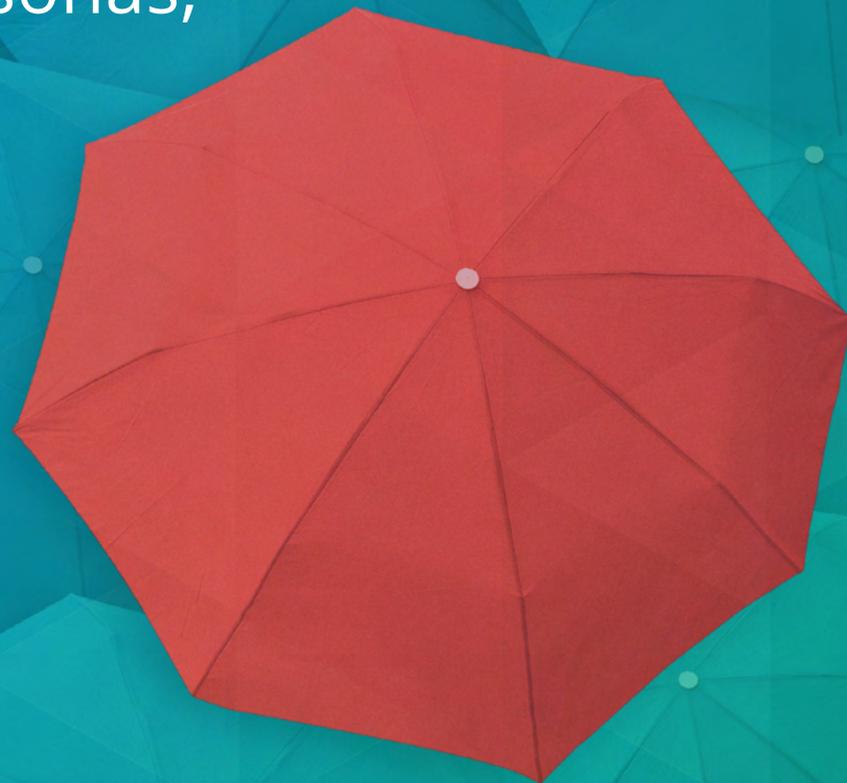


RECRUITMENT MARKETING 101

Your Guide to Candidate Personas,
Employment Branding, and
Nurture Campaigns



Jobvite

Introduction

Modern recruiting is more complicated—and competitive—than ever. More than two-thirds of companies [have increased hiring](#) in the last year, and 86% of recruiters aren't planning layoffs anytime soon. In the US, unemployment is the [lowest it's been in a decade](#), and some studies have predicted that by 2020, there will [be 85 million more jobs globally](#) than qualified workers to fill them. It's a job-hunter's market.

But low unemployment rates and increased competition for top talent don't necessarily equate to fewer options for recruiters. In fact, [76% of workers](#) who are already employed full-time report that they're either actively looking for new jobs or open to new opportunities. Talented and experienced candidates are willing to be recruited, but they may not be actively applying.

To find the right candidates to fill open positions—and to encourage those candidates to accept the positions they're offered—recruiters must think more like marketers. By applying some of the best practices of digital marketing to recruitment initiatives, recruiters can attract and engage passive candidates by extending their reach beyond the job boards.

How and Why Recruiting Has Changed

Changes in the approach to and process of recruiting have been driven by two major factors: candidate preferences, and technological advances.

- **Today's job seekers have high expectations.** Millennials are taking over for retiring Baby Boomers, but [their expectations are very different](#) from those of their predecessors. Millennials prefer flexible work schedules, remote work opportunities, and collaborative company cultures. Salary increases are often insufficient in winning them over—they're looking for meaningful jobs at companies that share their values.
- **Technological advances have simplified talent acquisition.** It's no longer necessary to filter through hundreds of resumes to find the best fit. Instead, recruiters can use [recruiting automation software](#) to weed out unqualified candidates programmatically. The internet has also enabled recruiters to extend reach globally, removing the local limitations of the newspaper classified ad model.
- **Technological advances have also complicated talent acquisition.** Modern job seekers use [an average of 16 resources](#) when searching for new jobs. They scour a variety of job boards and conduct detailed research on prospective employers. This requires recruiters to engage in constant reputation management, ensuring information across a variety of digital channels is accurate, up-to-date, and positive.

