# Social Media as an Effective Tool for Promoting an HR Brand Among Youth

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*Abstract*— **Currently all the large companies actively use social media having and promoting several dozens of official social accounts. This becomes as necessary as having an official website. The article is devoted to the study of the possibilities of social media to be an instrument for promoting an HR brand among young people. HR-branding is a way to attract qualified employees, but not only at the expense of high monetary rewards, but, mainly, creating a more attractive image of work in the company compared to competitors. The article discusses the features of the perception of information by modern generations of X, Y, Z, as well as the strategy for promoting HR brands of Russian companies among modern youth through social media which can help build a reputation and a positive image of the company in the eyes of potential employees**

*Keywords: HR brand, HR brand promotion, social media, generation theory the largest Russian companies, youth policy*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1991, the generational theory was created by American scientists Neil Hove and William Strauss. According to it, every 20–25 years a new generation of people is born with character traits, habits and characteristics that set them apart from all the rest and then repeat among future generations.

Sociologists distinguish generation X, Y and Z. Each of them has its own characteristic features by which they differ from each other. Generations X and Y are those who are now from 31 to 45 years old, the second from 21 to 30 years. The generation of schoolchildren belongs to generation Z., incorporating the applicable criteria that follow.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A certain set of knowledge has already been formed in the scientific literature on managing and promoting the company's HR brand and its role in enhancing the competitiveness of a modern company. So, the most famous foreign scientists in the field of managing and promoting the company's HR brand, as a significant factor in increasing the competitiveness of companies, are: Shelenz B., Esser M., Kinat T., Mincington B., and others.

In Russia, this problem was studied by the following authors: Osovitskaya N., Brukovskaya O. Vegesh M.A., Bashkina N.A. , Unsalted O. V, Arakelyan N.V.

The studies of the management and promotion of the HR brand in Russia and its development in the English literature were done by Rosethorn H., Walker P., Higgins A.

## III. APPLICATION AREA

However, from the point of view of the authors of this publication, in the studies devoted to this issue, the problems of managing and promoting an HR brand are not studied enough, there is a lack of systematic approach to the concept of an HR brand analysis and building a strategy of an HR brand promotion.

Today, representatives of Generation Y or Millennials, specialists who began work after 2000, are confidently taking positions in the labor market. Already, they are perplexing HR departments with their goals, ambitions, motives, and lifestyle.

Their maturity took place during a period of powerful technological progress, they easily own computer control, communicate easily, and know what virtuality is. They find themselves in creativity, freelance, are well versed in fashion trends, respect personal freedom and independence. They have good training abilities; they choose large companies known in the market for their career inspirations. The values of generation Y have developed under the influence of economic growth; they are distinguished from their predecessors by high computer literacy, freedom of choice, and most importantly, the absence of a template approach to activity. They will have to be reckoned with, and the deeper their employers understand, the more effectively they will be able to use their talents for the benefit of business.

Generation Z is the first real digital generation: modern children from the age of oneyear master tablets and smartphones. They are also called Homelanders (homebodies), because they derive information mainly from the Web, play online games, prefer to communicate in social media or by instant messengers.

Today it is clear that the children of the digital generation are different. Let's try to figure out how modern children differ from children of previous generations.

Generation Z could be considered as the children of multimedia technology. This is a generation born in the

information society. Representatives of Generation Z are "connected" by the Internet as a whole, YouTube, mobile phones, SMS and MP3 players. Now the Internet is not limited to a desktop computer and can be accessed at any time thanks to new mobile phones or handheld devices like PSP.

The development of digital technologies has made them a generation that has grown in the digital environment - they get almost all the information from the Web. Generation of "users" - they use all means of communication on the Web - social media, online games, blogs, ICQ, Skype, Vkontakte, etc. Communication in the virtual space is often given priority when choosing between a personal meeting and discussing issues via email or service instant messaging.

People of this generation are distinguished, first of all, by the maximum proximity to the information with which they are able to work perfectly. Children are now actually born with a mobile phone in their hands, and the computer becomes their first toy. Those who are now 30 years old or more were raised on books, but Generation Z thinks in completely different categories. The maximum that they can read is an article, but mini-news - the format of tweets and statuses in social media are much more familiar to them. Their way of thinking is fragmented, and in some matters superficial. They develop faster than children of this age 10-15 years ago (Fig. 1). Generation Z lives in the virtual world.
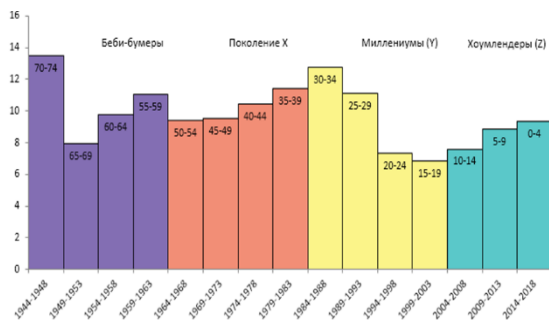


Fig. 1- Generation distribution by age groups in 2018 (million people)

Source: Generation theory: how to find a common language with an audience in advertising. [Electronic resource]. Access mode: https://texterra.ru/blog/teoriya-pokoleniy-kak-v-reklame-nayti-obshchiy-yazyk-s-lyuboy-auditoriey.html (Accessed 15.04.2019)

In the struggle for young promising personnel in the labor market, companies have to look for new channels for effective communication with potential employees and the formation of a favorable image of the employing company in the market. Building a strong HR brand has become an integral part of the competitive strategy in modern organizations, and social media have become an effective tool for promoting it among young people.

