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# Attract

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**Creating, Executing and Measuring a Talent Attraction Strategy**

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# Introduction

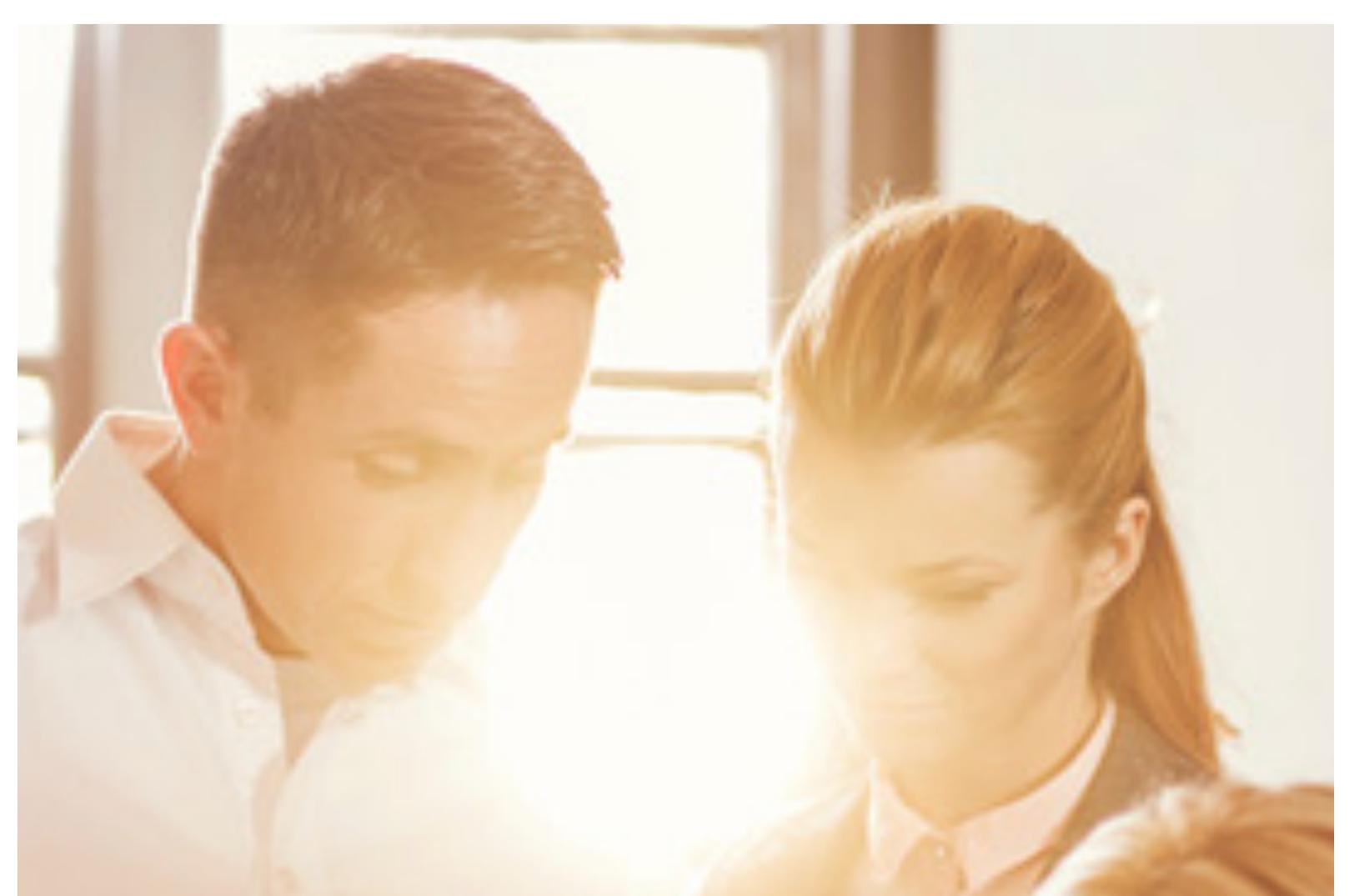
## Attract – Measuring your company's ability to attract qualified talent



Our ATAP research team was assembled to identify the key stages of the recruiting lifecycle and provide definitions, KPIs and thought leadership content for each stage. After we defined the stages, I set out to write a paper for my area: **Attract – Measuring your company's ability to attract qualified talent**. I started with online research to both absorb content and to identify thought leaders to interview. Then, with a list of experts and interview questions in hand, I began interviewing. As I dug deeper into the conversations and gained referrals, I found myself talking with many experts. I also found the need to circle back to some of the same people more than once when I got conflicting information or needed more insight. Through this process, I had the opportunity to vet the content across a diverse group of experts. So many golden nuggets were uncovered and though this paper is longer than I intended, I felt the responsibility to share the wealth!

Across the interviews, opinions sometimes differed. Topics like definitions and metrics required cross-referencing information between experts. Overall, there was a great deal of consensus for themes like recruiters learning from tried and true practices of the marketing team, how best to approach a marketing team for support and how to leverage workforce planning to create a talent attraction strategy. I appreciate the diverse perspectives gained by interviews of thought leaders from the vendor side and the practitioner side, across industries, in roles that span in responsibility from talent attraction to marketing. This paper will guide you through key definitions, preparing to measure your success, leveraging your marketing team, creating a plan, creating content and then marketing that content. I've taken the feedback from all of the interviews to provide a step by step approach that can be customized based upon an organization's resources. You'll also hear from several of those interviewed about their opinion on the future of this space. Enjoy!

