



RECRUITMENT MARKETING for Staffing Firms

Tactics and Strategies for Building
Your Candidate Pipeline

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The Foundation of Recruitment Marketing



WHAT IS RECRUITMENT MARKETING (AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE)?

Define: **Recruitment Marketing**

noun: 1. A cohesive marketing strategy built on a robust brand, targeted messaging, and intelligent marketing channels, implemented to attract and engage candidates who haven't yet converted into applicants.

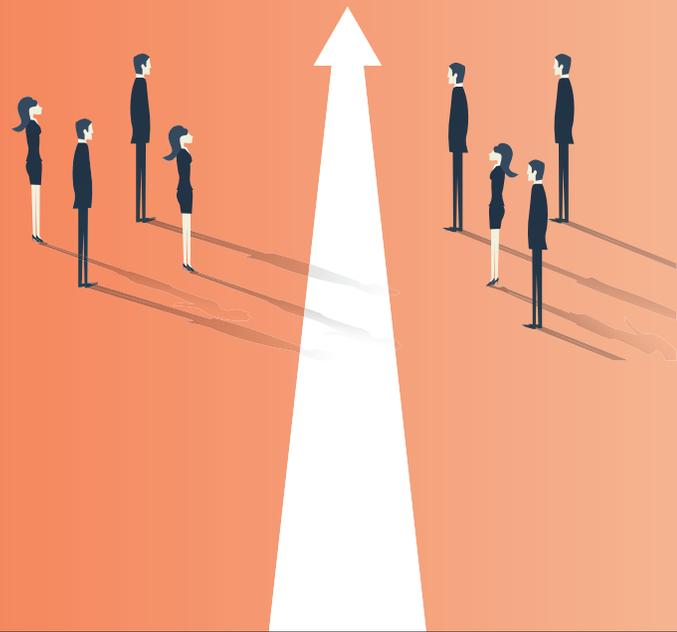
In the past, the meat of a firm's marketing efforts has been focused entirely on attracting prospective clients. Once a requisition was ordered, marketing towards candidates consisted of little more than job boards and referrals. But it's becoming increasingly clear that this is simply not enough. To grow your staffing business, you need to invest more time and effort in recruitment marketing.

WHY DOES IT MATTER NOW?

We're no longer faced with the nightmare of 2008, where staffing firms were fighting to win over clients who were experiencing hiring freezes. After minor casualties, we're officially on the other side. Clients are throwing jobs at us from every direction, and now we're faced with the reality that candidates are no longer applying to every job that comes along.

A 2017 survey from Talemetry reports that 71% of organizations are not getting enough qualified applicants¹. Why? Because demand for top talent is soaring, and top professionals know it. They're in the driver's seat, and it's up to us to seek them out.

And that's why recruitment marketing matters now more than ever. Candidates are not going to come to us on the strength of our jobs alone; attracting them is going to take more strategy.



THE GIG ECONOMY

It's no secret that the temporary staffing market has been growing exponentially². This is further impacted by the growth of the "Gig Economy," in which an increasing number of workers are turning to contracting and freelancing for full-time work. Recruiting these individuals is a challenge because their motivations are less familiar to recruiters and the positions they're filling simply have higher churn. This is just another reason why recruitment marketing matters now more than ever.

IS THE JOB BOARD DEAD?

Job boards (and their associated resume databases) are practically ingrained into the definition of recruiting, but is that by design or by habit?

With so many different means of reaching candidates today, is the job board still necessary? Could the job board be dead?

YES

Today, a massive 60% of the talent pool is comprised of passive candidates³. If you're trying to reach someone who isn't actively looking for a job, would you expect them to be perusing a job board? Of course not. Many of the highest-performing and most-skilled workers will be part of this subset, actively employed and likely well-compensated for their talents. When they finally move on to their next role, it will be because the opportunity came to them, not because they found the opportunity on a job board.

YES

When it comes to consultants and contractors, only 14% first learned about their current staffing agency through a job board². The consulting and contract workforce includes a number of highly-skilled professionals in hot sectors like tech, where that percentage drops to 13%, and healthcare, where the number of temporary workers using job boards falls to a mere 5%. These positions are being heavily recruited, so candidates are much less likely to be spending time on a job board. Also, many of these positions provide high-paying salaries, and studies show that the higher the salary the smaller the chance of a job board being used in a job search.



