



The Headhunters' Fight for Big Game

—

THE FUTURE OF RECRUITMENT IS EMPLOYER BRANDING—
AND THOSE WHO KNOW HOW IT WORKS

aperto

Contents

- 1 The Headhunters' Fight for Big Game
- 2 About Aperto
- 3 Sources & Imprint

1 The Headhunters’ Fight for Big Game

The future of recruitment is employer branding—and those who know how it works

They’re on the prowl—alert, stealthy—because they know: if they drop their guard for a second they’ll get away. Time is running out and somewhere another hunter is playing the same game. Because one is never alone on a battue, there are many others seeking those great trophies of the 21st Century: the best employees.

demographic changes. Another lingering threat is the German brain drain: between 2003 and 2009 alone, 180 000 professionals left Germany to settle abroad. Although one likely contributing factor is the high taxation rate that drives skilled labor to countries like Switzerland—that compellingly offer both lower taxes and higher salaries—it can’t be held solely responsible for the skills short-age in Germany. Ultimately, com-



“Our only fixed asset is our employees.”¹

The steady demographic change in Germany is unavoidable, with a shortage of skilled labor already foreseen for various sectors. “Various institutes’ prognoses point to an intensified skills bottleneck. A McKinsey study predicts a shortage of 2 million skilled employees by 2020”—that being one of the more optimistic projections. The German Federal Labor Office referred to a “reduction in employment potential of 6.5 million by 2025”, mainly as a result of massive

panies have to make more of an effort with ever-shrinking number of graduates.

“The ‘War for Talent’ is entering the next round.”²

And those who aren’t willing to adapt to the current situation are likely to be left behind. Job portals, social media platforms and employer ratings bring everything out in the open, switching the spotlight so the applicant becomes the evaluator.

When the Hunter Becomes the Hunted

Recruiting has long ceased to be the sole domain of the HR department—it is a matter for the boss. So it makes sense that advertising for the right employee has had to undergo a radical change with company culture as a starting point. While employers used to be swamped with applications and face an arduous selection process, there are now progressively fewer applicants, let alone the rare species with the right set of qualifications. It has become increasingly difficult to fill positions without investing significantly in training, or a human resources consultant, who doesn't necessarily deliver satisfying results. This may be one reason more and more companies are turning to Web 2.0 to manage their recruitment: 58% of companies with over 500 employees publish job advertisements on social networks. The high rate of employee fluctuation is a further drain on resources and an additional problem that needs to be faced.

moving the potential for personal development and the achievement of goals to the top of highly qualified graduates' checklists. Cultural changes such as the increased time spent by employees at work; and the need to be constantly available; also play a huge role, as the line between private and professional life becomes more blurred. Almost 40% of graduates take for granted that they will be working over 40 hours a week, versus a mere 3,5% who expect to work the stipulated 35 hours a week. Consequently, the meaningful integration of work into the employee's life should become the goal—putting the loyalty between employer and employee at the core of employer branding.

Meaningful and effective employer branding starts with the identifying of potential within a company. This applies not only to how well-known a brand or its products are, but also to the potential strengths of the employees—who ultimately define the image



“Eighty-seven percent of employees claim to have little or no loyalty towards their employer.”³

In the fight to land talent, forging new paths is becoming less of a future focus and more of a present necessity. But how does a company seduce qualified potential employees without forfeiting innovation?

The solution is to create a binding connection between the employee and the employer brand, with a differentiating message that runs through the company, both internally and externally:

Employer Branding

The concept of employer branding goes beyond the classical incentivization of employees with company-branded polo shirts and a token bonus at the end of the year. Good payment and company culture have gone from being a perk to being a basic prerequisite,

of a brand. Although very often neglected, involving employees in the creation of the company's future vision should be the first step in emotionally investing employees in the brand. The second step is the translation and implementation of the brand identity within the company culture. Defining and then communicating relevant company values, culture and attitude creates the basis of a collective image that fosters a stronger brand loyalty.

This 'new' employer image serves to distinguish the brand in the minds of the employees but can also be used as an opportunity to define a code of conduct with regards to new media. Although most employees already understand their role as brand ambassadors, companies often neglect or mismanage this—which



“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you’re helping them to become what they can be.”

—
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

is particularly evident when employees communicate via social media in the name but not necessarily in the spirit of the brand.

Who Can Connect With A Brand They Don't Understand?

In order to increase the understanding and appeal of the employer brand, companies have to provide rele-

vant offers that create a synergy between the brand and the employees. This, in turn, will demonstrate a more employee-orientated company culture that differentiates both a brand and a company from its competitors, and makes it a vital asset in the recruitment process.

The first questions in creating a successful employer brand are:

- » Is the company’s image differentiated and clear?
- » Is the brand vision meaningful to the employee?
- » Is there a relevant employee program in accordance with the brand identity?
- » How can one build the loyalty of current employees to the company to motivate them as brand ambassadors?

To address these questions requires strategic solutions that both define the brand identity based on the relevant findings, and successfully apply it to the company as part of its employer brand.



Digital since 1995

We are Aperto. A progressive communications agency that offers the right services for the digital age. As fusionists, we combine strategy, technology and creativity to put the Wow into the How for brands and organizations alike. We offer diverse talents with a common passion for excellence, and a unique culture in which ideas and innovation thrive.

We believe in creating a better digital world, and love doing it together with our clients. We are working from five locations spread across three continents. From Berlin to Beijing to Ho Chi Minh City to Dubai to Basel. With a team of 400 passionate fusionists, we're at the forefront of the digital era and determined to stay there.

Looking for Challenges

We are driven by projects that both inspire and challenge us. So if you're looking for an agency to collaborate and grow with, you've found the right partner. Focusing on three primary areas—strategy, creation and technology—to deliver a holistic solution, we provide the right service for the digital era.

Aperto AG
In der Pianofabrik
Chausseestraße 5
10115 Berlin

+49 30 283921-505
info@aperto.com

3 Sources & Imprint

Sources

¹ Jörg Staff - SAP Personnel Management, 05/2011

² Manager Magazine, 04/11

³ Süddeutsche Zeitung, Nr. 11, 15.01.2009, Seite 11

⁴ Hisbus, Statista 2011, Persönliche Ziele von Studierten,
<http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1441/umfrage/persoenliche-ziele-von-studenten/>

⁵ TNS/Infratest; Statista 2011, Erwartete Arbeitszeiten nach dem Studium,
<http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/713/umfrage/erwartete-arbeitszeiten-nach-dem-studium/>

Copyright

An Aperto AG Whitepaper

Text: Daniel Simon

www.aperto.com