– Christy Spilka



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# Definitions and KPIs

## **Attract**

Measuring your company's ability to attract qualified talent

# Attract – Measuring your company’s ability to attract qualified talent

## Definitions



### Attract

Measuring your company’s ability to attract qualified talent.

## Key Definitions



### Employer Brand

How an organization is perceived as an employer. Inputs to the employer brand include the Employer Value Proposition (EVP), Talent Brand and company news and reputation.



### Employer Value Proposition (EVP)

How the employer wants to be perceived as an employer which includes the core differentiators (brand pillars) of that employer.



### Talent Brand

The public voice of the employer’s employees. How the employees perceive the employer as a place to work.



### Talent Attraction

Your employer brand at work. The company’s ability to attract qualified talent.

# Attract – Measuring your company’s ability to attract qualified talent

## Overview



To attract **quality talent** to an organization, the health of the **employer brand is critical.**

The employer brand exists regardless of a company’s approach to EVP. The experience of a company’s consumers, candidates and employees as well as company news, reputation and general word of mouth all shape the way that people see a company’s overall brand. Each touch point that someone has with a company further defines their perception of the company overall and, depending on the interaction, the employer brand. According to James Ellis, Director, Employer Brand at Universum, “your brand is so many things. How a recruiter reaches out, what people say about you, what they heard about you at a party, what they heard about one of your leaders...they’re constantly absorbing information. Employer brand has a long tail. You are subconsciously picking up information about every company that you hear about.”

The EVP represents the ways in which the company wants to be perceived as an employer and the key differentiators of that company as an employer. The EVP must ring true to how the current and prior employees (talent brand) feel about the employer. What it’s really like to work there and does the organization live by its values or are they just words? If employees are posting negative sentiments about a company’s lack of communication from leaders and yet the EVP promises transparent and timely communication from leadership, there will be an authenticity issue with the EVP.

To ensure that your EVP is aligning with your talent brand, Jim Stroud, VP, Marketing of Proactive Talent, recommends tracking exit interviews, periodic employee surveys, alumni interviews and retention rates. **“Do people feel that you have kept your EVP promises?”** If not, why not? Is your retention rate falling or rising? Are you able to maintain a corporate alumni network? If not, figure out why people don’t want to come back”. He also recommends measuring internal referrals and how often employees voluntarily share their work experience online to determine the strength of your talent brand.

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## Areas of Measurement

Employer brand health can be measured by both sentiment and reach. Your ability to efficiently enable a healthy brand with effective talent attraction strategies can be measured by efficiency.



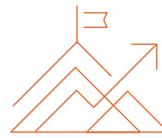
### Sentiment

How talent feels about your brand.



### Reach

How far the reach of your brand extends.



### Efficiency

The efficiency of your overall spend, strategy and process.



## Talent Attraction Ability

is determined by

**Employer Brand Health**

which is made up of

**Sentiment and Reach**

The following graphic provides a list of KPIs (p. 10) for each of these areas. Talent acquisition teams can choose from this list to track the KPIs that make the most sense for their organizational goals as well as their access to data, budget and team capacity.

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## Areas of Measurement with KPIs

### SENTIMENT (QUALITY)

- Company NPS
- CandEx (NPS or other score)
- Volume of social likes and shares
- Social engagement rate (likes/shares)
- Employer review sites:
  - ✓Overall score
  - ✓Comments
  - ✓CEO rating
- Career site drop off (track by page)
- Time spent on careers site (track where time is spent/how much time)
- Applicant conversion rate (drop off, click to apply, progression)
- Response rates to recruiter messaging
- Offer acceptance Rate
- # of quality applicants per role
- Employee referral volume
- Exit interview feedback
- Alumni network volume and engagement
- 1st day ghosting

### REACH (QUANTITY)

- Traffic to job postings
- Traffic to careers page (including landing pages) (impressions)
- Source of traffic to careers page and conversion to each
- Apply clicks
- Apply clicks to application ratio
- Source of application
- Source of hire
- Source of influence
- Social followers
- Talent community/network incremental growth rate and quality
- Talent community/network engagement rate
- Talent pipeline volume and quality

### EFFICIENCY

Time spent to apply

Cost Per Hire (CPH)

Agency Spend

Cost Per Application (CPA)

Quality of Hire (QOH)

# of Interviews per Hire

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### KPI Highlight: Source of Influence and Source of Application

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One of the KPIs that recruiting teams often have difficulty tracking is source of influence. There is a general consensus in the industry that this tends to be a black hole. Most could get lost in the abyss of trying to nail down how candidates were influenced to ultimately apply to an organization. Source of application is the most commonly used metric, though it has recognized flaws. At a prior company, Julie Calli, Chief Strategy Officer at Recruitics once tested the theory that asking the candidate where they heard about the job opportunity is not reliable on its own. She once added “super bowl ad” to the drop down menu. Though this company never advertised during the super bowl, this became the #1 source of application.