NO

Despite passive candidates being the majority, 40% of candidates are active job searchers. Completely ignoring job boards can alienate this massive chunk of talent. Additionally, one must consider demographics, and how different generations conduct their job searches. Millennials are now the largest generation in the U.S. workforce and recruitment marketing strategies should be partially tailored to them⁴. 17% of Millennials use an online job board when career searching, and given how large the Millennial generation is, that represents millions of workers³.

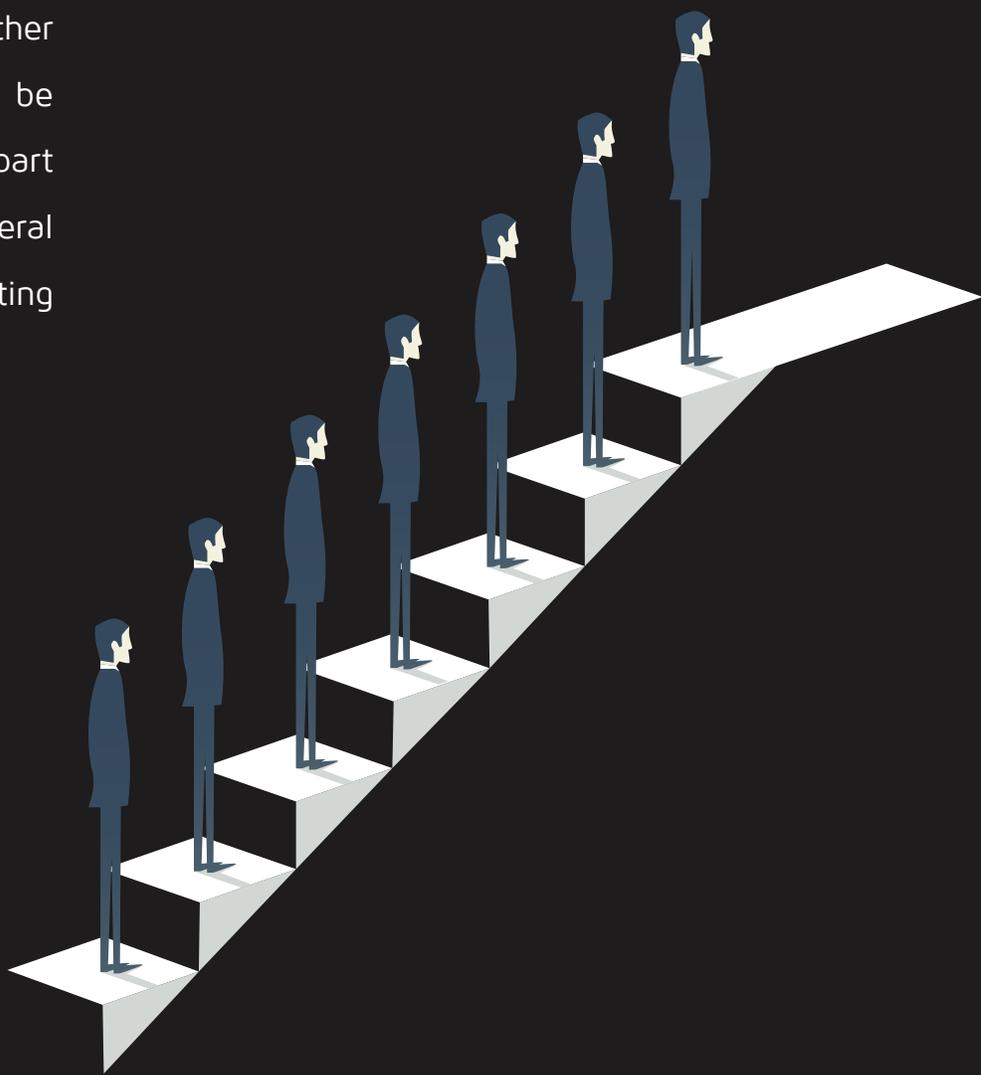
NO

On the other side of the coin, do businesses rely on job boards to find talent? Do you make extensive use of job boards in your recruiting strategy? It turns out that job boards are one of the top three sources of hires for over 69% of organizations¹. Is this because many organizations are stuck in their old ways, putting effort into job boards out of habit while oblivious to the benefits of other channels? Are companies disconnected from the behavior of the modern job seeker, or are job boards really that powerful? Whatever the answer, it's clear that the job board cannot be dead.



