2025

THE STATE OF EMPLOYER BRANDING:

Key Insights for Today's Top Employers

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IN THIS WHITEPAPER:

A NOTE FROM BRANDEMIX CHIEF BRAND OFFICER, JODY ORDIONI

Dear Readers,

Employer branding is continuously evolving, shaped by economic shifts, technological advancements, and changing workforce expectations. In today's hyper-competitive job market, the way an organization presents itself as an employer has never been more critical. Companies with a strong employer brand stand out not only to top-tier candidates but also to their existing workforce, fostering engagement, productivity, and long-term loyalty.
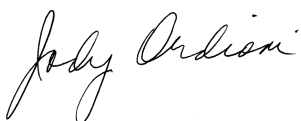
A compelling employer brand is more than just an employer's reputation—it's an authentic narrative about what it's like to work at an organization. This includes how employees are valued, the company's mission and culture, and the opportunities available for career growth. Organizations that invest in employer branding see measurable benefits, including increased application rates, reduced turnover, and stronger employee advocacy.

This white paper compiles ongoing research, industry best practices, and real-world insights to help organizations build and sustain an employer brand that attracts and retains top talent. Whether your company is just beginning its employer branding journey or refining an existing strategy, this guide will provide actionable steps to develop a powerful and differentiated Employer Value Proposition (EVP).

The Future of Your Employer Brand is Being Written Now

How you treat your employees today—how you support their needs, recognize their contributions, and adapt to changing workforce dynamics—will define your reputation for years to come. Employer branding is not just about hiring; it's about building a workplace where people want to stay, grow, and thrive.

Organizations that proactively shape their employer brand today will be the ones that successfully attract and retain top talent tomorrow. Please share your personal stories with me at branding@brandemix.com

Jody Ordioni

KEY INSIGHTS AND TRENDS

Companies with a strong employer brand see a 50% reduction in hiring costs and attract 50% more qualified applicants. In today's competitive job market, your employer brand is not a luxury—it's a necessity.

— LinkedIn Global Talent Trends Report, 2023

A strong employer brand does more than attract talent—it keeps your business competitive. Today's job seekers research companies before they apply, looking for cultures that align with their values. Companies that invest in employer branding don't just fill roles faster; they hire better, spend less, and keep employees longer. It's not about looking good—it's about being the kind of company people want to be part of.

KEY INSIGHTS AND TRENDS

Brandemix 2022 State of Employer Branding showed that a majority of companies surveyed had an articulated employer brand crafted within the past 12 months.

Does Your Company Have an Articulated Employer Brand?

I Don't Know 7%

No 14%

Yes 54%

Plan To Initiate this year 25%
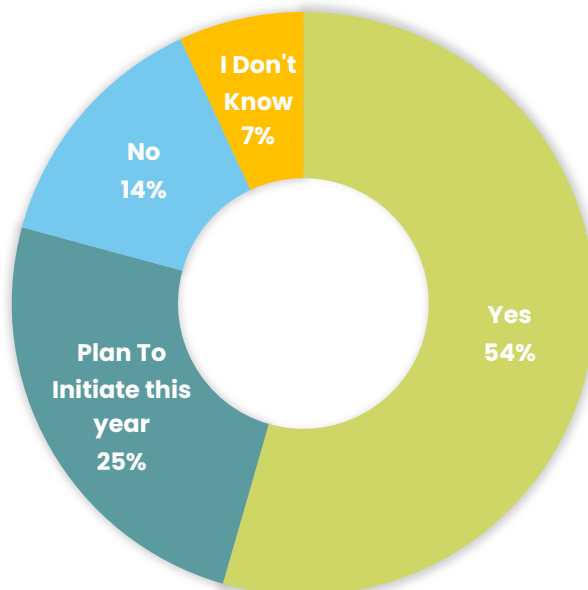
When Did You Last Conduct an Employer Branding Initiative?