Nicole Parish, Global Talent Brand Attraction Lead at Qualtrics has some insight on the source of influence blind spot. To simplify the strategy, her feedback has been consolidated into a “menu of

options” (p. 12) that talent acquisition teams can pick from based upon the resources available to them. She relates your data story to baking a cake, “***you have to have multiple layers to understand the story that your data is telling.*** Source of application is the go to for many organizations as this is the easiest point to see where people are making that final conversion. Typically, this is reported as self reported metrics, the candidate saying here’s where I found out about this job.” She also says that, “organizations at a minimum should also ask candidates where they first started to learn about the company (source of influence).” To then take source of influence data tracking to the next level, her team uses source tracking to understand where candidates started to engage as well as where they converted. This can help to gain more accurate data since, as Julie proved with her super bowl test, candidate feedback may not always be accurate.

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## KPI Highlight: Source of Influence and Source of Application Tracking Levels

Source Tracking Level	Tracking Level Strategy
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### The Basics



At a minimum, ask applicants how they heard about you as an employer during your careers site application process (source of influence) and how they heard about the job (source of application). Best practice is a required drop down menu of up to 10 sources.

### Advancing



If your ATS supports source tracking, work with your job board vendors to “tag” applicants with that job board as the source automatically (more accurate source of application) when they apply.

### Innovating



Create custom URLs based upon:

- ✓ **Source** – LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram
- ✓ **Medium** – Banner Ad, CPC, Post, Email
- ✓ **Campaign** – Job Type or other hiring campaign
- ✓ **Author** – who is sharing the content (hiring manager/recruiter)

#### Example:

[www.nthrive.com?utm\\_source=Facebook&utm\\_medium=Post&utm\\_campaign=Software\\_Engineer&utm\\_content=Amy](http://www.nthrive.com?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=Post&utm_campaign=Software_Engineer&utm_content=Amy)

Use Google Analytics or Bitly to track the best performing sources against your goals. The link indicates the candidate conversion point.

### Tools:

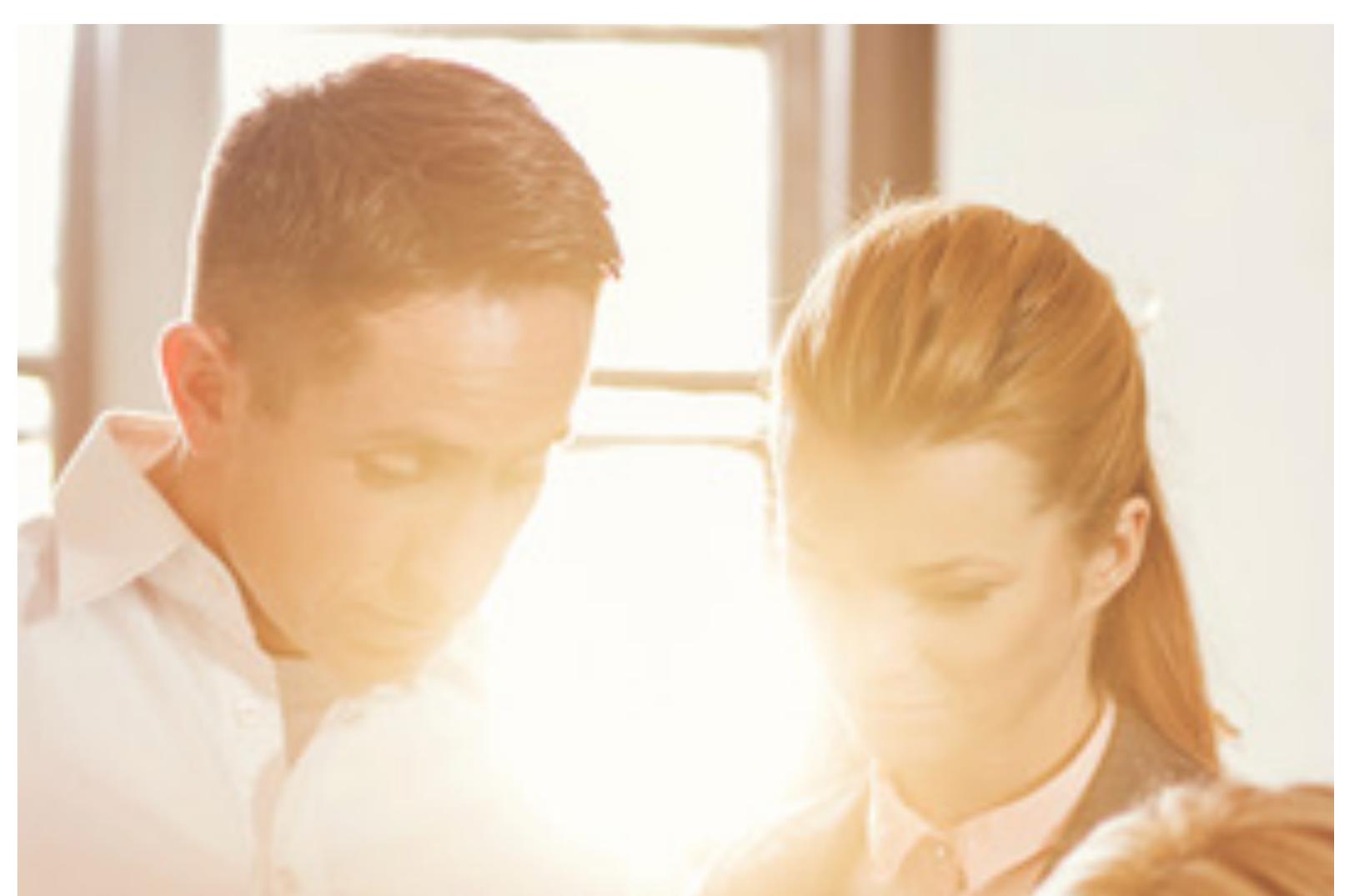
**Google Analytics URL Builder:** <https://ga-dev-tools.appspot.com/campaign-url-builder/> Google Analytics tool to create custom URLs for campaign tracking.