According to S. Barrow and T. Ambler, who first used the term "employer brand" (or HR-brand) - this is a combination of functional, economic and psychological advantages obtained as a result of joining a certain company and related to this company. HR-branding is a set of measures aimed at improving the position of the employer in the labor market. HR branding companies have at least two goals:

1. Gaining access to the best personnel in the labor market.

2. Improving the sustainability of a company's brand [8].

HR-branding is the company's activity in forming its favorable image as an employer. In accordance with this, one of the tasks of HR branding is the formation of a permanent group within the target audience, whose representatives associate with the brand their image of the best work that they can get. In modern conditions, companies require the most capable, proactive and competent employees. In this regard, the importance of effective personnel selection is growing many times, the need arises for the use of new technologies, one of which is HR branding, which is "a set of targeted measures to create a positive image of the employer in order to constantly attract the best of the best specialists in their industry."

The functions of HR-branding are: 1. Determining the lifestyle of employees and developing strategies, systems and practices that reflect the changing needs of employees over the entire period of their work in the company. 2. Monitoring the effectiveness of actions taken in areas related to the formation of a positive image of the employer. 3. The communicative function establish communication between existing employees of the company and potential employees, as well as integrating new employees into the team. 4. The function of supporting the development of the company's HR brand in accordance with the practical approaches and principles adopted by the organization.

A distinctive feature of HR branding in comparison with traditional approaches to brand formation in marketing, advertising and PR-activity is the formation of a real working environment in the employing company, and not an idea of it among the target audience.

Thus, HR-branding should be aimed not only at conducting events directly with the company employees, but also at including actions to form, manage and maintain the company's reputation in the labor market. In accordance with this, the following tasks of HR-branding can be distinguished: Increasing the recognition of the company in the labor market among job seekers. The acquisition of loyalty from the target audience in the labor market. Eradicating employees' desire to leave the company.

HR-branding is a way to attract qualified employees, but not only at the expense of high monetary rewards, but, mainly, creating a more attractive image of work in the company compared to competitors. As a result, people go to work for such a company, succumbing to the charm of the created brand, and also realizing that such work experience will be a good indicator in the future in the resume. In conditions when the components of the social package and favorable working conditions, which were recently considered very attractive, are turning into a standard set attached to wages, HR branding is becoming a new factor in influencing target audiences and the labor market as a whole.

The list of key actions that an organization needs to take in order to achieve the desired results for the development and promotion of an HR brand in social media [2]:

1. Identification of the main target audiences. Based on the business plan and the list of necessary specialties, it is necessary to determine the balance between current and future talents: how much resources will the company spend

on attracting new employees, and how much on retaining and developing current ones? If we are talking about an external audience, it is necessary to form the main target group and other, less priority ones in it. It should be understood that a company should not invest in becoming attractive to everyone. It is necessary to focus on key target groups, to win their sympathies as quickly as possible. A good way to understand in what your target audience is interested in is to draw a portrait of a hypothetical personality. It is recommended to perform a full description of a person and take into account factors such as age, gender, marital status, geography, values, problems, activity, interests, tastes, preferences, political views, aspirations. Then go to the details and describe how this person spends time, his daily tasks and how he spends his days off and holidays. As soon as such a portrait is drawn up, it is necessary to choose the social networks that will be needed to promote the HR brand.

2. The choice of social network. Promotion of the HR brand in social media should be comprehensive, as each network provides additional opportunities, and it is necessary to consider how to use these opportunities to the maximum. In addition to the functions that social networks provide, it is worth considering the preferences of the target audience you need. For example, the generation of millennials practically does not use the Odnoklassniki network.

3. Content Western SMM managers have developed a "golden formula" of content for social networks, which is used in Russia: 40: 30: 25: 5. Let's dwell on it in more detail.

Involving content (40%) - this is what satisfies the reader's need for communication, receiving bonuses and prizes: polls; news using photos and videos demonstrating the culture and values of the company; answers to questions from subscribers; contests, quizzes for knowing the company's brand, product (service) that it creates; discussion of any topics related to the company's brand.

User content (30%) is the content that is created by company employees or people who are experts in topics related to the company. These include: customer interviews; employee reports and interviews; small videos about collaboration with your organization.

Educational content (25%) is: the history of the company; industry news; information on the number of employees, the availability of posts; historical facts close to the topic of the company; reference information about products and services, etc.

Advertising content (5%) is: selected facts about the company; commercials; reviews. It should be few, and it should organically fit into the general structure of the community.