NOT SO FAST

While the job board is not dead, the old way of thinking of a job board certainly is. It's time to adapt job board utilization to present-day needs or risk falling behind the competition. Now that candidates can be better segmented by type of position, industry, age, education level, job searching habits, and countless other demographics, job boards must be used more strategically as just a part of the big picture alongside several other powerful recruitment marketing channels.



ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT MARKETING

Deciding Who Owns It

This is the million-dollar question. In the past, recruiters have been solely responsible for sourcing their own candidates, whether through job boards, resume databases, or the strength of their own referral networks. But innovative recruitment marketing is bigger than that.

Unfortunately, the same gap that exists between sales and marketing is often reflected on the recruiting side. It's easy for a disconnect to occur between these two functions, but bridging that gap is essential for success. Because recruitment marketing happens on multiple channels and requires a cohesive brand image, both recruiting and marketing departments must work closely to build a solid strategy.

Who Owns Recruitment Marketing?

Need an example? We'll discuss specific channels later on in this ebook, but here are a couple of ways recruiting and marketing can work together to attract candidates:

Marketing	Recruiters
Write optimized blogs and eBooks	Share blogs on social networks
Optimize web copy for search	Email eBooks to prospects to provide value
Perform email marketing campaigns	Follow up on leads from marketing efforts

Crafting Your Value Proposition

Why would a candidate choose your recruiters over others? In a commoditized, crowded market, how does your company stand out enough to build genuine, long-term relationships with talented professionals? Having a precise answer to these questions is the foundation of your value proposition.

Some companies leverage their history in the industry or the strength of their benefits packages, while others have unique and engaging processes or go the extra mile to personalize their business relationships.

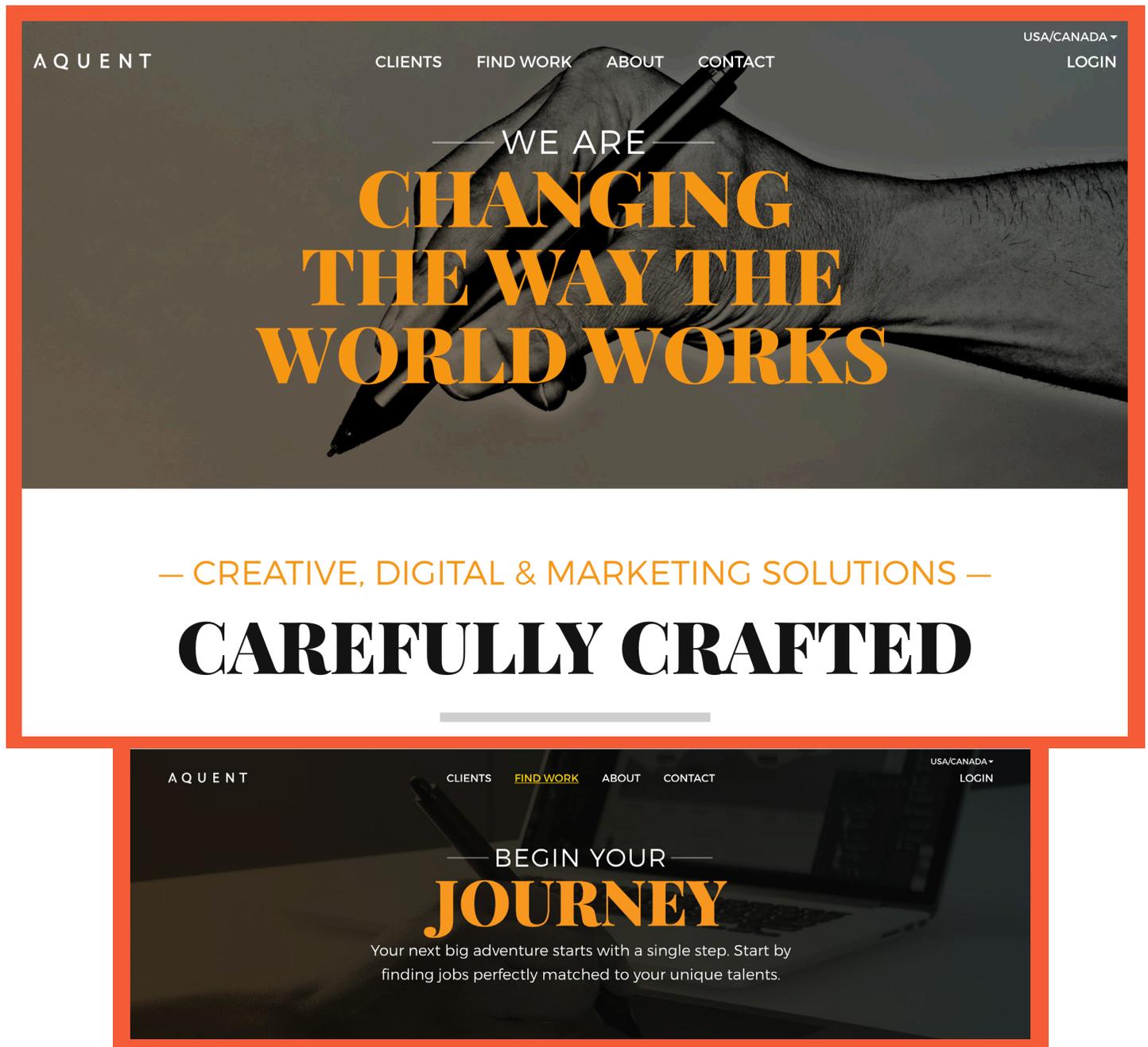
Another major differentiator is the industry niche you specialize in. According to the 2017 SIA Temporary Worker Survey, 61% of consultants prefer to work with a staffing firm that specializes in their skill, instead of a general agency². This is especially true for high-earning professionals: for those making over \$60 per hour, 85% prefer a specialist staffing firm. How can your company or your recruiters build a niche within your industry?