Within the past 4-6 months 14%

Within the past 7-12 months 14%

Within the past 3 months 34%

Within the past 1-2 years 29%
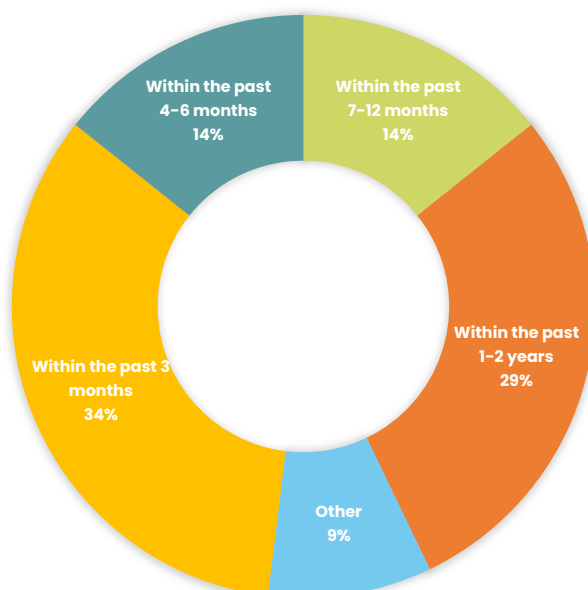
Other 9%

INVESTMENTS IN
EMPLOYER BRANDING VARY

While some companies allocate significant budgets to employer branding initiatives, others operate on a leaner model, focusing on digital and social media strategies. Regardless of budget size, consistency in messaging is key.

PARTNERS OR DIY?

Whether a startup or a global enterprise, every organization approaches employer branding differently. Some partner with agencies for expertise and scale, while others build their brand in-house to keep it closely tied to company culture. Both strategies have their merits, and each employer must choose what works best for them.

The right approach comes down to internal resources, expertise, and the complexity of your branding needs—what matters most is consistency and authenticity in the message.

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WHY COMPANIES BRING THEIR EMPLOYER BRAND TO LIFE?

Companies bring their employer brand to life because it directly impacts their ability to attract, engage, and retain exceptional talent. A compelling employer brand isn't merely a marketing tool—it's a powerful strategic asset that shapes hiring outcomes, boosts employee satisfaction, enhances retention rates, and differentiates the company in the competitive talent marketplace. By thoughtfully investing in employer branding, organizations position themselves for sustained success.

Why Companies Bring Their Employer Brand to Life?

Stronger Hiring Pipeline

Higher Employee Engagement

Lower Turnover

Competitive Differentiation

Alignment with Business Goals

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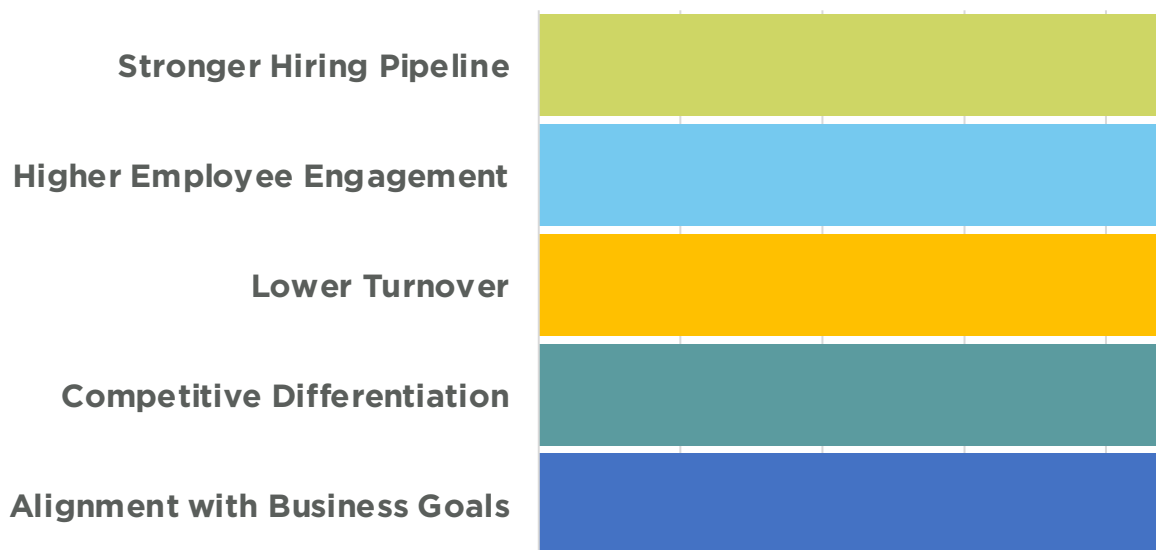
EMPLOYER BRANDING AND BUDGETS

Employer branding initiatives can vary widely in cost depending on the size of the organization, the scope of the campaign, and the strategies deployed. Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) typically allocate between $5,000 and $50,000 annually, often relying on cost-effective internal methods such as employee surveys and/or focus groups.