An important point at this stage is the development of a content plan. Currently, there are automated services that facilitate the preparation of a plan and its subsequent placement in social network accounts.

4. Promotion. Creating interesting content does not guarantee the popularity of the account. There are two ways to increase your popularity on social media: paid and free, which can be combined. Paid methods include:

- purchase targeted advertising;

- purchase of advertising from bloggers;

- advertising with opinion leaders (people who are respected in a particular field);

- publicity ads with a similar target audience.

Free ways:

- creating content that users want to share;

- contests different with a subscription;

- "likes" on accounts with a similar target audience;

- interaction with the audience in the form of discussions;

- commenting on content within the target audience;

- viral marketing;

- posting your own unique content (for example, an e-book);

- SFS on Instagram (you tell on your page about a blogger with a large number of subscribers, and he talks about you);

- Ask employees to share community posts on their social networks. Encourage them if they are active in groups;

- on the company's website make links to your social networks with a call to subscribe.

Work on the creation, development and promotion of an HR brand in social networks is an activity at the intersection of HR, management, marketing (SMM - Social Media Marketing), copywriting, photography and graphics [1].

To develop a strategy for the development and promotion of an HR brand in social networks, it is necessary to determine:

- what goals does the organization want to achieve by promoting its communities on the Internet;

- target audience;

- A group of people who will be engaged in promoting the HR brand and creating unique content, monitoring and analytics;

- social networks for promotion;

- the type of content that the organization will post, how it will communicate with the audience;

- ways to promote communities;

- ways to measure community development effectiveness;

- budget [7].

## IV. Conclusion

There are a lot of researches all over the world confirming the direct impact of a strong HR brand on the financial results of companies. So, according to the Sears study, an increase in employee satisfaction from working in the company by 5% causes an increase in profit by 0.5%. According to LinkedIn, companies with a strong brand have a 28% lower employee turnover compared to competitors.[3]

• Promotion of the company's HR-brand in social networks is directly related to the company's positioning in the market. There are organizations whose products, in whole or in part, correspond to the name, and by promoting the product, they thereby immediately promote the brand of the employer. The main reasons why companies decide to promote the brand are the following:

• market reputation (negative or controversial);

• several companies are merging;

• promoting a company that produces several well-known products or services;

• a desire to increase the level of candidates coming for interviews in the company;

• HR staff initiative [4].

How can social networks be useful? They can help build a reputation and a positive image of the company in the eyes of potential employees. The first thing that many companies do is create a group (someone more formal, someone less) in social media. The most popular resources are VKontakte and Facebook. If the group is interesting, the information is regularly updated, contains comments and photos, then it will attract attention. Posting reports on corporate events, etc., can also be an effective.

At the moment, all the largest employers in the world, for example, Russian Railways, have introduced or are starting to introduce interaction with potential employees through social networks. According to the analysis, Russian Railways has about 100 official accounts in various social networks, which disperses the flow of information among potential employees.

We conducted an online survey to identify the most popular social networks to obtain information about the employer among generations Z and Y (Fig. 2).
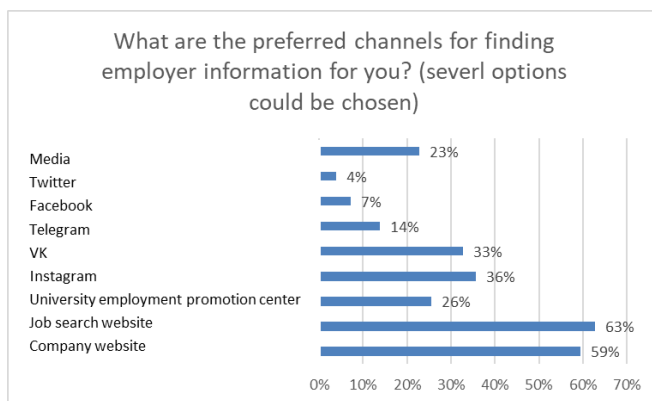


Fig. 2- Preferred channels for obtaining information about employers (in%)
Source: Prepared by authors.

Based on the data obtained, there is a need to develop mechanisms for the interaction of social networks with the organization's website, for a centralized impact on the target audience with one account in each social network.

In order to analyze the attitude to the brand of the company, to the brand of the employer, today there are special third-party objective services - tools for monitoring reputation. The most popular include: Brandspotter, Buzzware, IQbuzz, Kribrum, Monitorix, Semanticforce, Wobot, Youscan. Some of the listed services are Russian. These tools work like search engines that analyze social networks (Facebook, VKontakte, Twitter, Livejournal, etc.), forums, and news resources. Using such mechanisms, it is easy to audit brand reputation [10].

*In conclusion* it is necessary to mention that in today's economic conditions, it may be more effective for the company to focus on retaining valuable specialists. That means to pay more attention to the internal HR brand, which also does not require significant additional financial resources, and thus save on external. HR-branding is not a one-time promotion, but an ongoing process that will affect all the activities of the company. It is necessary to understand that you will not stand still, as the brand in the labor market must comply with the company's strategy. By laying a systematic approach to this process, you form a long-term basis for its development and successful promotion.

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