beyond a paycheck, which will likely influence their salary negotiations.

For job seekers, considering a new position is an exercise in imagining their own future. Paint the picture for them, from a compelling remuneration package to a clear career path and an exciting future.



**A BAD REPUTATION CAN
COST YOU AN EXTRA
\$4,723 PER EMPLOYEE.²**



UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Extend your reach to potential employees who are actively seeking a job, as well as employed people not actively searching but open to new opportunities. Seventy-six percent of full-time, employed workers are either actively looking for a job or open to new opportunities.³

Understanding active versus passive job seekers allows you to use the right tools for each audience, which in turn can improve your employer brand. Let's take a look at differences in their motivations and paths to hire.

**68% OF EXECUTIVES SAY
ACTIVE JOB SEEKERS
ARE MOST IDEAL DUE TO
MOTIVATION.⁴**

**PASSIVE CANDIDATES ARE
120% MORE LIKELY TO MAKE
AN IMPACT AND ARE 56%
MORE INTERESTED IN A
GOOD CULTURAL FIT.⁵**



THE ACTIVE SEEKER

- The active job candidate is currently looking for work. They may be in that position because they recently graduated from school, have been laid off, want to upgrade from their current jobs or are concerned about their employer's stability or viability.
- You can best target active seekers through strategies such as job postings that include targeted keywords, newsletters, blog posts, podcasts and video.



THE PASSIVE SEEKER

- Passive candidates are not currently looking for new opportunities (though they may be open to them).
- Remember that passive seekers can become active seekers in the future, so it is important for this demographic to be aware of and understand your employer brand. Make sure information about your company as an employer is available where any job seeker can find it.
- Because passive candidates may not be actively keeping tabs on the market through traditional venues such as job posts, you may need to target them specifically through social media or by soliciting referrals.



16 = THE NUMBER OF SOURCES AVERAGE JOB SEEKERS USE⁶

OPTIMIZE YOUR EFFORTS

Job seekers today spend a lot of time doing online research before applying to a job or accepting a job offer.

38% SPEND ONE TO TWO HOURS RESEARCHING A JOB AND 18% SPEND TWO TO FOUR HOURS.⁷

You need information about your employer brand to be readily accessible on your website and social media, and you need it to convey the right messages. For these reasons it's imperative to make employer branding a part of your company's larger search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) strategy.



SEO/SEM STRATEGIES

Pair your SEM strategy with a strong SEO strategy to make sure the right audience sees your content.

- Use keywords that are relevant to your job description. Include brands or products your company is known for, industry-specific terms (like tools or software that are important to the job), alternative job titles and location-specific terms—for example, “Social Media Manager in New Orleans.”
- Make sure a concise branding message appears on a variety of outlets, including job posts and social media.
- If you are only beginning to build your online presence, consider paid advertising to help boost your employer brand visibility as well as the visibility of individual jobs. Some options to consider include paid search advertising, pay-per-click advertising and social media marketing. Sixty-four percent of employed adults say they would feel more confident that a job is right for them if they picked the company and applied versus if a recruiter contacted them.⁸



MONITOR YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

Part of maintaining a healthy employer brand requires monitoring the information available online about your company, including what others are saying about you. Regular check-ins can help you figure out whether you need to change anything about the content you're producing, where you're posting it and the audience you're targeting.

- Conduct regular search-engine queries of your company.
- Set up email alerts to let you know when your company is mentioned online in news stories and on social media.
- Monitor employer review sites like Glassdoor and Indeed to see what people say about what it's like to work for your company.
- Consider using third parties, such as brand consultants or social listening tools, that can analyze information about your company that appears online.
- Ask for your employees' opinions. Find out (anonymously) what they feel your employer brand is and how it's represented. Compare their perceptions to your stated brand.

CREATE ADVOCATES

You can magnify the power of your employer brand by sharing it with potential employees through content such as newsletters, articles, blog posts, videos or podcasts. “Pick a form of content that you do really well and focus on that first,” says Pulizzi of the Content Marketing Institute. “Your goal is get people engaged with your story and sharing it, so you can build an audience that becomes an advocate for your organization.”



DRIVE TO APPLY

Once you have an interested candidate, your application process needs to be smooth, efficient and easy for them to complete. To that end, analyze and streamline your application process. Having a mobile-friendly website and application process is key.

ONE IN TEN MILLENNIALS SAID THAT THEY MIGHT STOP CONSIDERING A COMPANY IF THEY DIDN'T HAVE A MOBILE PRESENCE.⁹



GET STARTED IN 7 STEPS

Pulizzi suggests starting by distributing content to your company's employees, then encouraging them to share it with active and passive job seekers in their social networks. "This first step provides you with a core base from which you can build your audience," he says. From there, you can produce content that appeals to a wider audience.

Consider the following for engaging your audience.

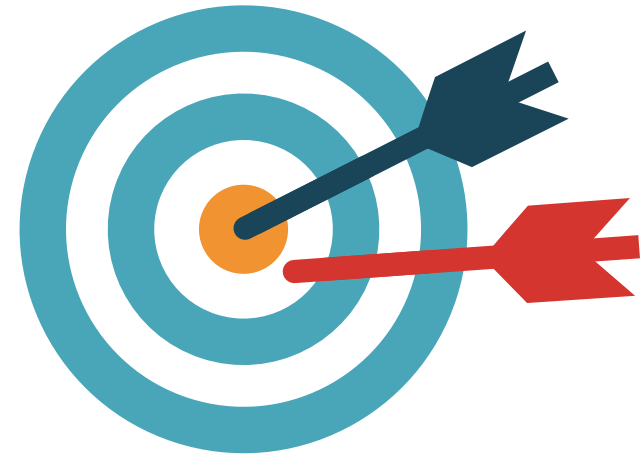
1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE
2. MAKE IT RELEVANT
3. SAY IT WITH PICTURES
4. TAP YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYEES
5. KEEP YOUR CAREERS PAGE CURRENT
6. NARROW YOUR FOCUS
7. ENGAGE DIRECTLY





1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Consider the traits and habits of your best employees. What interests them? What challenges do they face?