Larger enterprises usually invest significantly more in comprehensive research phases. These research elements frequently include competitive audits, external perception studies, detailed market analyses, and extensive stakeholder surveys. Internal employee research tends to be more cost-effective compared to external perception research, which often requires payment to recruit and incentivize external participants.

Company Size	Cost Range	Typical Research Activities	Focus
Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)	5,000–5,000–20,000	Employee surveys, competitor analysis, basic EVP development, focus groups/interviews.	Foundational insights for initial branding.
Large Enterprises	20,000–20,000–100,000	Comprehensive employee surveys, competitor benchmarking, candidate experience audits, advanced EVP development.	Detailed insights for robust branding strategy.
Fortune 500/Global Enterprises	100,000–100,000–500,000+	Global perception studies, multi-region market analysis, talent pool segmentation, longitudinal studies.	Strategic, data-driven insights for global branding.

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THE EMPLOYER BRAND RESEARCH MIX

#1 Employee Surveys

We often see two types of surveys: broad stroke surveys that give a general sense of employee feelings, and supplemental, which follow-up on specific sentiments. Both of these are important to research.
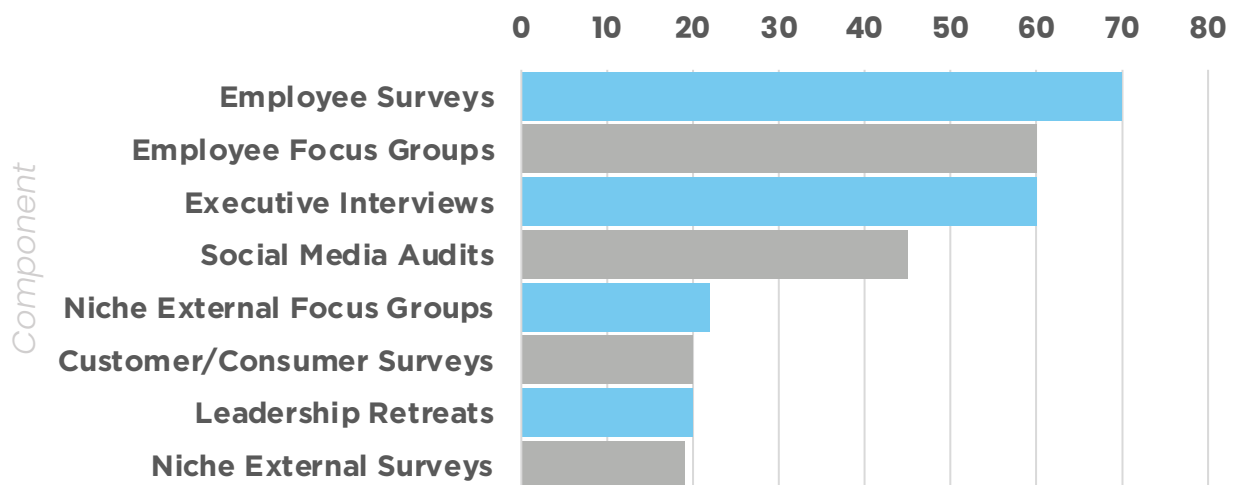
#2 Employee Focus Groups

Where surveys give a chance to think and reflect, focus groups are an important opportunity to get unfiltered, unedited and real-time responses from employees across departments and experience levels.

#3 Executive Interviews

Executives are critical to the employer branding project's success – they are key stakeholders, and can give important perspective to the vision of the company. They're also important advocates once the brand is created.

How Employer Brand Research Tools Rank

Component	Value
Employee Surveys	~70
Employee Focus Groups	~60
Executive Interviews	~60
Social Media Audits	~45
Niche External Focus Groups	~22
Customer/Consumer Surveys	~20
Leadership Retreats	~20
Niche External Surveys	~18

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WHERE WE SEE EMPLOYER BRANDING COME TO LIFE

The top four places we see employer branding come to life are a mix of internal and external assets. The careers site and recruitment advertising speak to the goal of attracting candidates, while updating employer brand guidelines and internal communications show employers making efforts to build affinity groups.