A Glance at Staffing Firms That Are Winning the Value Prop Game

This handful of staffing firms have won Inavero's 2017 Best of Staffing Talent Service Award for five years in a row. These are great examples of companies that are leveraging their value propositions in innovative ways across their websites and social media networks.

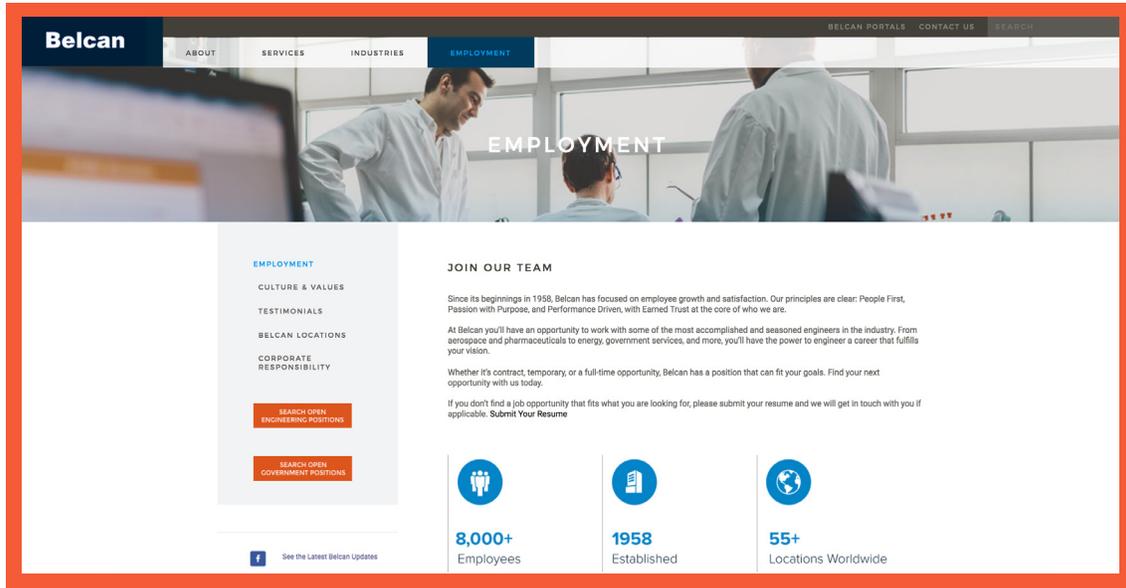
Aquent

This innovative digital and marketing staffing firm is all about the big picture. Their homepage reads, "We are changing the way the world works," while this candidate-focused page below is all about journeys and adventures. They've got their brand and value propositions nailed down ("We are not a follower" they announce on their About page) and they appear to know the personalities of their target audience well, too.