Successful modern recruiting requires reputation management, effective outreach, and improved engagement. These are the same basic goals of any digital marketing program. By analyzing how marketers attract leads and engage audiences, recruiters can move away from basic recruiting, and start driving successful outcomes with recruitment marketing.

Recruitment Marketing Begins with Candidate Persona Development

Successful marketing campaigns begin with the development of customer personas. Personas are fictional customers that are assigned needs, pain points, goals, beliefs, and other relevant personality traits that help marketers define their target demographics. Those personas are then used to define the audience for every campaign and communication, enabling refined targeting and personalization.

For recruiters, candidate personas enable job descriptions, recruiting materials, and company information to be personalized to attract and engage ideal candidates.

To create candidate personas, take time to define these important pieces of information:

- **Location** – Where do prospective candidates live currently? Do you need them to work in-person at a local office, or can they work remotely? Is your company willing to pay for relocation? Is the candidate willing to relocate?
- **Experience** – How much experience does the candidate have? Does he/she need experience that's directly related to the position, or is related experience satisfactory?
- **Interests** – What are ideal candidates interested in? What interests are important to your company's overall culture?
- **Personality Traits** – Is your ideal candidate an introvert or extrovert? Is the candidate an effective collaborator, a proven leader, or excessively organized?
- **Preferences** – What are candidates looking for in an employer? What do they value in their professional lives, and how do they evaluate potential employers?

Example Persona: Technical Tom

Technical Tom is an experienced .NET developer with a proven track record of successful projects. He is hard-working and disciplined, enabling him to be productive while working from anywhere in the world with little management oversight. He prefers to work alone, but he can collaborate effectively when necessary. He also expresses interest in the industry outside of work, participating in developer forums and engaging in personal side projects.

Technical Tom is currently employed, but he would be open to new opportunities for either a salary increase or the ability to work remotely. He enjoys traveling, so flexible working schedules and/or ample paid time-off are crucial decision factors. He works best when he can brainstorm with others, so it's important to him that his manager is both experienced in the field and available for regular consultation.

High-level personas can help you define the ideal candidates for any position at your company, and granular personas can help you define the ideal candidates for specific roles and positions.

To get started with recruitment marketing, take time to create several ideal candidate personas. If you're not sure what ideal candidates might prefer, need, or care about, survey existing employees to learn more about what encouraged them to join and what keeps them there.

The personas you create will form the basis for all of your inbound and outbound recruitment marketing campaigns.

Attracting Talent with Targeted and Value-Driven Job Descriptions

In marketing, one of the core concepts is features versus benefits. When selling products or describing services, many companies make the mistake of listing features like “mobile-friendly,” “scalable,” and “secure.”

The problem with feature lists is that features are meaningless without accompanying value statements. “Mobile-friendly” is nebulous. “Work from anywhere in the world on any device that’s convenient” highlights the value—or benefit—of that feature for potential customers. Feature lists are uninspiring, but benefit lists are compelling.

The same is true for job descriptions. Technical Tom may not care about 401k matching, but he does care about team dynamics, PTO, and schedule flexibility. The benefits in your job description should cater to those preferences:

- Work with a collaborative and experienced leadership team that welcomes new ideas and encourages creativity and innovation.
- Enjoy three weeks of paid vacation each year. If you don’t use all of your PTO, you can save it for a long vacation or sell it back for a bonus paycheck.
- Choose your own schedule. Work eight-hour days Monday through Friday, or work ten-hour days four days a week to enjoy endless three-day weekends.

Embrace Your Employer Brand

Companies often focus too heavily on defining the requirements of the position, and in the process, neglect to provide any benefits for job seekers. Creating an employer brand is one way recruiters can speak directly to candidate's needs, says Taylor Dumouchel, a marketing and communications specialist at [Peak Sales Recruiting](#).

In fact, [59% of executives](#) are investing more in their employer brand in 2016 than last year, bringing new emphasis to marketing for job candidates.

Appealing to top professionals requires that executives develop their employer brands with these steps in mind, Dumouchel says:

Position the company as a market leader

Top professionals are always interested in working for industry leaders or high-growth companies that are poised to dominate their sector. If there's no track record of success great workers are savvy enough to realize it's not their best option to make a move.

Create a supportive work culture

Top professionals seek respect, not just within their immediate teams, but throughout an organization; they want to work for companies that value what they do.