Careers Website (90%)
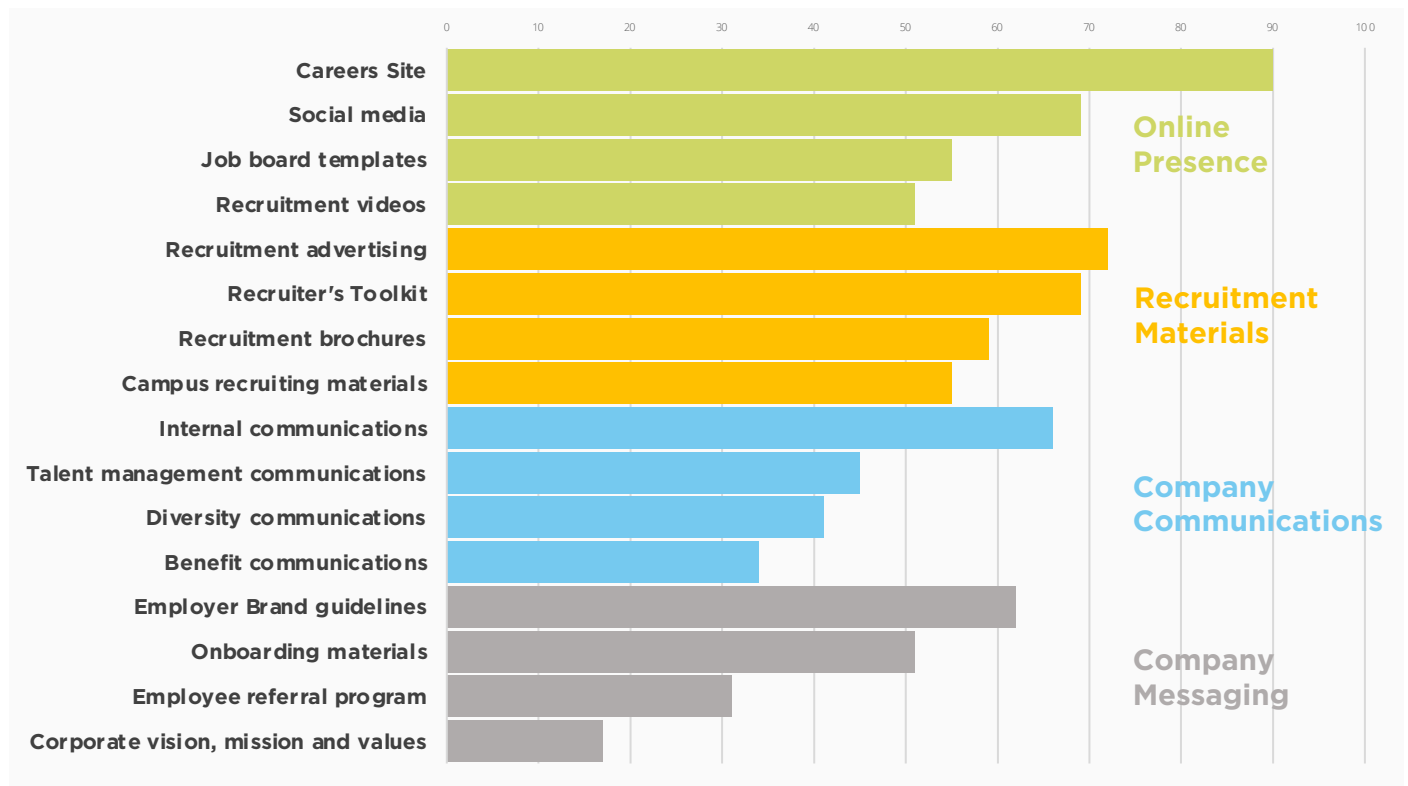
Recruitment Advertising (73%)

Internal Communications (66%)

Employer Brand Guidelines (97%)

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WHERE WE SEE EMPLOYER BRANDING COME TO LIFE

Horizontal bar chart with axis from 0 to 100.

Online Presence
- Careers Site — 90
- Social media — 69
- Job board templates — 55
- Recruitment videos — 51

Recruitment Materials
- Recruitment advertising — 72
- Recruiter's Toolkit — 69
- Recruitment brochures — 59
- Campus recruiting materials — 55

Company Communications
- Internal communications — 66
- Talent management communications — 45
- Diversity communications — 41
- Benefit communications — 34

Company Messaging
- Employer Brand guidelines — 62
- Onboarding materials — 51
- Employee referral program — 31
- Corporate vision, mission and values — 18

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HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