**Google Analytics Tracking:** [www.analytics.google.com](http://www.analytics.google.com) First, check with your marketing department to see if you have a company account. Use Google analytics to track careers page traffic, including the links that are generating the most traffic for each campaign (Did the Facebook link perform better than the Instagram link for the Software Engineer job?)

**Bitly:** [www.bitly.com](http://www.bitly.com) Another option to create custom URLs with the ability to track traffic. Each link that you create will provide the amount of clicks on that link and basic demographics. This tool is free up to a certain amount of links generated per month. Nicole recommends following the approach of including the author and channel in the name of your campaign. You may need to create multiple links for the same campaign.

Hashtag Tips by Channel: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-use-hashtags>

Hashtag Tips LinkedIn: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/linkedin-hashtags-guide/>



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# Strategy and Content

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## Branding and Talent Attraction Strategy, 5 P’s



### People

Do you have hiring manager and marketing’s alignment and support?



### Product

What are you trying to sell and who is your audience?



### Price

What are you asking of the candidate (time)? How much should you spend on advertising? Use your goals as a guide.



### Place

Where might the right candidates look for employer content and job advertisements? Research competitors.



### Promotion

Where and when will you get your employer content and job advertisements out to your target audience?

Many of the thought leaders interviewed thought that recruiting can “take a page” from marketing teams and do not need to re-create the wheel. The 4 P’s of marketing can be used as a guide for creating a talent attraction strategy. We’ve added “people” as a 5th P because hiring manager and marketing team alignment and support is important for the success of any strategy. However, it’s no secret that the relationship between TA and Marketing is often strained. Julie Calli, Chief Strategy Officer at Recruitics has some advice.

Julie says that in order to build a strong and effective relationship between TA and marketing, baby steps are needed. “Be tactical, it’s important that the recruiting team understands what the marketers need. It’s common that HR sends over a job description and says, can you put this on Facebook? Marketing says, no this description is terrible because communication isn’t flowing well.

**Marketing needs the message, audience, objective and call to action.** The recruiter wants an application but maybe the best path for Facebook is actually brand awareness – getting them to a landing page. The miss there is saying, *marketing I want an application, what do you feel we need to do to get there.*”

Josh Zywiec, Chief Marketing Officer at Paradox adds, “**prove to marketing why they should care by first seeking to understand their goals.** Then, request a follow up meeting armed with a consumer mindset, your goals, how your success can help marketing with their goals, and any data that you have. If you need support in providing a better candidate experience, remind them that candidates can be consumers and, at a minimum, advocates of the brand. If you need support with branding and/or recruitment marketing, show your traffic and application data and explain how those are potential followers, customers and/or advocates of the brand.”

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## Creating a Talent Attraction Strategy

To highlight the importance of an effective talent attraction strategy, Adrienne Sullivan, Global Employment Brand leader at Thermo Fisher Scientific shares that talent attraction is a strategic imperative and enabler of the business. “As business continues to evolve and change, we’re bringing in top skilled talent that can keep the company competitive. We are not only attracting external candidates, we are also continually attracting internal employees. This is especially important as roles evolve to support the workforce of the future. We have to continually design and deliver content strategies that resonate with the target audience in alignment with the brand.



### Workforce planning is an important place to start when creating a strategy and setting goals.

Celinda Appleby, Talent Attraction Director/ Global TA at VISA shares, “we look at workforce planning initiatives for the year. Who do we need to hire and where (geographically) do we need to hire them? By looking at internal data and trends and external market data, we create tailor made and employee centered hiring plans ahead of launching recruitment marketing campaigns.”

With a workforce plan in hand, consider the process and science behind your talent attraction strategy. Know where you stand today by referencing your KPIs (p. 8) and digging into both the bright spots and the gaps of your current tactics. Conduct an enterprise study and then funnel down to each role included in the annual workforce plan. Once you understand the hiring goals and have conducted a current state analysis, engaging both marketing and hiring management teams is a good first step to ensure alignment and support (people). Bring your data to the meetings! Then, develop personas and gather information about what those candidates might be looking for in an employer and in that role (product). Leverage your prior research of possible gaps in reach and/or sentiment. Next, with baseline information about previous advertising spend and ROI, budget decisions can be made (price). Through research you can determine which channels might have the highest advertising ROI (place). Consider if you need better content and/or better placement of the content (promotion). Some tactics can be core competency and some can be flexible. From here, choose the KPIs most relevant to your goals and track them regularly. Flex your strategy as needed.

This aligns with feedback from James Ellis that “anything that looks like a rule is a bad idea with employer branding tactics. You have to look at what can be easily influenced with maximum value. **Brand is about standing out in a crowd and your strategy may change as you execute your plan and analyze the results.**”

Jim Stroud added an example on how to align your strategy to your organizational goals, “if the company wants to launch a new product in the coming year, then the goal should be to pipeline a certain amount of passive candidates who can deliver that product ahead of time.”