Provide a strong career track

To encourage top talent to join their company rather than a competitor's, executives need to offer prospective candidates more than a better job. Top talent appreciates educational opportunities to build on their skillset and learn different selling methodologies, and want to know that a potential employer will provide the support necessary for them to build extensive professional portfolios.

At [Oldcastle Inc.](#), the manufacturer puts considerable emphasis on incorporating company branding directly into their job ads to attract candidates, shares Kyra Marcine, the company's social media specialist. In addition to creating a newsletter to keep potential recruits engaged, they look for ways to be creative.

By taking the time to ensure job ads speak to the excitement of the position, you can drive increased interest and applications.

We spend a lot of time branding the company via our careers social media pages. We have a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and YouTube. Construction is not the most glamorous industry, but with some creativity and effort, any industry can be made cool and appealing. Our content is a mixture of employee photos, company projects, pictures of job sites, etc. We also 'spice up' job ads by making images to go with them —since those get more engagement. The key is to always be experimenting to see what works for your audience.

Let Your Work Culture Shine

It's not enough to add a generic list of benefits such as 401k matching, health insurance, or casual Friday's. The benefits should also cater to the preferences defined in your candidate persona—and shine a bright light on your company's culture, says Terese Kerrigan, senior marketing manager at [FreightCenter](#). These benefits will inspire interest in the right candidates and encourage them to apply for open roles.

Few people think of freight and logistics as a ritzy or glamorous field to work in. With these odds stacked against us, it can be hard to recruit the driven talent that is integral to the success of the company. With fresh popcorn 3x a week, pinball machines, ping pong matches and many other instances of friendly competition, it's a place anyone would be more than happy to work in. Having all this to build off of, when we head online or to job fairs to recruit, it's easy to get people to see the appeal in working for us. Building a culture that people want to be a part of is what gets people to stay.

If you don't have a solid foundation of a company culture to stand on, it doesn't matter how many platforms or "benefits" you company offers, Kerrigan adds.

Choosing the Ideal Channels for Recruiting Campaigns

Buyer personas enable marketers to choose the optimal channels for their campaigns, and they provide the same benefit for recruiting campaigns. If you understand who your ideal candidates are, you can determine where they spend their time.

When trying to attract passive candidates, knowing where those candidates spend their time is crucial. If they're not actively looking for work, they're not searching job boards for postings, and they may not spend much time looking at LinkedIn.

While you can make some basic assumptions by looking at [demographics of social media users](#) on different channels, some of this will require hypothesizing, testing, and measuring results.

You can make some educated guesses by pairing interests with careers:

- Designers may be more likely to spend time on Pinterest.
- Marketers may be more likely to spend time on Twitter.
- Individuals in leadership roles may be more likely to spend time on LinkedIn.
- Developers may be more likely to spend time on GitHub.

For [Herofarm](#), for example, the marketing and public relations company even maintains a presence on Vine, Instagram and Snapchat to reach a younger and tech-savvy talent pool, says Co-founder and Creative Director, Shaun Walker.



When it comes to a hiring search we decided to use technology and newer social media as part of the process since all of our potential employees and interns would be handling a good bit of both. In any business and especially in marketing, social media and creativity are two keys to the industry and are musts in today's world.

It's no secret that social media and recruiting continue to cross paths. Holiday Inn Resort Vanuatu has taken advantage of many social media features that lend a hand. Tools such as Facebook's "Jobs" feature has bolstered its recruiting efforts by simplifying the application process. Explains Hiring Coordinator, Levi Boyd:

When a candidate applies for a position, the application is pre-populated with information from the candidate's profile. This is a big time saver and an incentive for candidates to apply for multiple jobs without having to type in the same information over and over again. Employers and recruiters will become more selective as they have a bigger pond to fish from, and candidates will have more to prove in order to stand out enough to be interviewed or accepted for a position.

To choose the channels that best align with the interests of your target personas, and promote opportunities on those channels, recruiters should additionally:

- **Utilize targeted ads to engage passive candidates.** Many social channels [allow you run targeted ads](#) that display only to users with very specific demographics. Use your candidate personas to determine optimal channels and optimal demographics to target, and design visually appealing ads that highlight relevant job opportunities.
- **Take steps to build your company brand on social channels.** Maintaining a single company profile and only posting new openings do little for branding and engagement. Consider [creating multiple company profiles](#)—each dedicated to a different candidate persona. Also, use social media as it was designed to be used: to form connections and facilitate discussions.
- **Measure, revise, and optimize campaigns.** Your initial approach is a hypothesis, so it's important to validate that hypothesis by measuring results. You can [track campaigns by creating custom tracking URLs](#) in Google's Campaign URL Builder, and then measure results in Google Analytics. Don't be afraid to abandon failed experiments. Replace them with new hypotheses until you discover the best channels and approach.

