



# The Ultimate Recruiter's Guide to Marketing

Learn to optimise your recruitment marketing strategy and achieve your goal of attracting and converting your ideal candidate personas.



# Recruitment and Marketing Have Consummated Their Relationship

Up until the 90's, the only ways to advertise an open position was through bulletin boards or post an announcement in the job section of the newspaper. Recruitment was heavily reliant on word-of-mouth and face-to-face applications. But thanks to technology and changes in candidate behaviour, recruiting is using modern marketing tactics to fill open positions. People now perceive and absorb marketing messages differently as the proliferation of different digital media continues to grow, which has seen users retain the power in the company-buyer relationship. The same can definitely be said for the company-candidate relationship: the huge upsurge of social media and content marketing coupled with falling unemployment rates and increased job opportunities means the control is now in the candidate's hands as well.

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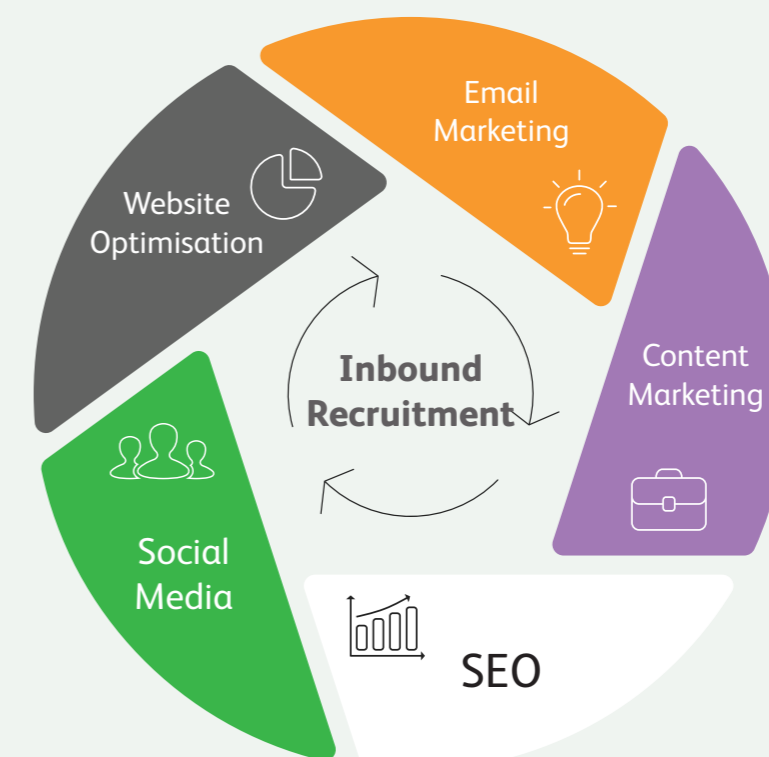
*A typical candidate is now behaving like the modern consumer: by researching companies online, gathering information and ultimately deciding on applying for a vacant role.*

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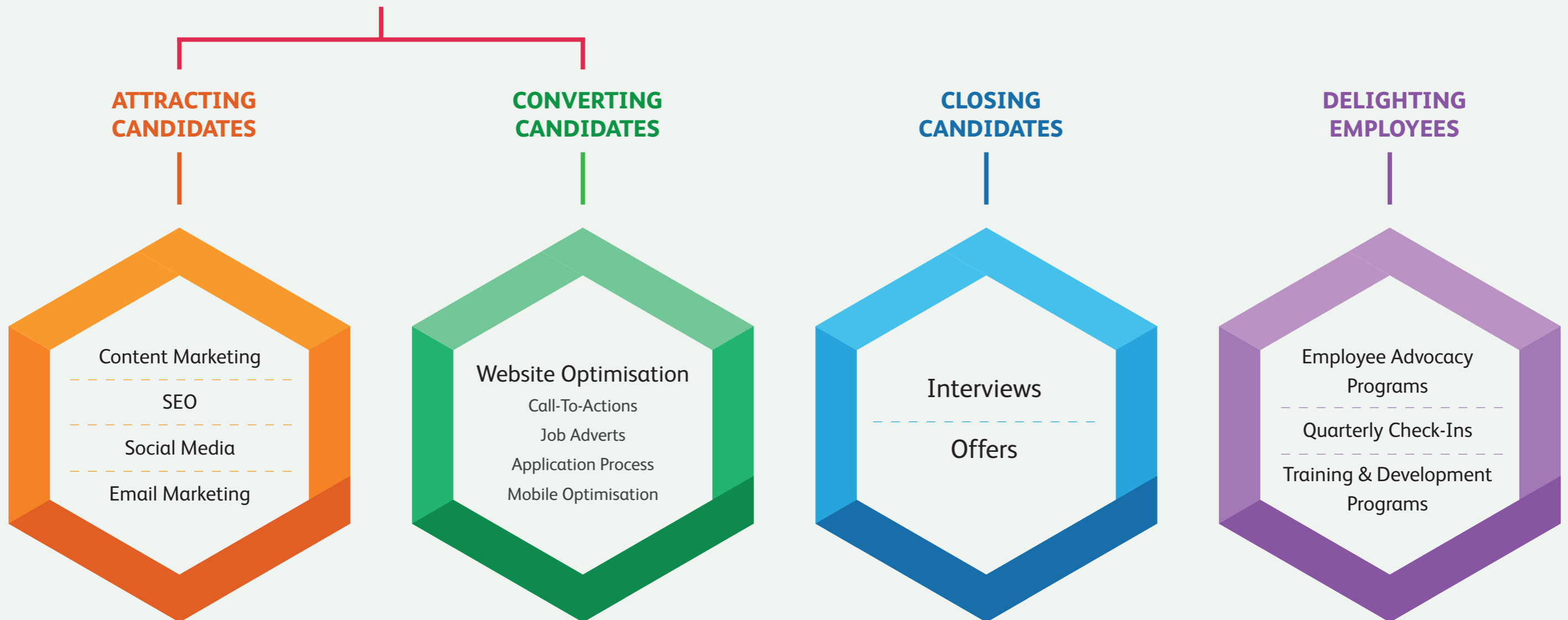
The current state of the job landscape is very much symptomatic of this recent behavioural transformation of candidates, with many recruiters realising the importance of 'inbound recruitment' and how it can help them engage and recruit the right talent for their organisation.

Before, there was always some element of marketing in recruitment but now recruitment and marketing have become completely intertwined. Employers are increasingly using consumer marketing techniques to attract top talent. Much like how marketers compete for a user's attention, recruitment competes for a candidate's attention and in a world where [70% of candidates are passive](#), the tactics you utilise are critical. In other words, a typical candidate is now behaving like the modern consumer - by researching companies online, gathering information and ultimately deciding on applying for a vacant role. As with marketing teams, it is crucial that recruiters develop a comprehensive understanding of the types of people they want to market to.

The marriage of recruitment and marketing has seen the birth of 'recruitment marketing', which is a process that is primarily practiced before the interview stage of the overall recruitment process i.e. the tactics that are used to attract, engage and convert leads into qualified applicants. Below we have displayed the 5 main online tactics that we think you should incorporate into your recruitment marketing strategy. We will walk through each of these areas and how they apply to the recruitment space but it's important to remember that all of these areas are interrelated.



