



Recruiting as Marketing

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Abstract

This work looks at the idea of treating recruiting in the same way we think about marketing. Over time, hiring people stopped being just a technical routine with ads, résumés, and interviews. The job market became more competitive, and candidates started to expect more from employers. Because of this, companies had to change how they approach recruitment.

In the paper I explain the theoretical background of this idea and show how marketing tools - like branding, targeting, and clear communication - can also be used in HR. I trace how recruitment moved from simple announcements in the past to more complex strategies today that include employer branding, online platforms, and personalized ways of reaching candidates. A big part of this shift is the reputation of the company, since many people choose an employer the same way customers decide which brand to trust.

Another important aspect is dividing candidates into groups. Just like in business, it makes sense to build “personas” of the ideal applicant and adapt messages for different audiences. Social media, online advertising, storytelling, and referral programs are some of the most effective tools in this new version of recruiting.

An important part of the discussion is how companies can actually see if their recruiting efforts work. It is not enough to come up with creative campaigns; organizations need to check them through clear signs. Among the most common are the money spent on hiring one person, the time it usually takes to close a vacancy, and how candidates themselves feel during the process. These measures show not only how fast and cheap recruitment is, but also whether people leave with a positive impression of the company.

The final idea of the paper is straightforward: treating recruiting as a form of marketing is no longer a temporary fashion. It is becoming a stable practice that changes the way businesses look for and keep their people. Human resources and marketing are now working closer than ever, and this cooperation will strongly influence how future talent markets are shaped.

Keywords: *Recruiting as Marketing, Employer Image, Candidate Groups, Hiring Strategies, HR-Marketing Connection, Candidate Journey, Evaluation Tools.*

INTRODUCTION

Recruiting today is no longer just a routine process of filling empty positions. Companies have realized that the search for employees has much in common with the way brands search for customers. Employers compete for skilled professionals almost in the same way as companies compete for loyal buyers. Because of this, recruiting is gradually taking on the features of marketing - with its strategies, tools, and even its language of communication.

It's pretty obvious why this topic is important right now. The world of work doesn't stand still: some professions disappear, new ones show up, and the need for people with modern skills is often bigger than the number of people who

actually have them. Because of that, companies can't just post a generic job ad and hope for the best anymore. They have to think about the impression they make, the image they show to potential candidates, and whether people see them as a trustworthy place to work. In many ways, it's the same logic that brands use when they try to win over customers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this paper, the main “materials” were academic articles, books on human resource management and marketing, as well as recent case studies from professional journals and business reports. I also looked at online sources, such as company career pages and social media platforms, to see how theory is being used in practice.

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The method was mainly analytical and comparative. First, I reviewed the existing literature to understand how scholars describe the idea of recruiting as marketing. Then, I compared traditional hiring approaches with modern practices that borrow from marketing. Along the way, I also noted real-life examples from companies to show how concepts like employer branding, candidate segmentation, and digital tools appear outside of theory.

The process was straightforward: collect sources, analyze them, highlight key patterns, and put the findings together in a clear way. This gave me a balanced view of both the academic discussion and the practical side of the topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

At the same time, people looking for work have also changed. Most of them don't just grab the first offer they get. They pay attention to what the company stands for, whether there are chances to learn and grow, and what kind of culture exists inside the team. In some cases, these things even matter more than the paycheck. That's why the old style of recruitment - just reading résumés and picking someone - is no longer enough. What matters now is the skill to "tell the story" of the job, to show its strengths, and, most importantly, to do it honestly.

This is why the idea of recruiting as marketing feels so timely. It shows how HR and marketing actually overlap, and why this mix influences how successful companies are in finding the right people.

Before diving deeper, it makes sense to stop and ask: what do we actually mean when we say "recruiting as marketing"? On the surface, these sound like completely different areas. HR deals with people already inside the company, while marketing is usually about products, services, and customers. But if you look past the labels, both share the same heart - they're about how you communicate and how you create value for others [3].

In recruiting, the "product" isn't something you buy in a store. It's the job itself, the workplace, the team a person might join. And the "customer" isn't a buyer - it's a potential employee. Just like in marketing, the company has to understand what makes its offer stand out, how to explain it in a way that feels clear, and how to reach the people most likely to be interested. That's where ideas borrowed from marketing - like knowing your audience, building an image, or positioning yourself against competitors - suddenly make a lot of sense for HR too.

People in the academic field have been talking about the link between HR and marketing for quite some time. In books and articles you often come across terms like employer branding, internal marketing, or talent attraction. All of these ideas show one thing - that methods borrowed from marketing can be useful in hiring. Take employer branding as an example: at its core, it's just about creating a positive

image of the company for future applicants, the same way a brand shapes how customers see its products.