The success of an employer branding initiative depends on the specific goals of the organization. Common metrics used to evaluate success include increases in the number of qualified candidates, improvements in employee engagement, and higher traffic to career sites. Smaller organizations or those with limited budgets often focus on building awareness and attracting talent, prioritizing metrics like candidate volume and engagement. In contrast, larger or more established organizations may place greater emphasis on efficiency metrics, such as cost-per-hire, as their employer brand may already have strong recognition in the market.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of an employer branding initiative is determined by how well it aligns with the organization's objectives, whether that's attracting top talent, improving retention, or enhancing overall brand perception. Success can vary widely depending on the company's size, industry, and stage of employer brand development, but the key is to set clear goals and measure outcomes that matter most to the business.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

Metrics Associated with Employer Brand Performance

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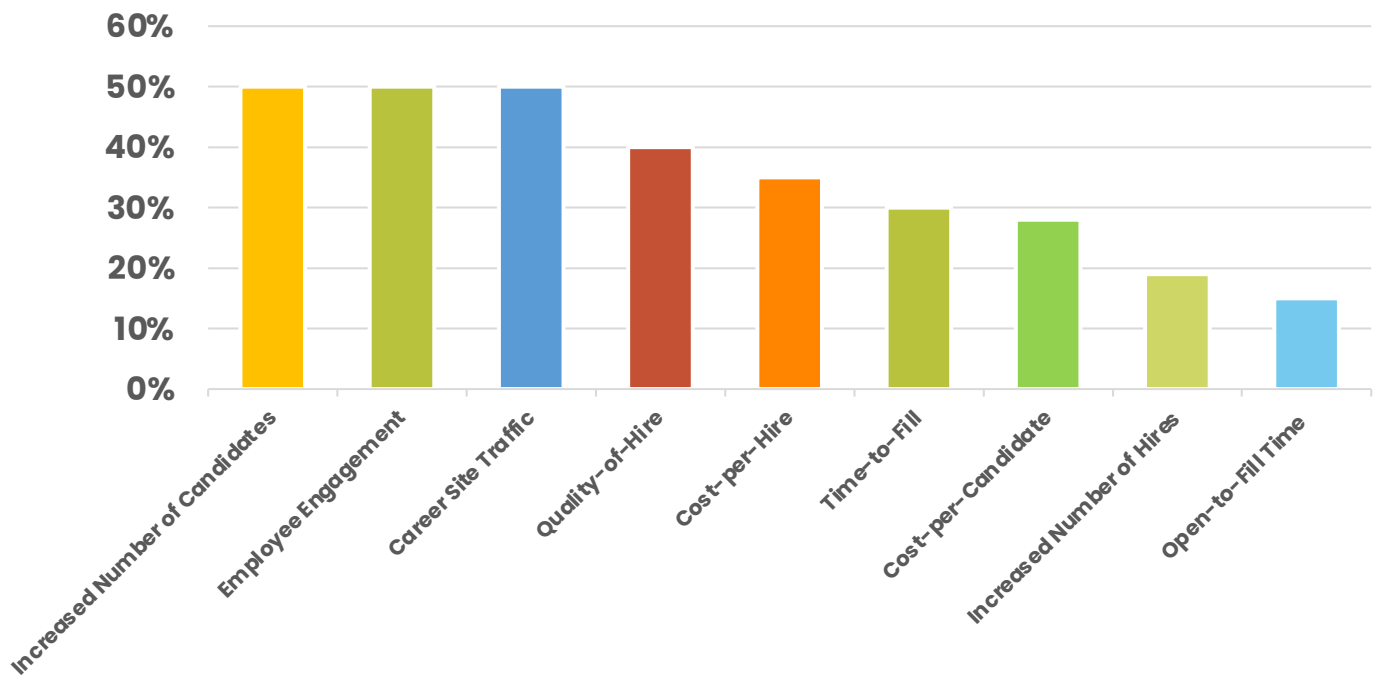
TOP CHALLENGES OF EMPLOYER BRANDING EFFORTS

Managing an employer branding initiative often comes with its share of challenges. One of the most common hurdles is aligning employer branding messaging across the organization, as consistency is key to building a strong and cohesive employer brand. Engaging senior leadership in the initiative is another frequent challenge, as their buy-in and support are critical for driving success.

Securing an adequate budget for employer branding efforts, aligning the employer brand with the consumer or marketing brand, and creating a differentiated Employer Value Proposition (EVP) are also areas where organizations often face difficulties.

aligning employer branding messaging across the organization

engaging senior leadership in the initiative

obtaining an adequate budget for the employer branding project

aligning our employer brand with our consumer brand

creating a differentiated Employer Value Proposition

working with outside vendors

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KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM YOUR PEERS

Don't treat Employer Branding as an HR project.

Employer branding is part of your corporate brand and needs the involvement of your communications and branding team.