# RECRUITMENT MARKETING



Each of these tactics will have different goals in your recruitment efforts. To explain these tactics better, we have placed them on a road map vaguely similar to Hubspot's famous [Inbound Methodology](#). Hubspot's methodology depicts 4 main phases: Attract -> Convert -> Close -> Delight. The reason we say vaguely is that we will primarily be focusing on the 'Attract' and 'Convert' stages in this whitepaper and applying them to recruitment marketing. In recruitment terms, 'closing' candidates can be interpreted as the process of conducting interviews and ultimately making the final offer to candidates, while 'delighting' employees would involve motivating hired employees to refer new candidates and measuring the retention rate of new recruits which we could dedicate a whole whitepaper too!

It is clear from the graph above that the ultimate goal for recruitment marketing is to attract users to your site using various tactics such as Content Marketing, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), Social Media and Email, and converting these potential candidates by encouraging them to apply for roles using the different elements on your site. We will walk through the different elements of each stage and at the end of each stage, we will detail a list of things you can measure in order to gauge success!

# ATTRACTING CANDIDATES

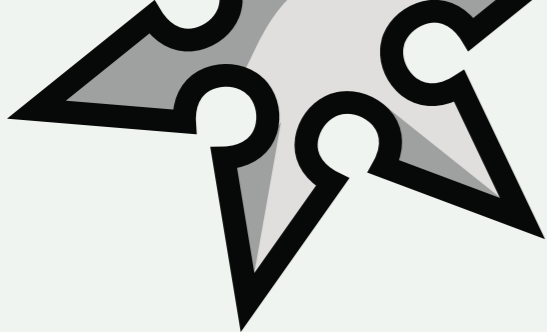
## Definition

The process of attracting users to your site and turning them into visitors. As indicated in the graph above, there are number of ways you can do this such as content marketing, social media and optimizing your website for search engines.

## What you need to do first

It's important to note that while the goal here is to get as much traffic as possible, what we want is the right traffic. This means attracting prospects to your site who are likely to become leads and ultimately quality candidates that you can select from for the interview process. This is where your candidate personas come in. In the marketing world, Hubspot define personas as "fictional, generalised characters that encompass the various needs, goals, and observed behavior patterns of your ideal customers". So how do you define 'candidate' personas? Well no prizes for guessing here. Replace the word 'customers' with 'candidates' in the Hubspot definition and there you have it! You need to have a full understanding of your candidate personas and the way in which those candidates arrive at decisions as this information is fundamental in designing a recruitment marketing strategy that will meet your organisation's recruitment goals.





## CANDIDATE PERSONA EXAMPLE

<b>ROLE</b>	Customer Experience
<b>NAME</b>	Chloe
<b>AGE</b>	28
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	5 Years
<b>SKILLS</b>	Brand Management, Customer Engagement, Marketing Communications.
<b>JOB SEARCHING PREFERENCES</b>	Actively searches on online job boards, social professional networks and specialist groups. First looks at compensation offered and then opportunities for professional development.
<b>PAIN POINTS</b>	Not enough scope in her current role; rarely recognised for achievements and consistently surpassing goals.

Developing candidate personas allows recruiters to identify core candidate segments, understand their goals and tailor content to match. This means focusing on the most relevant channels, speaking the candidate’s language and building relationships. Without this intelligence, your recruitment messaging will be totally lost which means much less engagement, making a recruiter’s talent acquisition process more difficult. Above is a basic example of a candidate persona. It is important to note that this is not an extensive evaluation of a candidate by any means so you will need to go beyond basic information like name and skills.

When developing your candidate personas, there a huge variety of different areas you can explore which we detail below. Getting answers to these questions will give you a greater understanding of the ideal candidates you wish to target. Next we will provide a comprehensive overview of the tactics you can utilize in the ‘Attract’ phase.

<p><b>DEMOGRAPHIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demographic – age, gender, marital status, location</li> <li>Educational background – what level of education do they have and what did they study?</li> <li>Career path/Employment history – how did they get to where they are today?</li> </ul>	<p><b>INFLUENCERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do they find new information?</li> <li>What publications or blogs do they read?</li> <li>What associations do they belong to?</li> <li>What social networks do they use?</li> <li>Who do they respect most and why?</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHALLENGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are their biggest personal and professional challenges and why?</li> <li>How do they solve those challenges?</li> <li>What don’t they like about solutions that they’ve tried?</li> </ul>	<p><b>JOB SEARCH PREFERENCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is their preferred method of communication with a company?</li> <li>What types of information do they look for when applying for a role?</li> <li>Describe a recent job acceptance.</li> <li>What are the most common objections they may raise during the job search process?</li> </ul>
<p><b>JOB INFORMATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is their job role?</li> <li>What is their level of seniority?</li> <li>What does a typical day look like?</li> <li>What skills and competencies are required to do their job?</li> <li>What are the goals of their role?</li> <li>What is their current income?</li> </ul>	<p><b>INTERESTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do they spend their free time?</li> <li>What do they consider an indulgence or a treat?</li> <li>What activities do they consider routine or mundane?</li> <li>What types of topics do they generally read about?</li> </ul>

# 1. Content Marketing

## The What

Content should be the lifeblood of your recruitment marketing strategy. It is largely accepted that content marketing is the fundamental tool for digital marketing (and also recruitment marketing) as without content, there is nothing to promote. There is no universally accepted definition of content marketing but we believe the definition provided by Sam Decker, CEO of Mass Relevance, really captures the essence of how content can provide value:

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*Content marketing is creating or curating non-product content — be it informational, educational, entertaining, etc. — and publishing it to contact points with customers to get their attention, to focus on the topic around your solution, and pull them closer to learning more about you.*

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## The Why

Based on this definition, we can say that the goal of content marketing is to raise awareness of your brand among your target audience and try to increase loyalty through information and education. Valuable content can help transform interest into lasting relationships with consumers or in this case, candidates.



## The How

So what types of content should you be focusing on as a recruiter/HR professional? Well you really need to go beyond creating a basic job description and hoping the candidates come in. You need to 'pull' potential candidates in and create an online environment that fosters two-way communication, showcases your current talent and solidifies your position as a thought leader in the industry. See below for the different types of content you can use to amplify your employer brand:

- Company news: New product releases, company benchmarks
- Awards: Reinforcing the strength of your team by creating content around recent awards
- Thought leadership: Write on relevant and hot topics in the industry
- Employee spotlight videos: Show potential candidates some of the fantastic people they could be working alongside
- Employee blog posts: Encourage employees to write about their role and their key learnings

## 2. Search Engine Optimisation

### The What

Usually when you mention Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to recruiters, a look of confusion and/or panic dawns across their faces. Many recruiters feel daunted by the thought of SEO as they start to get exposed to technical terminology like keyword stuffing, submitting sitemaps and rel=canonical links (...what?). Others may have read how a small adjustment to content can have a hugely negative impact on your website's search rankings. But SEO is an area that cannot and should not be avoided! Here's a definition to get you started:

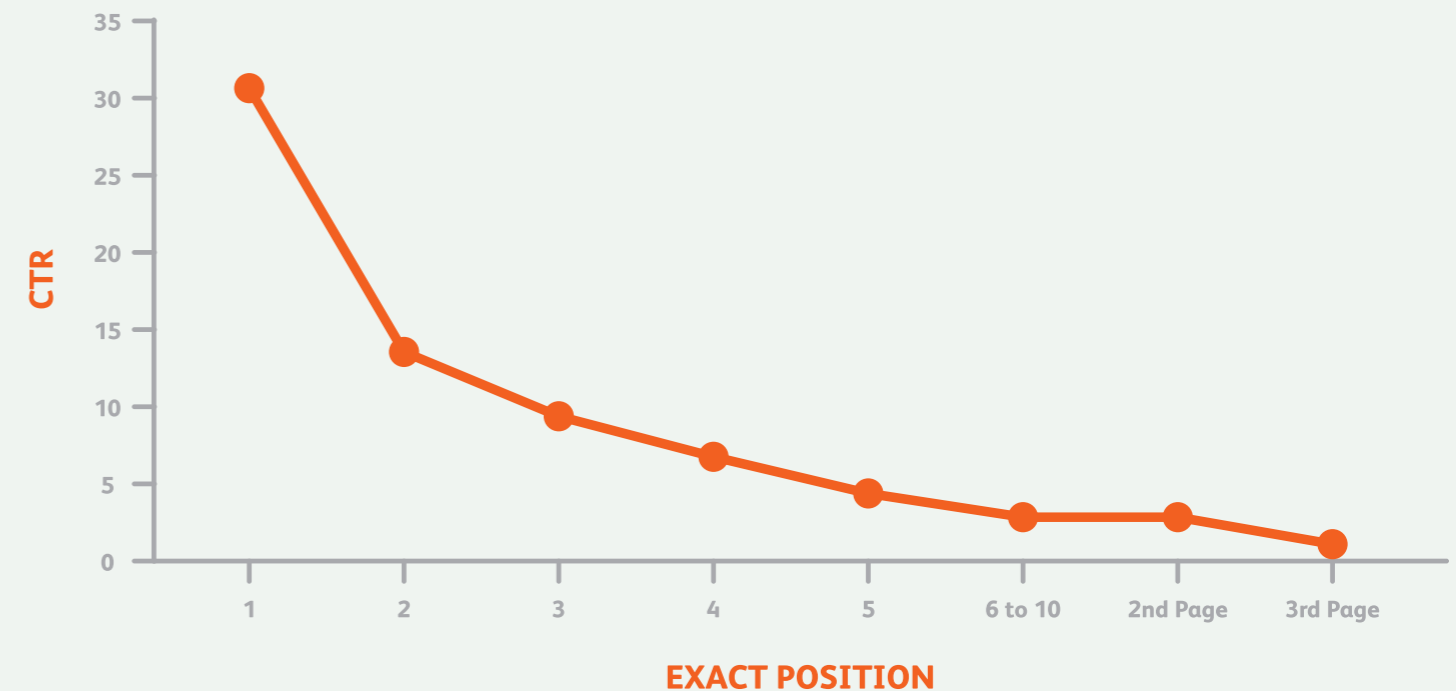
*SEO is the process of improving the visibility of your website or web page in search engines via the "natural" or un-paid search results.*

Pretty simple to understand, right? You would think so but many recruiters are still having trouble getting a firm grasp on the concept of SEO. For example, one of the main findings from our [Global Recruiting Survey](#) was that 42% of recruiters did not optimise their job advertisements for SEO. Improving positions of your online job adverts is heavily dependent on your understanding of the process whereby search engines determine these search results. There are 3 main processes involved:

- **Crawling:** Search is performed by bots (or spiders) on the search engine's server which access web pages for analysis and indexing
- **Indexing:** An index is created to enable search engines to rapidly find the most relevant pages based on the query of a user. This index information includes a page's title, meta description, PageRank, authority, spam rating etc.
- **Ranking:** A rank in the search engine results pages (SERPs) is calculated for each page based on many ranking factors

### The Why

In general, the higher ranked on the search results page a site appears, the more visitors it will receive from users. According to [Marketing Land](#), a result ranked number one on the SERP will get over 30% of all the clicks. Probably even more telling is that page one of the SERPs receives over 70% of clicks, with the first 5 results on page 1 alone receiving 67% of clicks. In other words - the more relevant and frequent your content can be to any individual search term, the more likely it is to rise to the top of the rankings.





## A Brief Note on Content Marketing and SEO

*It should be clear by now that Content Marketing and SEO, while being distinct disciplines, very much have a symbiotic relationship. You really can't divorce the two! Google has quickly learned that users are happy most when they find the best answers to their search queries which are typically pieces of organised, exhaustive and easy-to-consume content.*

*At the same time, content can only really stand out and get more visibility with SEO data and support. Search engines now care about what humans care about so recruiters need to catch up. Recruiters need to be writing content with the knowledge of SEO goals and ensuring that the basics are being done such as optimising titles, meta descriptions, using internal linking and using keywords.*



## 3. Social Media

### The What

You will be hard pressed to find someone who doesn't have much knowledge of what Social Media is these days! Thousands of definitions have been developed to explain this concept but the best way to encapsulate it is that it enables the creation and exchange of user-generated content online. This has marked a huge power transfer as before, companies were able to control information about them through releasing strategic press announcements for example, but now much of what you see online is user content and opinion. We now live in a world where everyone can have an online voice which translates into comments and reviews on company-branded accounts.