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## Developing Content for the Talent Attraction Strategy

When thinking about developing content, Allison Kruse, Director of Social Media and Content Marketing at KForce recommends first creating a candidate journey. At every stage of the journey, consider what that person is going through, their pain points, triggers and the actions that they are taking. Once your candidate journey map is complete, audit your current content. What content do you have that answers their questions, shoulders their burden, or inspires them to take the next step in their career? Map your content to each stage of the job search journey and analyze gaps. Content mapping also allows you to prioritize the content that you need to create or curate.” She also recommends not spamming networks with jobs and suggested a ratio of 1:5, 1 job post for every 5 pieces of content posted.

Allison Dunsmore, Sr. Analyst Talent Attraction and Employer Brand at American Airlines highlights the importance of creating personas as part of your overall content strategy.



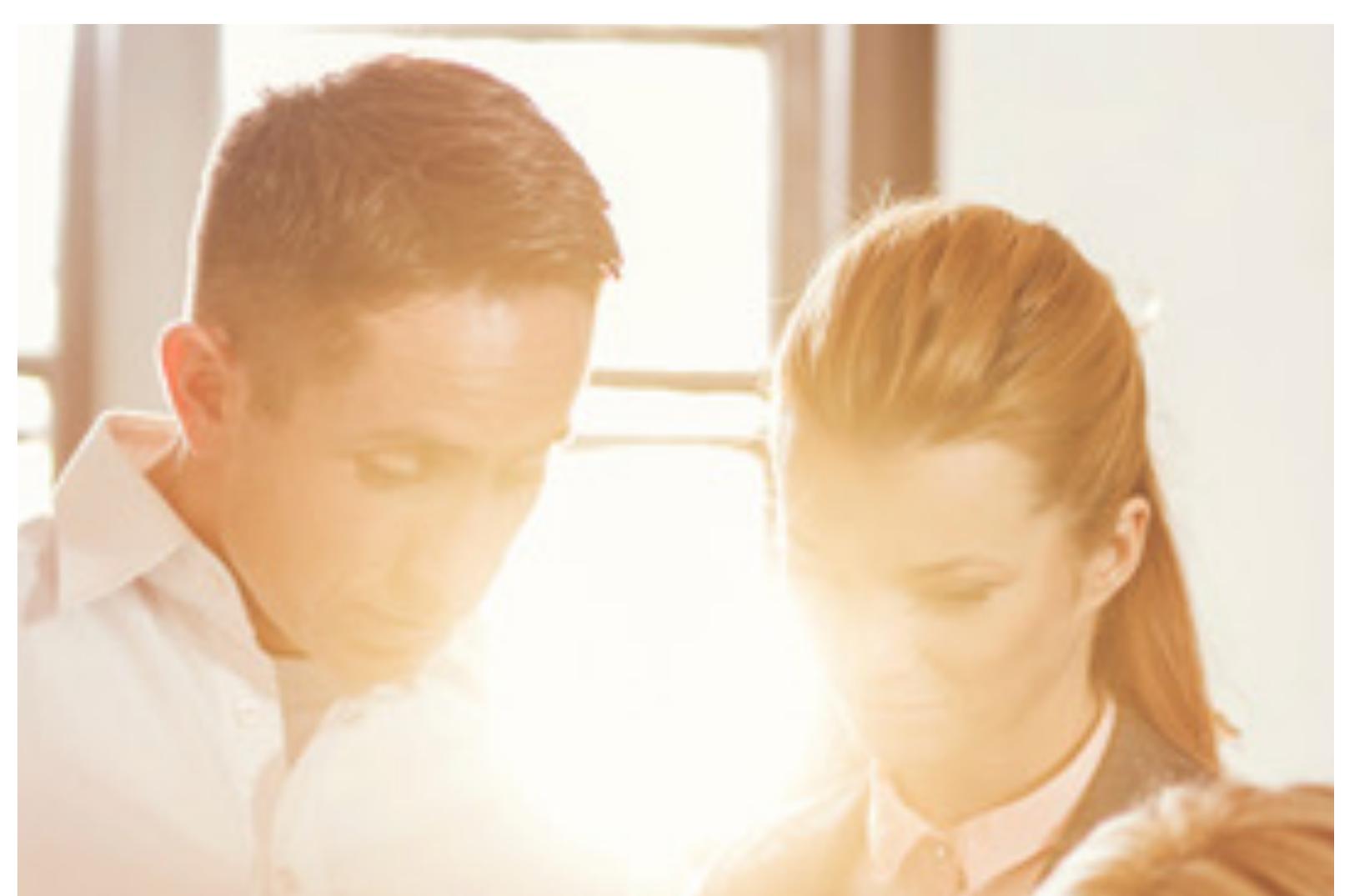
Creating content is like storytelling.

“Creating content is like storytelling. The story you tell to an HR professional will be a bit different than the story for a Software Engineer though both need to be on brand and in line with your EVP and talent brand.” She

recommends talking with the colleagues doing the actual work for which you are creating content. They can provide valuable insight as to what will resonate with the intended audience.

