

Universum Quarterly

Best Practices and Global Trends in Employer Branding

Hot topics: The female touch

If you think inviting women into the board room is just about niceties, you are behind the times. Today's modern companies push for female employees and firmly support the idea that it is no longer a 'man's world'.

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Checking back with the best

How successful was Kraft's 2005 employer branding campaign? Universum checks back with Carin Kaiser to find out. page 24

GUEST WRITERS:



Driving EB

EB expert **Brett Minchington** discusses the drivers of employer branding.

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Getting it right at career fairs

The newly graduated **Stefan Visser** shares personal experiences of the dos and don'ts of career fairs. page 8

FEATURED COMPANIES

Bernard Hodes Group	NHO
British American Tobacco	Osram Sylvania
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)	People in Business
Colman Services	PwC UK
Deloitte	Shaker Recruitment
Ernst & Young	Advertising & Communications
Facebook	Staffwell
Ferrari	Starbucks
Google	Terrakultur Russia LLC
Kontakt East Holding	Toyota
Ecommerce	UBS
Kraft	Vestas
Microsoft Russia	Wagamama



SUCCESSING IN:

Russia

With businesses heading east, Russia is experiencing a tug of war for talent.

Without enough qualified candidates to meet new demand, companies big and small are experimenting to give their most attractive offer. page 16

Fuelling the employer brand

Creating your employer brand is crucial, especially when future recruitment will be based in new markets. The Danish energy company Vestas share with us how they rejuvenated their employer brand. page 22

COMMUNICATION TRENDS:

The next frontier

The expression may be 'social network site' but that does mean it is only a social tool. Some companies are appreciating the benefits of using these online networking sites for recruiting. But know your boundaries, not everyone likes to take work home with them.

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Fad or future?

EB is bigger than HR, but is it here to stay? A panel of experts debate the future of employer branding and explore some of the pitfalls companies succumb to when trying to keep up with the times. page 26

Future directions in employer branding

By Brett Minchington



Brett Minchington

Managing Director of Collective Learning Australia, Co-founding Partner of the Employer Brand Institute.

Background

Brett Minchington is an international employer brand strategist who has delivered keynote addresses and masterclass events to executives in 11 countries and has been published in six countries. His book *Your Employer Brand attract-engage-retain* is the International employer brand book of choice and has been sold in over 20 countries. Brett's company delivers employer brand solutions through audit, strategy, research, publications and speaking engagements. Further details can be found at:

www.collectivelearningaustralia.com and:

www.employerbrandinstitute.com

The increase in adoption of the employer brand concept as a strategic framework to attract, engage and retain talent has been driven by factors which are homogenous across most of the world's major economic regions. Many of these markets are facing critical labour challenges driven by the ageing population, declining fertility rates, increased mobility of talent, declining labour market growth, technological advances and rising employee expectations.

Having researched and tracked employer brand trends since its adoption in the early 1990s I believe the future directions in employer branding will be driven by four key themes:

- 1. Strategically managing employer branding channel partners**
- 2. An understanding and mindset at the C-Level that talent are now driving the business performance agenda**
- 3. An increase in leadership capabilities that support effective employer brand management**
- 4. An ability to leverage employee networks will become a key driver of a company's employer brand**

Managing channel partners

Directors of human resources, employer branding, talent management and people and culture are being expected to take a more strategic view of human capital management. This is at a time when they are also being asked to ensure that investments in people are linked to corporate goals and provide a measurable return on investment – no different to what is expected from investment in physical assets.

My co-founding partner of the Employer Brand Institute (EBI), Kaye Thorne and I developed the EBI Collaborative Partnership Model™ to assist companies to manage the complexities and competing priorities of channel partners responsible for enhancing a company's employer brand.

The EBI Collaborative Partnership Model™ identifies the main channel partners impacting on the employer brand:

- **Talent acquisition partners (e.g. online and offline recruitment service providers),**
- **Talent engagement and development partners e.g. specialists in organisational development solutions,**
- **Recruitment advertising partners, and**
- **Corporate reputation partners e.g. public relations specialists.**

I find too many directors are managing conflicting objectives amongst the channel partners resulting in inefficiencies and high levels of bureaucracy which divert the focus of the main priority of leveraging their employer brand to attract and retain the best. Directors should spend more time discussing strategy with their channel partners in the same room.

The C-level mindset

Employer branding is not a human resources responsibility, it is not a leader's responsibility, it's every employee's responsibility.

As you are reading this article, someone is either reinforcing the key behaviours and positive messages about your employer brand, or quietly destroying it.

With the shifting supply/demand curve favouring the supplier of talent (the employee) and the quality of talent pools declining, creating chronic skill shortages, companies will need to ensure their talent acquisition strategies deliver the right message about the employment experience to the target audience.

There are a number of studies that conclusively demonstrate the positive impact on financial performance in organisations where employees are engaged. ISR's three-year study of over 360,000 employees from 41 countries found companies with higher engaged employees achieve a 3.74% increase in operating margin and 2.06% increase in net profit margin.

CEOs must never underestimate the influence they have on a company's employer brand. During a recent interview on CNN, Howard Schultz, the CEO of Starbucks, said "Starbucks spend very little on advertising; however, we do invest a significant amount of employee engagement and development activities." This is a CEO who clearly understands brand promises are delivered through people.

Supportive leadership capabilities

A 2006 study undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers UK found there is little evidence to suggest that leadership is improving despite a continued focus and investment in this area.

The Australian benchmark survey conducted in 2007 by the Employer Brand Institute using the Minchington/Thorne Employer Brand Index™ also found leadership to be the second lowest ranking of 14 employer brand drivers by middle-senior managers.

These findings are of grave concern, as talent management programmes which discover, nurture and challenge employees to reach their potential will underpin an organisation's ability to sustain competitive pressures and build an organisation that is "fit for the future".

Inspired employees will 'buy in' to the leadership agenda and vision. When approached by leaders at Italy's largest power company, Eni, workers agreed to wear 'lighter and cooler' attire to work and raised the thermostats at HQ one degree Celsius. The summer savings: 217,000 kilowatts and CO2 emissions equivalent to 140 employees taking public transport for a year. A good result for shareholders, leaders, employees and the environment!

Employee networks – a key driver of a company's employer brand

The acceleration of social networking sites has increased the speed at which good and bad news is circulated around the globe. A poor



experience with a manager may lead to a blog entry that has a potential to be seen by over one billion eye balls.

Facebook has become the 'it' company of the tech world with over 41 million users, and online job boards such as Jobster and Seek now have a strong presence there for the purpose of engaging with the massive talent pool that exists on this platform. It is not uncommon for recruiters to Google, to Linked In or to Facebook a candidate or current employee to learn more about the person. Engaged employees will also use this network for referrals to the organisation.

Businesses will need to rethink their business model to optimise their speed to hire whilst maintaining a high level of candidate cultural fit. Top companies want top talent fast and the level of competitiveness to source talent is increasing significantly.

In closing, I encourage executives to take a more strategic view of their company's employer brand programme and have the vision, focus and commitment to provide the sponsorship and investment to ensure leaders have the resources to optimise the outcomes of the employer brand strategy. ■

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– Brett Minchington

Employer Brand Strategist