- BIOTECH/PHARMA (5001+ EMPLOYEES)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM YOUR PEERS

Change starts at the top.

My biggest takeaway is that it takes the strength of the leadership team to really get an Employer Branding initiative off the ground — without their support it's a very labor-intensive process.

- GOVERNMENT AGENCY (5001+ EMPLOYEES)

KEY TAKEAWAYS
FROM YOUR PEERS

Cross-functionality and collaboration are key to successful employer branding.

Working in an agile system is key with a company that is changing so quickly. Your core culture may not change, but how you communicate it will.

- GOVERNMENT AGENCY (5001+ EMPLOYEES)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM YOUR PEERS

Focus on the big picture and the details, equally.

It is very important to refine and to question the brand messaging on a global level. Are we still speaking with one voice?

- HIGH-TECH/ IT (5001+ EMPLOYEES)

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KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM YOUR PEERS

Your EVP should work internally and externally.

It would have been better if it weren't just recruitment-led. Now it's the 'recruitment EVP' as opposed to the company-wide EVP, which is a missed opportunity.

- OIL, GAS, ENERGY (5001+ EMPLOYEES)

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LOOKING AHEAD

The world of work is changing rapidly, influenced by evolving technologies, shifting values, and the ever-changing expectations of talent. To build a resilient employer brand, organizations must stay ahead of these trends:

Integrating AI for Enhanced Candidate Experiences

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping employer branding by streamlining recruitment processes, personalizing candidate interactions, and creating efficiencies that significantly enhance candidate experiences. Employers who thoughtfully adopt AI-driven solutions will differentiate themselves as innovative, attracting and retaining talent that values forward-thinking workplaces.

Sustainability and Social Responsibility as Brand Essentials

Employees increasingly seek alignment between their personal values and the social mission of their employers. Organizations that authentically integrate sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical business practices into their employer brands will stand out to purpose-driven talent, fostering loyalty and engagement well beyond recruitment.

Building a Culture for Flexibility and Adaptability

The ability to adapt quickly to shifting economic landscapes, technological advancements, and workforce expectations is vital. Employers who build cultures centered around agility, continuous learning, and adaptability will be better positioned to thrive, successfully attracting talent looking for dynamic workplaces capable of navigating the uncertainty and opportunities of the future.

By proactively addressing these emerging trends, organizations can stay ahead, ensuring their employer brand remains authentic, relevant, and appealing in the future talent marketplace.

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Building a strong employer brand is an ongoing journey. As workplace expectations evolve, proactively shaping your employer brand ensures continued success in attracting and retaining top talent. At Brandemix, we've proudly supported organizations through 20 years of employer branding excellence because we heart HR—then, now, and always. Let us help you craft an employer brand that resonates deeply, not just with the talent you want to attract, but with the people who already call your organization home.

A SPECIAL OFFER!

Have you ever wondered how your talent culture stacks up? We're happy to help. **Mention this white paper for a free mini talent brand scorecard!** We'll look at your online employer branding and show you where you need to go from here.

To create or enhance your employer brand, or for information about social recruiting, internal communications, or other Brandemix services, please contact us at **branding@brandemix.com**.

BRANDING
Brand Research
Research Analysis
Brand Architecture
Brand Positioning
Value Proposition
Brand Activation
Identity Design
Brand Standards

ADVERTISING, MARKETING, & PR
Market Research
Strategy Development
Creative Development
Message Testing
Ad Campaign Development
Media Planning
Buying & Placement
Media Relations
Event Marketing & Management

EMPLOYER BRANDING
Employer Brand Research
Employer Research Analysis
Employer Brand Architecture
Employer Brand Positioning
Employer Value Proposition
Employer Brand Activation
Employee Engagement
Onboarding Programs
Careers Sites

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING
College Recruiting
Diversity Recruiting
Employee Referral Programs
Recruitment Videos
Media Planning & Placement

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS
Benefits Communications
Identity Design
Change Management
E-Learning
Internal Communications
Investor Relations
Presentations
Training Materials
Training Videos
Wellness Programs

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING
Applications & Widgets
Community Management
Interactive Promotions
Profile Creation & Management
Reputation & Response Management
Social Media Content Creation
Social Recruiting
Strategy
Videos

DIGITAL & INTERACTIVE
App Development
Augmented Reality
Content Management Systems
E-Commerce
Interactive Communications
Mobile Marketing
SEO/SEM/PPC
Videos
Website Development