Nate Guggia, Brand Marketing at Job Potraits adds, “marketing thinks differently, they first look at what the end user cares about and they go straight to that source. When developing an attraction strategy, a similar approach should be used with the product as the employer brand and the consumer as the candidate. Intel from the talent acquisition team should be leveraged because they know a lot about what candidates care about. With that information in addition to the employee generated feedback, teams can create employee spotlight stories and write Q/A profiles that directly answer questions candidates may have.”

Allison Kruse was “white knuckled” at first when she started an employee generated content campaign because she was concerned about protecting the brand. However, she quickly realized the value of this content and put a plan in place to loosen the reigns and achieve her goals while not compromising the company’s brand. Alison says, “the most impactful way to get your careers-focused and talent brand content in front of target candidates is by empowering your employees to serve as brand ambassadors. Employee advocacy programs make it easy for employees to be brand ambassadors by consistently delivering content to them in a format that is easy for them to share with their networks. When your employees share content with their networks, they are shaping the perception others have about you as an employer. Not only does a successful employee advocacy program exponentially increase your company’s digital footprint, the content itself will perform better because people tend to trust their peers over brands. **Companies that can get candidates to know, like and ultimately trust them will beat their competition when recruiting top talent.**”



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# Recruitment Marketing

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## Creating a Recruitment Marketing Strategy to Support Talent Attraction Goals

Recruitment marketing can help an organization unlock increased benefits from a great content development plan and drive better results for both sentiment and reach. Depending on an organization’s employer brand strength, resources and budget, the recruitment marketing strategy can vary widely. Several thought leaders shared the concept that as the employer brand strengthens, the investment needed for recruitment marketing decreases. This can help an organization maintain the desired outcome in their efficiency metrics while boosting sentiment and reach.

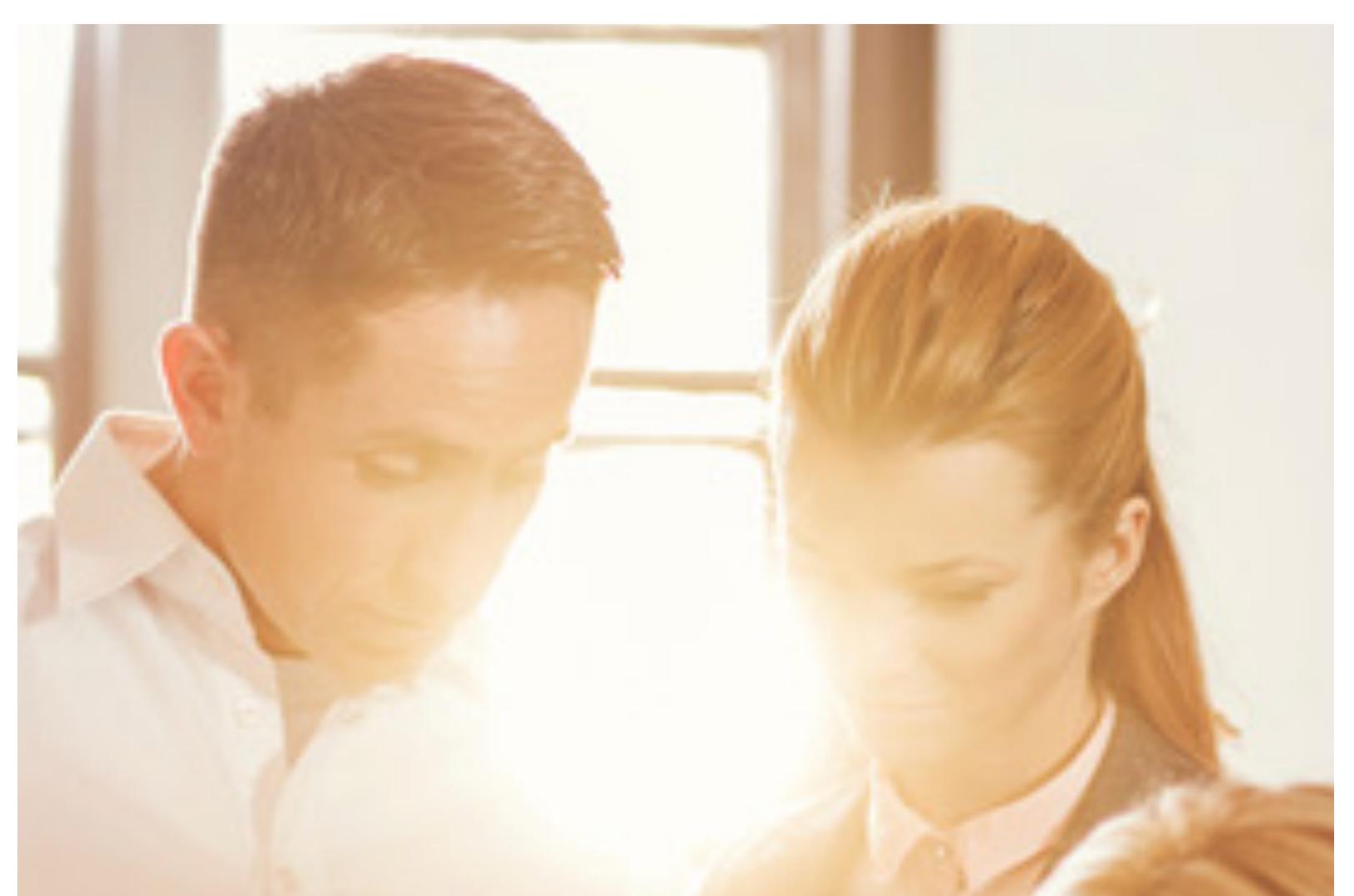
While employer branding is what is being said about your company and why it’s important, recruitment marketing is where and how you are advertising your content including job advertisements. Nicole Parish shares a strategy for decision making around recruitment marketing, “I compare source of application to source of traffic to see where I need to spend my time. If most traffic goes to the careers page from Google, double down on SEO. If most traffic is social media, look at paid advertising in those areas. For source of influence, look at paid advertising on Facebook for example to see if there was a lift in traffic to the careers site from that source. If yes, it’s acting as a valid source of influence. If top sources of traffic are not converting to applications, look for bottlenecks that could be in the way.”