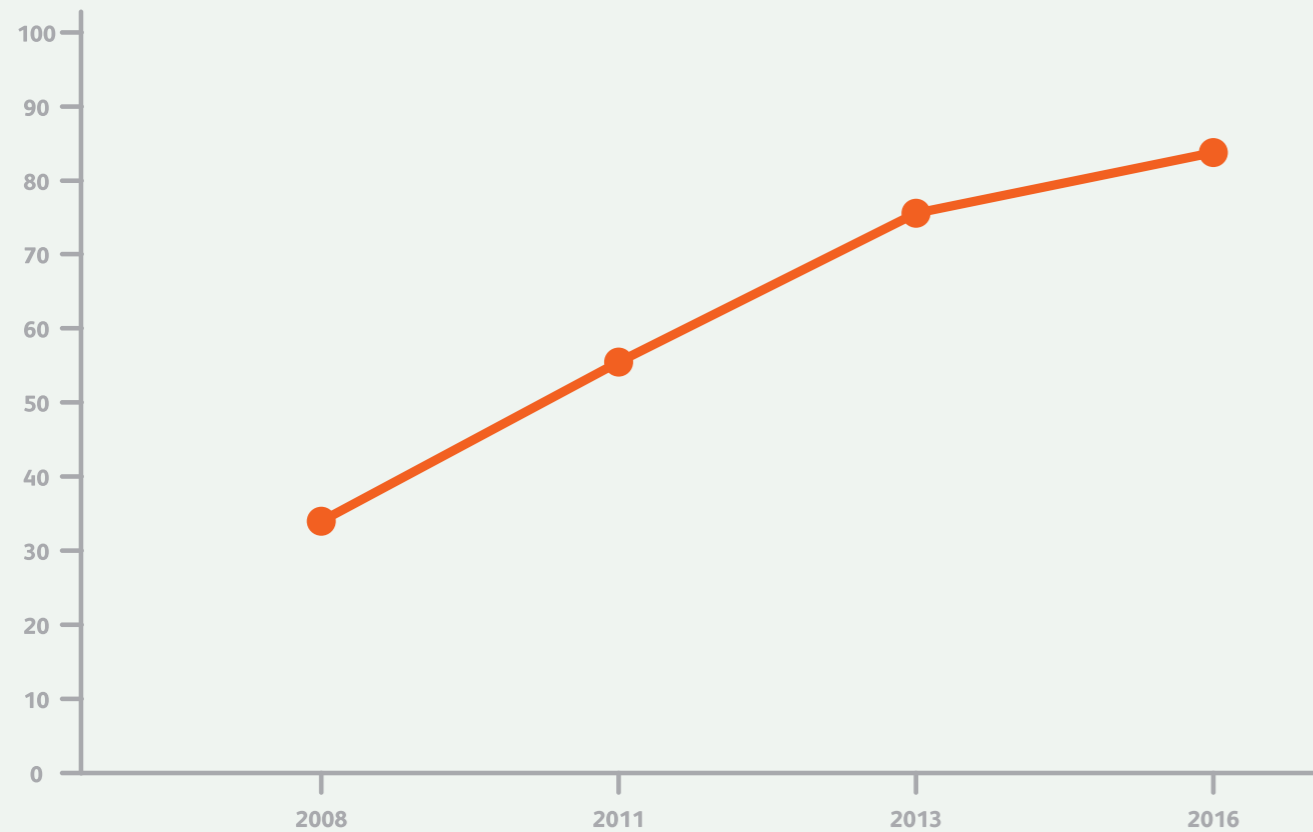
### The Why

In the last 20 years, there has been a fundamental shift towards online user-driven technologies such as video-sharing platforms, blogs and social networks, all of which are pretty much uniformly tagged as Social Media. This shift has completely dominated the way we use the Internet with users spending a vast majority of their time on sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Because of this, Social has become an unrivalled platform for businesses to engage with their audiences and provides a great insight into their online behaviour.

Social has taken the recruitment world by storm. It has now become a core component of the marketing strategies for many recruiters, HR professionals and talent acquisition managers. With more emphasis being placed on building a sustainable company culture and hiring people who not only have the relevant skills but also fit into this culture, employers are starting to realise the importance of social media networks to achieve their recruitment goals. A recent survey by SHRM confirms this as they found that recruiting via social media is growing with 84% of organisations using it currently and 9%

planning to use it (see the graph below depicting this growth trend). However, in terms of attracting new talent, many employers are not strategically using social to its fullest potential.

*% of companies adopting 'social recruiting'*

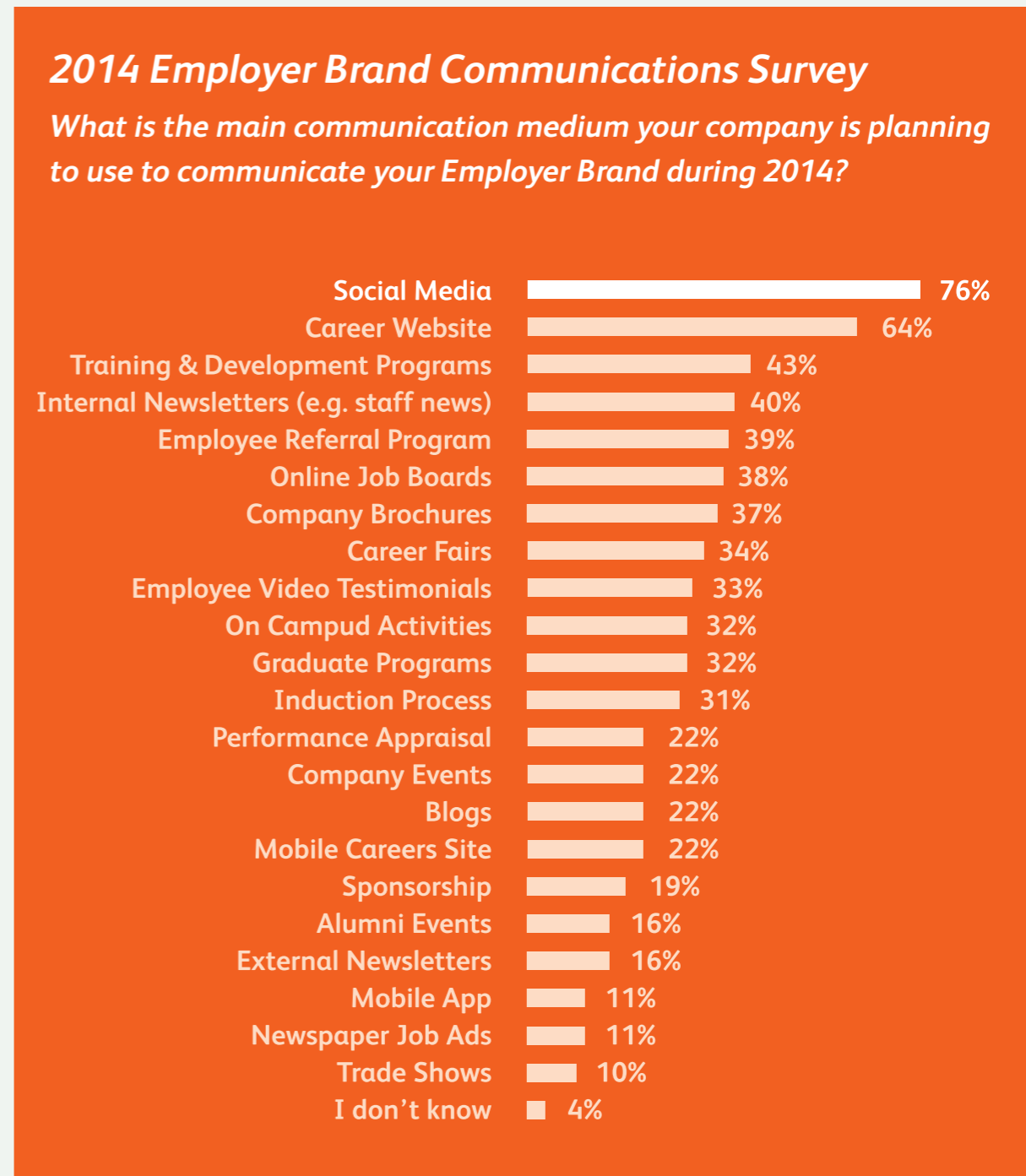


### The How

Social Media can be used in two main ways by recruiters: candidate sourcing and amplifying your employer brand, the latter of which we will focus on for this specific whitepaper. The goal of employer branding is to create differentiation and preference in the minds of both current and future employees. And it seems companies are catching on to the importance of social.

According to [an extensive survey](#) by Employer Brand International, 76 % of companies said that Social Media was their main channel when it came to communicating their employer brand.

*The goal of employer branding is to create differentiation and preference in the minds of both the current and future employees.*



So how do you go about amplifying your employer branding through social? The answer is through content. Much like Content and SEO are interrelated, the same can definitely be said for content and Social Media. Renowned marketer and keynote speaker Jay Baer famously once said that ‘content is fire, social media is gasoline’. In other words, your content exists independent of what you’re doing on social but you use social to drive awareness of your fantastic recruitment-related content. This is the perfect time to hark back to our ‘Content Marketing’ section where we listed the different categories of content you can create. All of these categories are great ways to amplify your employer brand.