But this isn't only about logos and campaigns. Some researchers remind us that when HR and marketing come together, we also need to pay attention to the people side of things. Marketing usually studies what makes buyers choose one brand, why they stick with it, and what builds loyalty. HR looks at different questions: what pushes employees to work well, why they decide to stay, and how satisfied they are day to day. When you put these two angles together, you start to see the full picture - why someone decides to join a company in the first place, and why they choose to remain part of it.

In simple terms, "recruiting as marketing" just means borrowing the basic ideas of marketing and applying them to hiring. It's about knowing exactly who you want to reach, giving them something that feels valuable, and showing that value in a way they can actually believe. The only real difference is what's being "sold." Here, the product isn't an item on a shelf - it's the job itself. And the person you're trying to reach isn't a shopper but a potential employee. The role of the company is not to push goods, but to show why joining their team is worth it [8, c. 453].

If we compare hiring today with how it worked several decades ago, the difference is huge. Back then, the whole process was very basic: an employer would post a small ad in the newspaper or put a note on a bulletin board and then wait. Whoever showed up and seemed to fit even a little bit often got the job. Hardly anyone cared about how the company looked to outsiders, what impression the ad gave, or how the candidate felt during the process. It was seen as a simple exchange: the business needed a worker, the person needed money - and that was it.

As time went on and the job market became tougher and more global, this old way stopped working. Employers could no longer count on people lining up for every vacancy. Skilled workers suddenly had options, and they started acting more like consumers: comparing offers, checking out company culture, and paying attention to reputation, not just pay. That's when recruiting had to evolve into something more thoughtful and competitive.

This is where marketing ideas began to enter the hiring process. Instead of only "announcing" jobs, companies started "promoting" them. Job ads became more creative, careers pages began to look like mini-marketing campaigns, and recruiters had to learn how to highlight the unique benefits of working in their organization. Basically, the role of the recruiter shifted closer to that of a brand ambassador.

You can really see how things have changed if you look at the way companies talk to applicants now. Years ago, someone could send in their CV and never hear anything back. Today, that kind of silence is seen as unprofessional. Even if a person doesn't get the job, businesses are expected to treat them

with respect, give feedback, and leave a good impression. The whole idea has shifted - recruiting isn't only about closing a vacancy, it's about building relationships with people who might become future employees.

Because of this, hiring has grown beyond a simple HR task done behind the scenes. It now feels much closer to marketing. Recruiters need to know how to tell the company's story, how to understand different audiences, and even how to use data to see what works and what doesn't [6, c. 5462].

And when people think about "marketing" in recruiting, the first thing that comes to mind is usually the company's reputation as an employer. That makes perfect sense: just like strong brands attract loyal customers, a company with a good image attracts talent. It's not about having a shiny logo or a clever slogan - what matters is the overall impression candidates get about what it's like to work there.

Before applying anywhere, most people like to do a little digging. They'll check reviews online, scroll through the company's social media, or ask someone they know who has worked there. If the stories they find are negative - things like poor treatment of staff, no growth, or constant stress - then even a high salary won't be enough to convince them. On the other hand, if the company is known for treating people fairly, giving chances to develop, and keeping a healthy atmosphere, candidates are much more open to applying.

That impression doesn't just build itself. HR can't carry it alone - marketing plays a role too. Together they shape how the company is presented: the look and feel of the careers page, the tone used in job ads, the kind of posts they share, even how quickly they respond to emails. Small details matter a lot. A late reply, a rushed interview, or lack of feedback can quietly damage the company's image. Step by step, these everyday moments decide whether the workplace is seen as attractive or not.

When that reputation is strong, hiring gets easier. Instead of chasing people, the company starts to attract them. Students bookmark internship pages; experienced folks keep an eye out for openings the way fans wait for a favorite brand's new release. The pipeline stays warmer because trust is already there.

So employer image isn't a slogan or a logo issue. It's the everyday bridge where HR and marketing meet-how the company shows who it is, and how that promise is kept in every step of the candidate's journey [1, c. 187].

One of the biggest lessons recruiting takes from marketing is the idea that you can't talk to everyone in the same way. In marketing, companies divide customers into groups based on age, interests, lifestyle, or needs. In recruiting, the same logic applies: we need to understand who our "audience" is and how to reach them.

A company can't speak to every group of candidates in the same way. The message has to change depending on who

they're trying to reach. For example, if the goal is to hire recent IT graduates, they'll probably be most interested in flexible hours, learning opportunities, and creative projects. But if the company wants to bring in an experienced manager, then the focus should shift to stability, leadership roles, and long-term career paths. Using the same message for both groups wouldn't make sense.