### Measuring the ROI of Recruitment Marketing

Metric	Calculation
<b>CPC</b> (Cost Per Click)	Spend/Clicks
<b>CPA</b> (Cost Per Applicant)	Spend/Applicants
<b>CPQA</b> (Spend per Quality Applicant)	Spend/Qualified Applicants
<b>CPH</b> (Cost Per Hire)	Spend/Hires
<b>CTR</b> (Click Through Rate)	(Clicks/Impressions)X100
<b>CR</b> (Click Rate)	(Applicants/Clicks)X100
<b>CQR</b> (Quality Click Rate)	(Qualified Applicants/Applicants)X100

Source: Recruitics ([Recruitics.com](https://www.recruitics.com))



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# The Future

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## The future of talent attraction

The thought leaders interviewed had some varying thoughts on the future of talent attraction while certain themes such as the **synergy between consumer marketing and employer branding/talent attraction** were widely agreed upon.

**James Ellis** helps to explain the synergies between the consumer brand and employer brand, “talent attraction has always been seen as a discrete business function, something for which recruiters or those employer brand folks have the responsibility. However, as more companies are realizing that hiring is everyone’s job and every person is responsible for living and extending the brand, the concept of talent attraction extends beyond talent acquisition. As it expands, it will become increasingly hard to draw a line between the employer brand and the corporate brand. The brand will be more monolithic. As consumer marketing, investor marketing, marketplace development and employer branding create a shared reason for why the company exists, they will leverage that shared concept for their own audiences. This means that the way employer branding attracts talent will impact how consumer marketing attracts customers and vice versa, blurring the lines between functions.”

As a Chief Marketing Officer for Paradox, **Josh Zywiec** has the marketing leader lens on this topic and since he also works in the recruitment industry he has a unique viewpoint.

In addition to the synergy between consumer marketing and employer brand/talent attraction he also is starting to see a trend in talent attraction roles moving to the marketing department. “Brand marketing and corporate marketing come together with employer brand. I know someone whose role in talent attraction and employer branding was recently moved to corporate marketing and it’s been successful. We will see this more with innovative brands who want the teams to work together more collaboratively. If it’s just for consolidation reasons, that’s a mistake. Corporate brand teams need to see value in employer brand teams and be peers for this to be successful. There is exceptional value in this approach.”

**Vikram D’Mello**, Director, Market Insights & Research at Symphony Talent shares, “rather than doomsday prophecies of evil robots and malicious self-learning AI taking our jobs and automating all hiring, the future of work – and recruitment – lies in an ever evolving symbiosis between the capabilities of technology and the ingenuity of humans. Instead of replacing humans, technology will work hand in hand with them to make the talent selection process that much more efficient and effective.”

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## The future of talent attraction