So at this stage in your recruitment marketing strategy, you have two big tasks done: defining your candidate personas and creating content that is optimised for these personas as well as search engines. But there are still a few things that need to be done:

## SELECTING YOUR SOCIAL NETWORKS

There are literally hundreds of networks on the market today so it’s important to do your due diligence on them and determine if this is where your candidate personas typically interact. To save you some time, we would recommend you asking your existing employees what social networks and communities they are typically on as this will give you a good indicator of where your candidates are. You should also start using basic search strings on the different social networks which will give you a good feel as to where you should focus promoting your great content.

Once you have completed your social network research, you will quickly learn that each was created to deliver a different type of social experience for audiences so it’s important to get your messaging right. When you select an appropriate network to use to deliver your recruitment content, you should refer to our social media table which gives some tips on how to optimise your social presence on the mainstream networks.



### LinkedIn (433 Million users)

- Strive to complete all available sections on your LinkedIn profile (Summary, Education, Awards etc.)
- Place the keywords commonly used in your industry in each area
- Have a professional-looking photo
- You can join industry-specific groups (max. 50) to increase the reach of your content
- Post regularly on your company page, create showcases pages for specific products/ services if needed
- If you have regular vacancies, consider purchasing the Careers page option from LinkedIn



### Facebook (1.6 Billion users)

- Similar to LinkedIn, fully complete your ‘About’ section and make sure it’s keyword optimised
- Don’t make your photo overtly corporate, instead make it more personal/friendly
- Facebook is more for private use but if you wish to eagerly network on this channel, you can add custom lists of your ‘Friends’ to segment them
- Add an app to your Facebook business page specifically for posting new jobs
- If you have regular vacancies, consider creating a Facebook careers page for your company - post regularly, have an appealing cover photo



### Twitter (310 Million users)

- Put time and effort into creating a great ‘Bio’. Keep it keyword-optimised but add a fun element to it too
- Again, add a good photo of yourself (can be same as LinkedIn). Add a ‘fun’ header image that communicates your personality
- Identify relevant social influencers who can amplify your content
- Create Twitter lists of specific people on Twitter so you can follow their Tweets in one place without missing them – you could use lists for potential candidates or competitors
- Create a Twitter account dedicated to recruiting and post relevant content



### Instagram (400 Million users)

- Complete your 150-character bio and add a link to your careers website
- Perfect avenue for you to share employer branding content
- Most visual out of all the other social networks so give followers an insight into working with the company – office tours, internal luncheons, charity effort, award ceremonies etc.

## CONTENT STRATEGY

After selecting the social channels you wish to promote your content on, it's time to get strategic. You need a clear and focused content strategy to produce optimal results for each network you choose to be active on. Some things to consider that will help you define your content strategy are:

- What is the purpose of each piece of content?
- What is the workflow from content creation to publication?
- What will the ratio be for original content:curated content?
- What content formats do we think will work best on each social channel (i.e. text, photos, images, links, video etc.)?
- How often should we post on each channel?
- What is our tone of voice when publishing on social?
- How will we measure effectiveness? (Discussed later)

## A Note on Visual Content

*Today's world is visually-obsessed. This can be largely attributed to the rise of the attention economy where the attention span of online users is lower than ever before as they navigate through the world of information overload. Content like photos, infographics and videos allows audiences to consume content more efficiently and satisfy their information needs. In a world where [55% of users who view a page spend less than 15 seconds looking at it](#), capturing a user's attention is vital. More employers must learn to visually engage with candidates.*

# 4. Email Marketing

## The What

Email – probably the only tactic here that could be considered strictly outbound. This may seem counter-intuitive given the focus on inbound in this whitepaper but in a landscape where candidates are becoming increasingly passive, tactics like email outreach can work beautifully – if you do it right.

## The Why

Because email has been around for so long, it has a reputation for being 'less sexier' when compared to other channels, especially social. This has led to questions like 'is email dead? Still relevant? Effective? Dying?'. The truth is that email is very much alive and well and is still a potentially massive engagement tool for companies. In 2016, the number of business emails sent/received per day is estimated to be a staggering 116 billion, very much confirming that email remains one of the elite channels for business communication. Dela Quist, CEO of email marketing agency Alchemy Worx, says:

***"I would recommend that anyone who thinks they need to prove the value of email in a world where Facebook is one of, if not the biggest sender of email in the world, to stop sending email for a whole month and see if they keep their job."***

Marketers have long known that email is one of the best-performing digital marketing practices and are getting to the point where most are designing and implementing 'pretty decent' email marketing programs. Talent acquisition teams are still playing catch up in this regard and are still utilising dated and manual practices that leads to their emails getting lost in the 'noise'. So what can you do to improve your strategy and ensure your emails are getting opened, read, clicked through and replied to?

## The How

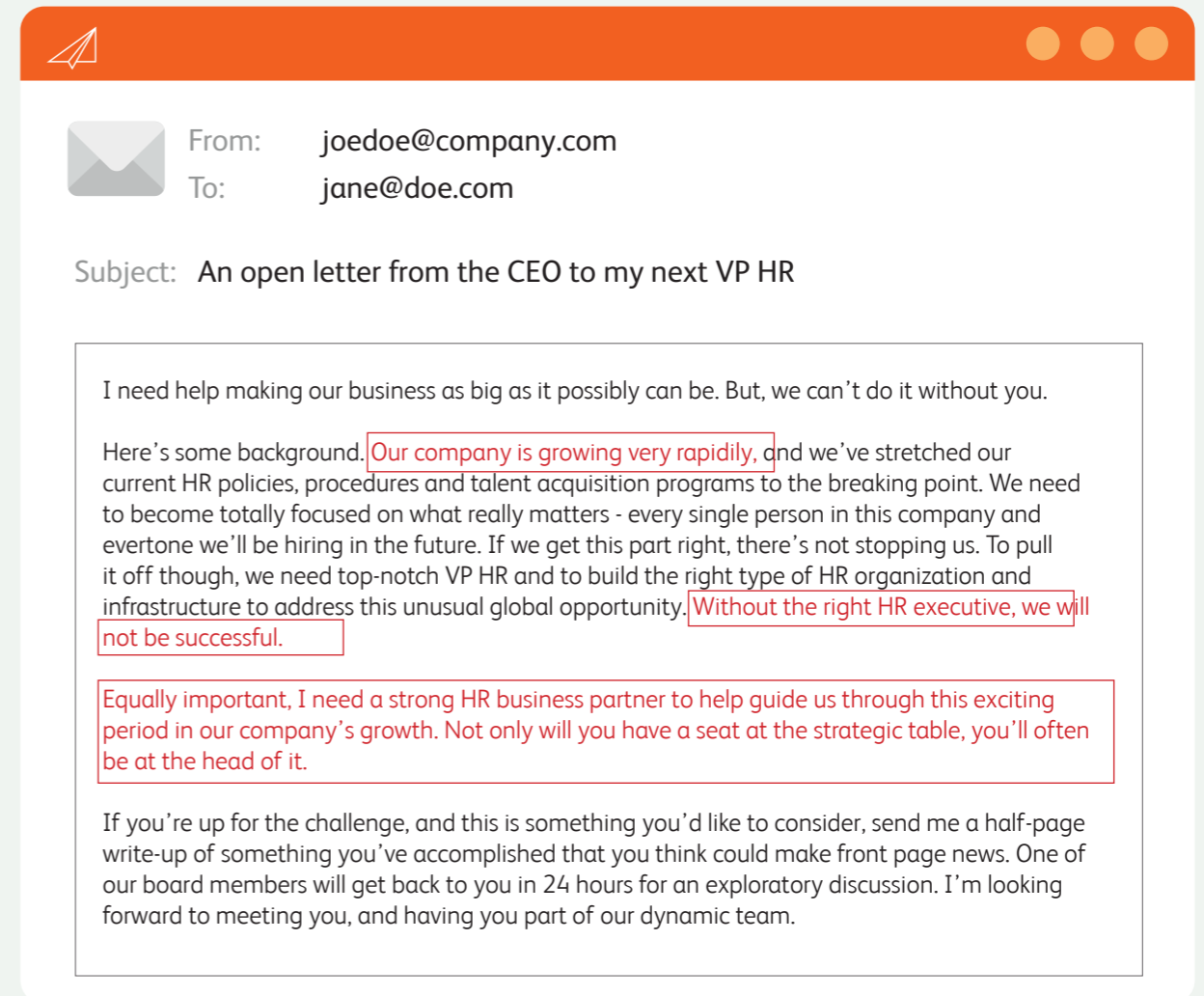
There's plenty of email marketing noise out there and sophisticated candidates have greater expectations & have the power to unsubscribe. Therefore, your recruitment email campaigns need to always be relevant, engaging, conversational and strategic. Here are some tips to optimise your recruitment emails:

- **Keep it Personal (SMYKM):** So how can you stand out? The answer is personalisation. Recruiters often tend to forget that the potential candidates they are emailing are in fact people! By personalising your messaging, you are giving them an avenue to make a connection with your employer brand. The way to do this is incorporating 'Show Me You Know Me' (SMYKM) content. This means doing some research on the candidate and referencing the experience they have or the achievements they have made in their career. For example:

*Hi Chris,  
My name is Stephen and I was researching \*company\*, and I noticed that you create and implement editorial and audience growth strategies for \*company's\* podcast.*

This immediately communicates to the candidate that you have developed a genuine interest in them. Bottom line: the more personal the message, the more obliged the candidate will feel to reply. And a reply is exactly what you're looking for.

- **Incorporate the Employee Value Proposition (EVP):** After recipients read your email, they should have a decent understanding of the core values of your company and how you conduct business. The EVP is a core part in this as it defines what you want most potential and current staff to associate with you as an employer. For potential staff (which is what you're going for here), this mainly relates to the benefits and rewards provided by you in exchange for the daily efforts to help the business succeed. For the example that follows, the target candidate is a HR professional and the EVP used is the candidate being central to the company's success, the CEO's appreciation for the HR function and massive importance of the job itself.



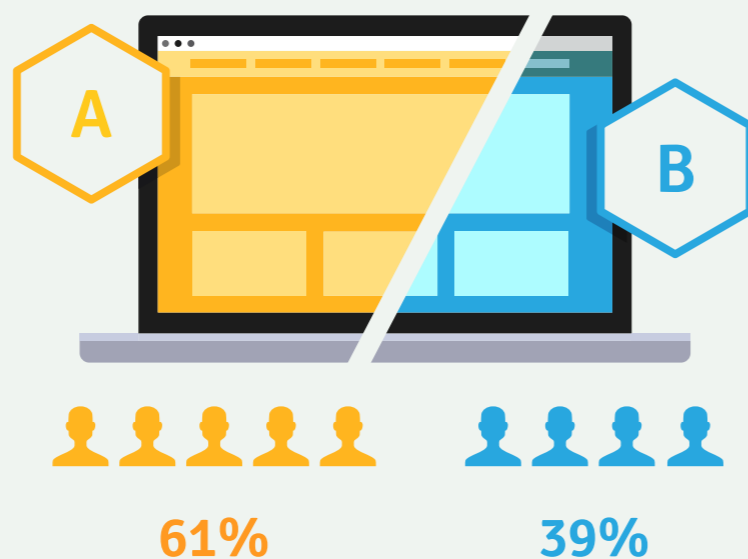
Source: [LinkedIn Talent Solutions blog](#)

- **Compelling Subject Line:** In a word: crucial. Your subject line is the greatest factor that determines whether or not the talent you are targeting open your email. No open? No engagement. So what sort of subject lines work best? Well based on anecdotal evidence, common opinion seems to be the more creative your subject line, the bigger the increase in your open rate. While there is probably some substance to this, an interesting study was conducted by MailChimp which found that pretty simple, straightforward, and consistent subject lines worked best in terms of open rate and subject lines that would be considered more attention-grabbing had the worst open rates. In other words, they found that the best subject lines tell what's inside, and the worst subject lines sell what's inside. How does this apply to recruiters? It seems silly to even say but all you need to do is describe the subject of your email in the subject line. Sending emails to potential candidates that have a heavily promotional subject line will not work well.

• **Marry Lead Nurturing with Automation:** What we mean by this is that you have to deliver the right content to the right candidate at the right time (think of the categories of content discussed above). Using automated emails can greatly increase conversions because target candidates receive targeted and personalised messaging based on the information they give you and their actions with your content. This is the ultimate goal of lead nurturing as it drives leads through the candidate journey towards the conversion stage (discussed later). A great example of a company sending relevant emails was the Cheesecake Factory which used its recruitment marketing platform to trigger an email reminder to candidates who failed to complete their application within two days after starting it. Because of this email reminder, the organisation made an astonishing [182 hires out of 1,000 potential candidates](#) that were reminded to complete the application.

• **Always Be Testing:** The best recruiters continually test their email marketing initiatives in order to optimise the recruitment process. Most studies and industry benchmarks report higher ROI when systematic A/B testing is used for email. There are a myriad of factors that you can test such as:

- o Subject line phrasing/length
- o Message greeting
- o Message body
- o Message closing
- o Number of calls to action
- o Days of the week
- o Time of the day sent
- o Landing pages
- o Short vs long copy
- o Unsubscribe position
- o Font colours and styles



### Metrics for the Attract Stage

As with any marketing or recruitment initiative, you need to measure the impact of your activities. Without defining what your return is, you have nothing to measure success or failure against so this should be made clear and absolutely aligned with business objectives from the beginning. You are essentially asking yourself ‘how will I measure results’?

The era of big data has brought with it a myriad of metrics you can use in the online space. As Michele Porfilio, Talent Acquisition Consultant of World-bridge Partners, puts it: “The amount of impact (recruiting is having) that we are able to show, up through our executives has completely changed how we are viewed. We have data to show what we are doing and what difference it is making”.

By asking yourself the following questions when building benchmarks for the ‘Attract’ stage of recruitment, you will be better able to articulate the ROI of your activities.

✓ Which Social Channels are performing best in terms of reach and engagement for career-related content?	✓ How are we ranking for career-specific keywords?
✓ Which social-specific formats of content work best across our channels e.g. links, text, videos and/or photos?	✓ What is the quality and quantity of backlinks to our career-related content?
✓ What categories of content are performing best/worst across our various channels e.g. blogs, spotlight videos etc. ?	✓ What is our organic search traffic for career-related content?
✓ What is our follower growth across each of our social channels? Is our content resonating?	✓ What kind of open rate and click throughs we are seeing from our emails?
✓ How much traffic is our career-related content and landing pages getting and what channels are our best performing?	✓ How effective are our nurturing efforts at converting opt-ins into qualified applicants?
✓ How many people viewed, downloaded, or listened to our career-related content?	✓ What is our subscriber growth?