To avoid this mistake, recruiters often create a kind of "portrait" of the person they're trying to attract. It's not just a checklist of skills, but also an idea of what that person values, what motivates them, and even which online spaces they use most. If the target group spends time on LinkedIn, then it makes sense to focus efforts there. If they're more active on Instagram or TikTok, the strategy has to follow them onto those platforms.

Breaking candidates into groups like this also saves time and energy. Instead of spreading the same generic job ad everywhere, the company can shape the message for a specific audience. That way, the ad feels more personal and relevant. People on the other side notice that the company understands what matters to them - and that alone makes them more interested.

When we treat recruiting like marketing, it's not only about what we say but also about where we say it. Just writing "we're hiring" isn't enough anymore. What really matters is knowing where people actually spend their time and showing up there with the right message [7, c. 236].

Social media has become one of the main places to do this. LinkedIn is the obvious choice for professionals, but it's not the only platform people check. More and more, companies use Instagram, Facebook, or even TikTok to show what working in their team looks like. A quick video from the office, a photo of a project, or a story told by an employee can feel more real than any polished job ad. It lets candidates picture themselves in that environment, which makes the company feel closer and more relatable.

Another way companies try to reach people is through online advertising. It works much like product ads: instead of showing a message to everyone, you can aim it at the exact group you want. For example, if a company is looking for engineers, the ad can be set to appear only to people who follow engineering content or search for related topics. That way the job post doesn't get lost in the noise and actually lands in front of the right audience.

One of the most convincing ways to attract new people is to let current employees speak for themselves. Instead of posting a boring checklist of tasks, some companies share blog entries, short stories, or even videos where staff describe what their workday is like. Hearing a real person talk about their job feels much more authentic than reading a polished ad. When you see that employees genuinely enjoy what they do and feel proud of their team, it makes you curious - and often makes you want to be part of it too.

The company's career page also plays a bigger role than many think. If the site looks outdated, hard to navigate, or half-broken, most candidates won't bother finishing the application. But if it's clean, clear, and actually gives a feel of what working there is like, it can motivate people to take the next step and apply. Even something as simple as a friendly design or clear instructions can make a big difference.

And honestly, sometimes the best way to bring in new people has nothing to do with websites or ads at all. Often it comes down to the people already working there. When an employee tells a friend or an old teammate about an opening, that recommendation feels more genuine than any polished campaign. Trust is already there, so candidates are more likely to listen - and in many cases, a personal referral gets someone through the door much faster than a random application ever could [4, c. 25].

But no matter how many creative ideas a company uses in recruiting, at some point it has to check if those efforts are really working. In marketing, teams look at sales or clicks to measure success. In recruiting, the numbers are different, but the logic is the same.

When companies want to check if their hiring efforts are working, they often look at a few key numbers. One of the most obvious is the cost of bringing in a new employee - basically, how much money is spent to fill a single role. Another useful measure is the time it takes to close a vacancy. If weeks or even months go by before the right person is hired, it usually shows that something in the process isn't efficient.

Still, figures on their own don't give the full picture. That's why many employers now also pay attention to what's called the candidate experience. This simply means how people feel while going through the recruitment process. Did they get clear communication? Was there any feedback? Were they treated with respect? Even if someone doesn't get the job, a positive experience can leave them with a good impression of the company - and that, in the long run, strengthens its reputation.

Some companies also track engagement on social media, visits to the career page, or the percentage of job offers accepted. All of this gives a fuller picture of how recruiting efforts are paying off.

The point is not to drown in statistics but to find a balance: using metrics to improve the process while still remembering that behind every number there's a real person.

When you look at how hiring has changed, it's obvious that it's not the same process it used to be. What once meant posting a vacancy, scanning through résumés, and running a few interviews has grown into something much bigger. Recruiting today has more in common with marketing: companies work on their image, try to understand who they want to reach, pick the right ways to communicate, and even track results to see if their efforts are paying off.

The key takeaway is that people can't be treated like numbers on a spreadsheet. Skilled workers aren't easy to replace - they're more like customers you want to win over and keep. That means employers have to show real value, build trust, and communicate honestly. If they don't, they risk losing talent to competitors who do take this approach seriously.

CONCLUSIONS

Looking ahead, it's hard not to notice that this whole direction will only grow stronger. Technology is already changing how people look for jobs and how companies search for talent. Social media feeds are filled with posts about work life, job offers, and career advice, and this will only increase. New digital tools will also make it easier to connect the right person with the right employer.

Still, no matter how many platforms or algorithms appear, people remain at the heart of it. A candidate wants to feel respected, understood, and valued - and that can't be replaced by technology.

That's why "recruiting as marketing" should not be seen as a short-lived fashion. It's more of a shift in thinking: companies and job seekers are building relationships in the same way brands build relationships with customers. And this way of looking at recruiting will continue to shape how the job market works in the years to come.

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