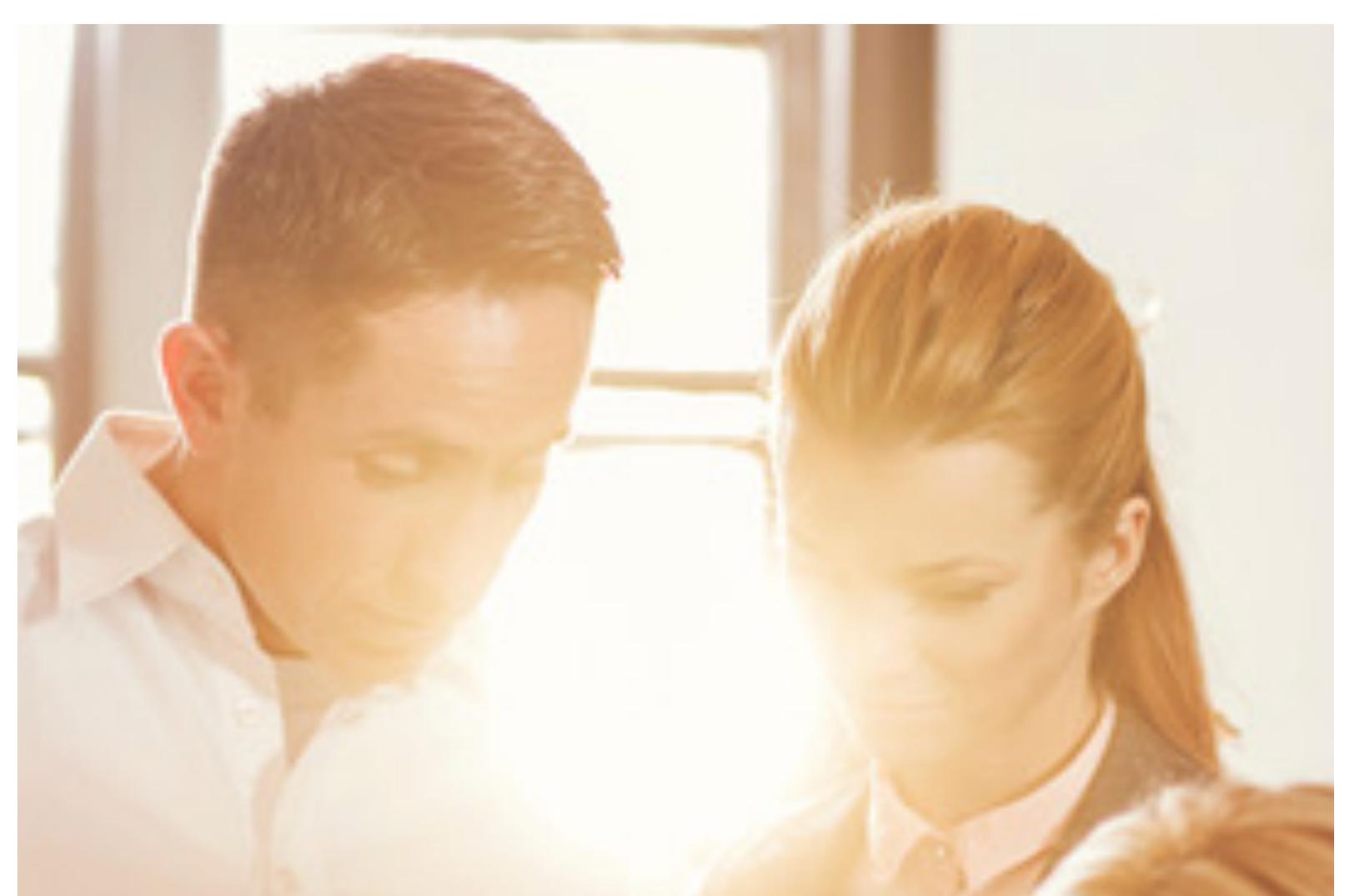
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**Carrie Corbin**, Director of Global Employer Brand and Talent Attraction at Dell also sees the need to consider the entire employee experience when we think about employer brand and talent attraction, “as we drive more standardization across both branding and talent attraction, we cannot lose sight of what our goals are. As employer brand often sits within Talent Acquisition, it needs more focus on the entire experience (candidate/employee/ alumni).” She would like to see this combined focus evolve.

**Jim Stroud** believes that because of the new jobs resulting from changing technology (for example, Netflix displaced video stores and enabled a new tech industry for streaming videos), employees will want to learn as much as they can. He says, “companies that can brand themselves as a learning culture will attract the best talent.” He also believes job boards will become content hubs and that TA teams start functioning more like the marketing department and “have more quantifiable data as well as proven strategies that they can tie to results for every job that they recruit for.”

**Allison Dunsmore** foresees “candidates becoming even more informed and interviewing us just as much as we are interviewing them. As the unemployment rate continues to drop, candidates have their pick of employment and an employer’s ability to sell the whole package (salary, benefits, culture, etc.) will become increasingly critical to their success. Companies need to also have conversations about training and educating their current workforce to meet the demands of the needs of the future workforce. This strategy can fill workforce gaps while also helping to brand the company as a learning organization.”

**Nate Guggia** believes “talent attraction will be led by those who understand content marketing, digital, product-market fit, and buyer empathy. I truly feel that people-centric marketers are set to revolutionize the talent space and start putting into practice the strategies and tactics that traditional marketing has been using for years.”



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# Interviews

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## Interviews/Sources

<b>Celinda Appleby</b>	Talent Attraction Director, Global TA	VISA
<b>James Ellis</b>	Director of Employer Brand	Universum
<b>Jim Stroud</b>	VP, Marketing	Proactive Talent
<b>Allison Kruse</b>	Director, Social Media & Content Marketing	KForce
<b>Carrie Corbin</b>	Director, Global Employer Brand and Talent Attraction	Dell
<b>Vikram D’Mello</b>	Director, Market Insights & Research	Symphony Talent
<b>Allison Dunsmore</b>	Sr. Analyst Talent Attraction & Employer Brand	American Airlines
<b>Adriana Kevill</b>	SVP, Marketing	Recruitics
<b>Julie Calli</b>	Chief Strategy Officer	Recruitics
<b>John Graham Jr.</b>	Sr. Mgr. Global Brand & Recruitment Mktg	Amgen
<b>Josh Zywiec</b>	Chief Marketing Officer	Paradox
<b>Nicole Parish</b>	Global Talent Brand Attraction Lead	Qualtrics
<b>Adam Glassman</b>	Sr. Manager Employer Brand	Cox Enterprises
<b>Adrienne Sullivan</b>	Global Employer Brand Leader	Thermo Fisher Scientific
<b>Nate Guggia</b>	Brand Marketing	Job Portraits
<b>Dave Foley</b>	VP, Sales	Wade and Wendy
<b>Max Notice</b>	Enterprise Sales Executive	Wade and Wendy



### Thank you

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for their time and insight throughout this process.

Attract interviews and content generation completed by:  
Christy Spilka, Vice President of Talent Acquisition at nThrive.