# Converting Candidates

## Definition

A conversion occurs when a user submits their contact information when they arrive on your website. Ideally, a conversion will be a qualified candidate submitting their resume and contact details but there are different types of conversions for employers in the hunt for new recruits. For example, a conversion could be someone subscribing to your newsletter (which will have the latest positions advertised) or signing up to get access to a brand new e-book (showcasing your thought leadership). For a potential candidate like this, they aren't quite ready to submit their application for a position in your company but you can 'nurture' this lead with valuable and educational content over a period of time until they are ready to apply. This is where talent pipelining comes in (also known as relationship recruiting) where professional relationships are continually being built with passive talent for future opportunities.

For the purposes of this whitepaper, we are going to picture a path for an active candidate who has clicked on a piece of content on one of your social channels and has found themselves on the careers section of your website. In general, your website should be the central hub of candidate activity.



# 1. Website

## The What

This thing that is made up of a collection of different web pages accessible through the Internet. Seriously if you're reading this and you don't know what a website is, you're most likely a time-traveler! Your website is your company storefront and your careers section is one of the checkout aisles. As a recruiter, you are the cashier and you really should be doing everything you can to get candidates down your aisle. Your careers section should be prominently displayed on every page on your website and easily accessible.

When it comes to actually implementing tactics to get users from your careers section to applying for open roles, the first thing you need to ensure is that the overall user experience (UX) is positive. What do we mean by a positive UX? UX refers to wider human experiences, including emotional and perceptual components of the key elements of your website including structure, navigation and style. A combination of the advances in mobile and social technologies and taking account of the views of different stakeholders on website design has increased the importance of UX.

## The Why

Building a great careers website can be one of the most effective and cost-efficient solutions out there when it comes to converting potential candidates. Your careers section plays a key role and you must allocate the time to optimise the layout, design and content of your pages to maximise its effectiveness. It's an absolute critical task to optimise the conversion process as highlighted by Jason Berkowitz, Business Development Manager for the Recruitment Process Outsourcing Division at IBM, who says:

"A high-quality career site is a competitive advantage in seeking talent. Our research shows that the average candidate will spend less than 60 seconds on

a career site before deciding if they want to pursue a job with that company, so it's important that a career site be strategic and impactful".

Furthermore, CareerBuilder [conducted a recent survey](#) of candidates which gave recruiters a key insight into the importance of candidate experience. Some of the key findings were:

✗	42 % said they would never seek employment at the company again
✗	22 % said they would actively tell others not to work for that company
✗	9 % said they would not purchase products and services from that company
✓	56 % said they would consider working for that company in the future
✓	22 % said they would actively tell others not to work for that company
✓	9 % said they would not purchase products and services from that company

It's interesting to see from this study that the implications of a negative candidate experience actually go beyond candidates not seeking employment at the company in the future but also candidates not purchasing products/ services from said company.

## The How

So we've broken down what exactly website UX is, why it's important and how it relates to the overall candidate experience. But what can you do to ensure it's a positive UX for the candidate? A couple of things you need to consider are:

- The overall structure of your careers site (site design and structure)
- The layout of individual pages (page design)
- How the text and graphic content on each page is designed (content design)

Again, all of these elements are developed based on the needs of the candidate personas you are trying to target and therefore, perfecting these elements with the personas in mind will automatically translate into a positive candidate experience. There are a couple of website components that you as a recruiter can work on optimising in order to get more candidates to submit applications.

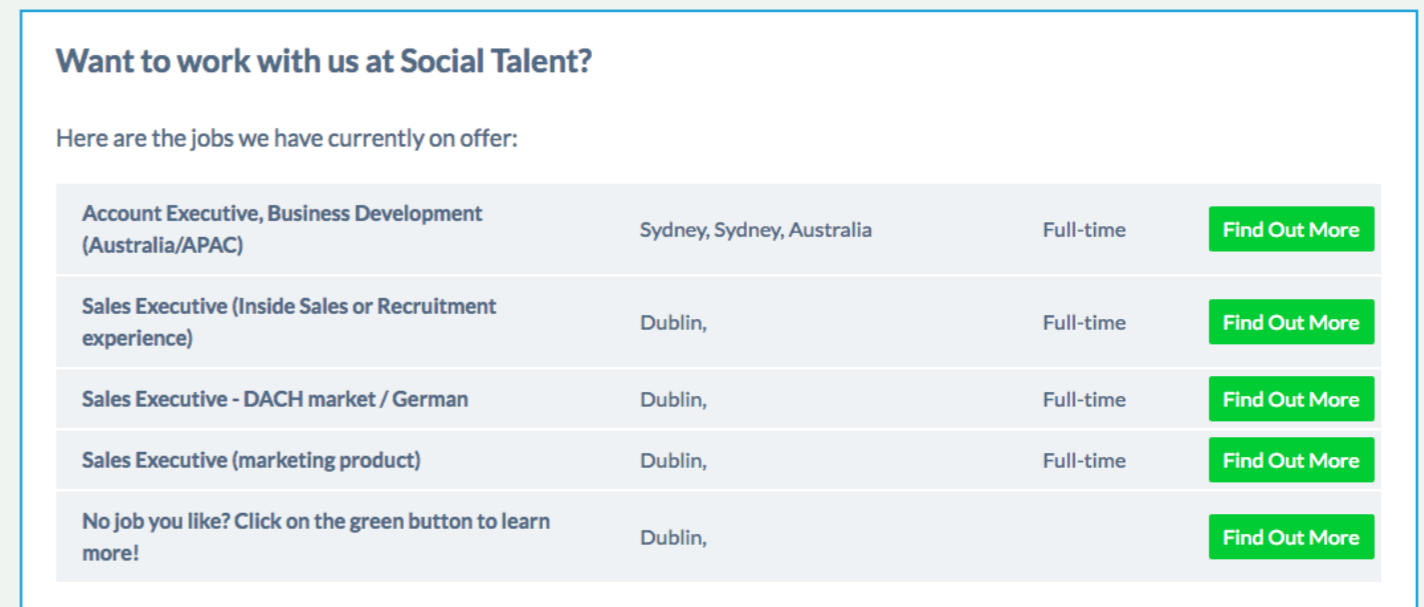
### (a) Call-To-Action

Your conversion process and user experience typically begins with a call-to-action (CTA) which is essentially a button on your careers website that urges candidates to take an action. This element tends to be brushed over by many recruiters but designing an effective CTA is a critical step when trying to encourage candidates to apply for your job position. Let's go through some of the best practices when it comes to designing an effective CTA:

**Make it action-orientated:** You want to excite users when they arrive on your careers page so it's important to avoid weak phrasing that fails to encourage the candidate what to do. Start your CTA with a verb e.g. IBM have a great CTA on their careers website which tells exactly what candidates can expect when they click on it. Simple, clear, direct action verbs make for a great call-to-action. Put yourself in the minds of your candidate personas when developing a CTA.