The Importance of Inbound Marketing in Talent Acquisition

In the marketing industry, [inbound marketing](#) refers to the process of generating leads and revenue through approaches like content marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and social media marketing. As opposed to disruptive outbound tactics like advertising and sales outreach, inbound marketing attracts customers naturally with content and interactions that are designed to help individuals solve issues or complete tasks.

Inbound marketing is a powerful approach that can be easily applied to recruiting.

A powerful example of effective inbound marketing can be found on HubSpot—the company [responsible for coining the term](#). A recent post on the HubSpot blog titled “6 Cover Letter Examples That Got Something Right” ended with a simple—but brilliant—sentence: “And by the way – we’re hiring.”

The article wasn’t advertising HubSpot jobs or engaging in heavy recruitment tactics—it was written to provide some helpful examples of cover letters that readers could use for inspiration.

Take Cover

We’d like to add a sixth stage to the job search: Experimentation.

In today’s competitive landscape, it’s so easy to feel defeated, less-than-good-enough, or like giving up your job search. But don’t let the process become so monotonous. Have fun discovering the qualitative data we’ve discussed here -- then, have even more by getting creative with your cover letter composition.

We certainly can’t guarantee that every prospective employer will respond positively -- or at all -- to even the most unique, compelling cover letter. But the one that’s right for you will. That’s why it’s important not to copy these examples. That defeats the purpose of personalization.

So get creative. And, by the way -- [we are hiring](#).

Providing helpful guidance to prospective candidates is a great way to boost engagement, build awareness, and attract an ideal audience when it's time to fill open positions.

One way to gauge your company's level of exposure? Through a search on Google, says Jason Parks, president at [The Media Captain](#).

We are in a very competitive market in the digital marketing space. Yet our agency ranks well on Google for the top keywords in our industry in our local market of Columbus, Ohio. We get people contacting us each day seeking jobs because they found us on Google. Also, the type of candidate we get is very unique. There is a difference in a person that is actually reaching out to you proactively versus one you find on a job board site. If you rank well on Google, it builds credibility and helps lure talent into your funnel.

Blogging is an effective, basic approach to inbound marketing. By regularly updating your company blog with quality content that's targeted to your candidate personas, you'll enjoy multiple benefits:

- Your content may rank in search engines, encouraging clicks from targeted candidates.
- You can post links to blog content on your social channels, which will help grow your network of followers and boost follower engagement.
- You can advertise jobs postings and highlight your recruitment marketing materials.
- You'll gain recognition as a thought leader, which will bring your company to mind when prospective candidates are looking for new jobs.

Think about what types of information your ideal candidates are looking for, and engage in inbound marketing by writing high-quality content that solves their problems and answers their questions.

Modern Hiring Managers and Recruiting Professionals Must Think Like Marketers

It's a job seeker's market, so hiring managers and recruiting professionals can no longer simply post jobs and wait for the right resumes to roll in. Instead, you must think more like a marketer. In doing so, you can attract ideal talent for your open roles—even if those candidates aren't actively looking for work.

To get started, choose a category of positions that you've historically struggled to fill, and define some candidate personas for those positions. Determine the goals, preferences, and motivations of individuals who may be interested in that role, and add some benefits to job descriptions that will entice ideal candidates to apply.

From there, you can expand efforts incrementally—evaluating results along the way—to form a solid recruitment marketing strategy that enables you to fill more open roles with talented and qualified employees.

Jobvite is the industry leader in recruiting software that helps emerging, mid-market, and enterprise companies hire top talent easily, efficiently, and effectively. Our comprehensive and analytics-driven recruiting platform accelerates recruiting with an easy-to-use Applicant Tracking System (ATS), social recruiting capabilities, mobile-optimized branded career sites, a recruiting branding solution, on-demand video screening, advanced analytics, onboarding, and seamless integration with other HR systems. Focused exclusively on recruiting software since 2006, with offices in San Mateo and London, Jobvite has thousands of customers including LinkedIn, Schneider Electric, Amway, Zappos, and GoDaddy. To learn more & request a free demo, visit www.jobvite.com or follow us @Jobvite.

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