2. MAKE IT RELEVANT

After a potential employee has found you, engage their attention with content that they'll find exciting and relevant. Create content that relates to the interests and concerns of the people you want to hire and connects them to your company. For example, an eco-friendly clothing manufacturer might send out a quarterly newsletter that discusses topics such as the value of sustainability.



3. SAY IT WITH PICTURES

People process images more quickly than text. Moreover, Pulizzi notes that a visual element makes people more likely to remember and share content. Use as many images as you can, such as photos of what it's like to work at your company. Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook provide good forums for telling your company's story visually.



4. TAP YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYEES

Take advantage of your current employees' experience and knowledge. Collect first-person accounts of what it is like to work at your business and use those stories to create content. Then ask employees to help distribute your employer message to their own social and professional networks.



5. KEEP YOUR CAREERS PAGE CURRENT

Maintain an active careers page that includes job openings and lists the perks of working at your company. Many potential employees do deep online research about potential employers, so include as much information as you can. When possible, provide contact information for hiring managers, salary, benefits, your company's approach to work/life balance and information on team structure and roles.



6. NARROW YOUR FOCUS

Consider the niche you're hiring for. It's important to use big social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn, but also seek out job boards and online groups that cater to the specific type of hire you're looking to make.

Top niche job categories:

- Healthcare & nursing
- IT & engineering
- Energy
- Trucking & construction
- Diversity & veterans



7. ENGAGE DIRECTLY

Seize every opportunity to engage in conversation with potential hires. Use social media to speak directly about issues in your industry. For example, you can use Twitter to share stories that are important to you and your colleagues, or comment directly on posts that others in the industry have made. Social media is also a great way to engage directly with job seekers. Use sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn to speak to candidates directly by sharing information with them, commenting on posts they make or even actively recruiting them.



PROFILES OF SUCCESS: THE 7 STEPS IN ACTION

Now that you've seen some of the steps you can take to engage an audience of potential employees, let's take a look at how major companies have addressed employer branding challenges—and how you can use their ideas to boost your own brand.





CHALLENGE

Making their workplace stand out from the crowd

SOLUTION

Zendesk, a customer service software company, created a humorous video to show potential employees what it is like to work in the company offices. It also shows local restaurants, coffee shops and bars where employees go to get lunch and hang out, giving potential hires a holistic view of what it's like to work for the company.

LESSON

Working for a company goes beyond the office. Providing as much information as you can about work life helps potential employees understand your office culture, including what sets it apart from your competitors. That way they are more likely to know if they're a good fit for the company before they apply.



CHALLENGE

Building an engaging careers page

SOLUTION

Men's clothing company Bonobos created a careers page that's all about the user experience. Text is concise, easy to read and explains the company's mission and culture. High-quality photos make the site and the company visually appealing. The up-to-date list of job openings lets users click on a job to read its description and complete an easy-to-fill-out application. The page design works well on both desktops and mobile devices, and job applicants can apply on either.

LESSON

An up-to-date jobs page with a clear and simple application process helps convert interested parties into applicants. For a company like Bonobos, which has a Millennial client and employee base, a mobile option for job applications is crucial.



CHALLENGE

Harnessing the power of pictures

SOLUTION

Software company VMware has been using its Instagram account @vmwareu to help attract college students to its entry-level positions. In addition to posting inspirational messages and calls to action, the account highlights pictures of recent hires having a good time in and outside the workplace. These pictures give job seekers an idea of what it's like to work at VMware, while making the experience look fun.

LESSON

You don't need a comprehensive, elaborate visual brand to make use of striking visuals. Pictures are processed faster than words and can help make a workplace look attractive to potential hires.

THANKS FOR DOWNLOADING OUR BUILDING YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND EBOOK!

As your local recruitment resource, Alabama Media Group experts understand the job search habits of candidates and can ensure you have the visibility, industry insights and tools you need to be successful with your hiring efforts.

OUR SOLUTIONS

- Employer Brand Development
- Content Marketing (Native and Branded)
- Job Postings, Distribution & Optimization
- Social Media Optimization
- Search Engine Marketing
- Custom Career Website Development
- Display (Digital and Print) Advertising
- Direct Mail

Learn more about your recruiting options by contacting your Alabama Media Group Recruitment Advertising Representative at 205-325-3174 or recruitment@al.com.



Alabama Media Group is a digital media company that operates AL.com, one of the country's largest local websites, produces television and video programming, and publishes Alabama's three most prominent newspapers: The Birmingham News, The Huntsville Times and Mobile's Press-Register, as well as Birmingham magazine and The Mississippi Press. The company also offers digital marketing solutions—including audience targeting, search engine marketing and social media optimization; plus creative services, data analytics and event sponsorships.

Alabama Media Group is part of Advance Local, a leading media company comprised of 12 local affiliated news and information websites that rank #1 among local media in their respective markets and more than 30 affiliated newspapers known for their award-winning journalism. Advance Local is part of Advance Publications, along with Condé Nast and American City Business Journals.

NOTES:

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4. Futurestep, September 2015 <http://www.futurestep.com/news/futurestep-survey-motivations-and-drivers-trump-skills-and-experience-when-sourcing-job-candidates/>
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