**Attention-grabbing:** Again, it's important to think about your candidate personas here and try to understand their tastes when it comes to a certain colour or size of your CTA. Ultimately, your CTA must stand out so try to use contrasting colours that aligns with your company branding. A good example of this is Social Talent's careers page where the CTA 'Find out more' button is easily visible to the user. You also need to consider the placement of your CTA. Generally, you should aim to put a CTA above the fold so it's the first thing candidates notice when they arrive but ensure that it fits logically with everything else on the page.

**Always be testing:** There's no point using a specific CTA and not measuring the results. Set goals when it comes to click-through rate for your CTA as well as the click-through/application rate. When testing and experimenting with different CTAs, you need to isolate a single variable as your test variable, identify your control and see how it performs. Some things you can test include the text in the CTA and the colour of your CTA.



The screenshot shows a section titled "Want to work with us at Social Talent?". Below the title, it says "Here are the jobs we have currently on offer:". There is a table with five rows, each representing a job listing. Each row has four columns: Job Title, Location, Employment Type, and a "Find Out More" button.

Job Title	Location	Employment Type	Action
Account Executive, Business Development (Australia/APAC)	Sydney, Sydney, Australia	Full-time	Find Out More
Sales Executive (Inside Sales or Recruitment experience)	Dublin,	Full-time	Find Out More
Sales Executive - DACH market / German	Dublin,	Full-time	Find Out More
Sales Executive (marketing product)	Dublin,	Full-time	Find Out More
No job you like? Click on the green button to learn more!	Dublin,		Find Out More

### (b) Your Job Advert

After your target candidate persona clicks on the CTA, they will arrive on a landing page which will typically have your job ad. At this point, your goal here is to convert these candidates into actual applicants and this is where the content of your job plays a major part as it is really the heart of the conversion stage. When it comes to demonstrating the best practices for job ads, we think the best way to illustrate this is break down the things of what NOT to do when you're creating your job ads.

**Vague Job title:** Vague job titles like 'Group Manager' and 'Senior Consultant' will leave potential candidates uncertain of what the job actually entails which will discourage them to explore further. In order to attract top calibre candidates, job titles need to be concise and contain accurate words

that effectively communicate the role and responsibilities for the vacancy. It is also important to note that a vague job title will also have an adverse impact on your SEO.

**Redundant Information in Job Description:** According to [TheLadders](#), it takes candidates 49.7 seconds to determine whether a job is a good fit for them. Yes your job description is the section in the job ad that typically contains the most content but it is essential you present this in a way that is concise. The content here should also be candidate-centric, in that you provide a good overview of the role and detail how your company is going to help the candidate achieve their professional goals. Instead of telling the candidate of the skills they need to possess in order to perform the job satisfactorily, you put the candidate front and centre. Check below for an example:

*“As a core member of the Project Management team, you will be expected to work autonomously and deliver on project phases on time and on budget. We will help you achieve your goals by continuous professional development and regular career progression sessions.”*

**Business/Technical Jargon:** There’s nothing worse than a candidate excitedly clicking to a job ad thinking it is a great opportunity, only to find that it is flooded with uninspiring business/technical jargon around the role. Monster undertook a recent survey and found that jargon or acronyms in job ads puts over half of job seekers off applying for the role with 60% finding jargon annoying. Terms like ‘hitting the ground running’, ‘leverage’, ‘bottleneck’ and ‘penetrating the market’ are examples of jargon you may be guilty of using. Using these terms can seriously affect recruiters’ chances of finding the right candidate. What recruiters need to do is use language that is clear and easy to digest.

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*A simple and easy-to-follow application process plays a critical role when it comes to candidates submitting their information.*

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### **c) Application Process**

Great, you’ve got them to apply! But wait – you’ve noticed that when candidates start applying, many of them are dropping out of the application process. What’s going on? Well chances are your application process needs to be looked at more closely. Even if you think you have nailed down your CTA and you have aced your job advert, the candidate still has to actually apply for the job role. While you want candidates to invest some of their time when applying for your vacancy, a poor application process can quickly deter them from filling out required information. As a result, a simple and easy-to-follow application process plays a critical role when it comes to candidates submitting their info.

CEO and President of Capify, David Goldin elaborates more on issues associated with the application process, saying:

*“Nobody should need to fill out a ten-page form. Just make sure your site has the capability for candidates to submit a resume and/or cover letter, and they’ll leave with a positive impression right off the bat; they didn’t have to jump through hoops just to apply” hoops just to apply”.*

One common mistake that recruiters make is that their application process is too long. Again, we can refer to the attention economy discussed in the Social Media section of this whitepaper where candidates simply do not have the time or patience to fill out each and every one of your custom fields.

One simple solution to this is installing a one-click apply button on your job ad which enables candidates to apply for jobs instantly using a stored CV and cover letter or using info from their LinkedIn profiles. This makes for a quick and seamless process that doesn't irritate potential candidates. Simplicity is your best friend here – boil down to what you absolutely have to know at this stage and ask more question later on in the process.

#### (d) Mobile

Is your application process not optimised for mobile yet? Big problem. Mobile is becoming part of the expected candidate experience and an application process not mobile optimised runs the risk of disengaging many of your candidates. Job seekers have very much embraced mobile with Simply Hired, LinkedIn and Sonru all reporting that upwards of 70 % of candidates use mobile to browse for career opportunities online.

As a recruiter, HR professional or talent acquisition manager, there is huge need to embrace mobile in order to source, contact and hire the right candidates. Not only that but Google announced last year that [mobile-friendly websites will rank higher](#) in mobile search results and those that are not optimised will fall down the rankings.

In order to optimise your mobile candidate experience, you need to ask yourself:

- Do potential candidates have to zoom in to see text?
- Can they easily find jobs on mobile?
- Is the navigation easily accessible?
- Can candidates easily click on links?
- Is video content (e.g. employee spotlight videos) loading?

## Metrics for the Conversion Stage

When measuring the success of your Conversion activities, consider the following questions.

- ✓ What is the bounce rate we are seeing on our career landing pages?

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- ✓ How many applicants are we getting?

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- ✓ What is the click-through rate of our various CTAs? Which ones work best?

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- ✓ After users click on the CTA, what is the click-to-submission rate?

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- ✓ What is the overall quality of applicants (leads)? Do they fit our candidate personas?

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- ✓ How many touch points does it take for a candidate to apply?

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- ✓ At what point in the candidate journey are users dropping out?

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- ✓ At what point in the application process on desktop are potential candidates dropping out? On mobile?

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- ✓ How many people are viewing our career-related content on a mobile device?

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- ✓ How many applications are we seeing via mobile?

# CONCLUSION

It has become increasingly clear that strong recruitment is about adapting to the evolving consumer technology landscape. In order for you to do this effectively, the modernisation of recruitment marketing processes is needed which demands a new breed of recruiters. You need to wear multiple hats to thrive in today's hiring ecosystem and this whitepaper serves as a great starting point for you if you want to start attracting and converting more qualified candidates.

Hiring quality has never been more important as a company's ability to find, attract, and ultimately recruit skilled talent is going to determine how successful they are in meeting their business growth objectives. Talent acquisition is now firmly on the agenda of chief executive officers (CEOs) and business owners across the world. No matter how you look at it, understanding how and why candidates are looking for jobs is the key to developing effective recruitment marketing materials. After gaining a considerable understanding of your ideal candidates, you need to utilise numerous marketing tactics to bring your prospects on a journey from familiarisation of your company, to knowledgeable insight into the company and ending in consideration of working at your company.



# Thank you.



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