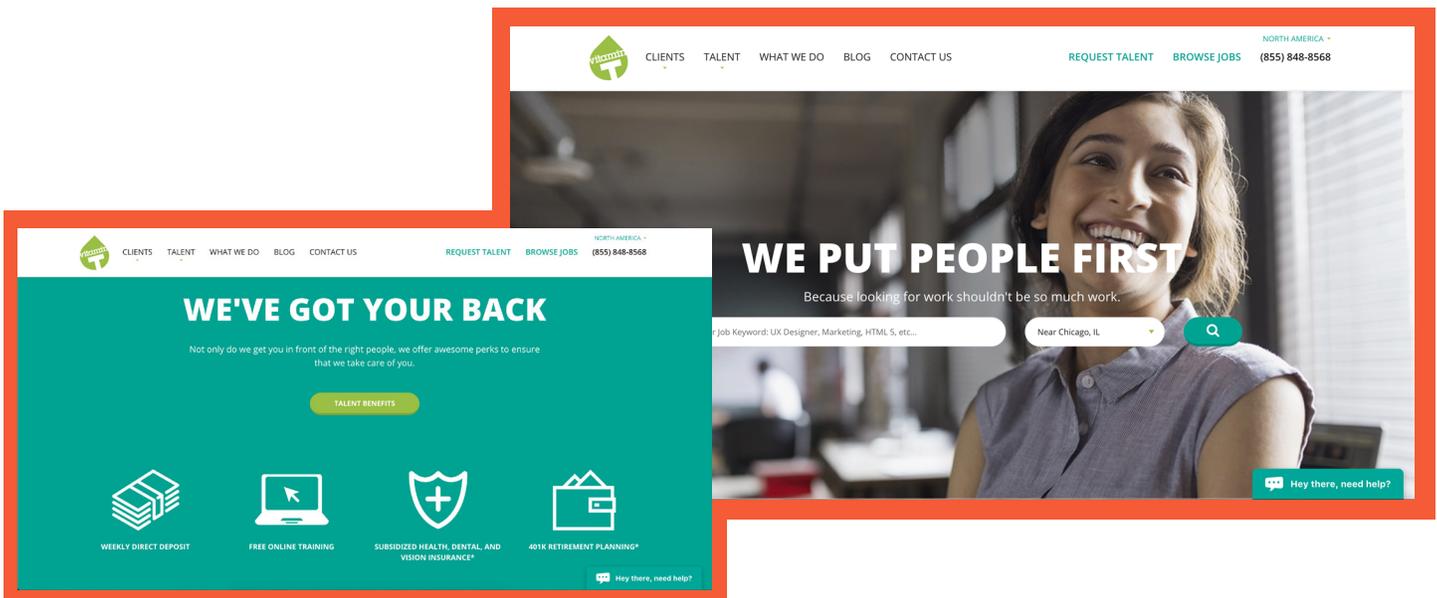
Belcan

Providing engineering and technical recruiting services, Belcan has an established legacy, with nearly 60 years in business. Their rich history has helped build their brand on a set of clear core values: "People First, Passion with Purpose, and Performance Driven, with Earned Trust at the core of who we are." The company showcases an array of consultant and employee testimonials as well as their commitment to corporate responsibility.



Vitamin T

This creative staffing agency is known for being, well, creative. They pride themselves on knowing their audiences extremely well and making great matches because of it. Their "people first" value proposition seems to direct their entire recruitment marketing strategy, not only in their branding and content, but also in their offerings, like benefits, retirement planning, and free training programs.



Developing Buyer Personas

How many times do you hit “delete” on spammy, un-personalized emails per day? How many banner ads, websites, or social posts do you ignore? What about the ones that you actually pay attention to? We’d be willing to bet that the things you pay attention to have been carefully crafted to appeal to your specific demographic, industry, and experience. That snapshot of what you look like from a marketing perspective is called a Buyer Persona.

It Makes Marketing More Effective

Developing your buyer personas is absolutely foundational to your recruitment marketing initiative. Skip this key step, and you’ll simply be throwing marketing efforts at the wall to see what sticks; a highly inefficient use of your time and money. Targeting your strategy at a specific audience is a much more effective way to reach the right people. In other words, you need to work to understand your candidates.

It Makes Candidates More Receptive

And candidates want you to understand them! In an SIA survey of consultants and contractors, many suggested that a staffing firm needs to “understand the candidate, not just their resume.”² You need to understand their short and long term career goals, their skills and experiences, their challenges and desires. These factors combine to represent a profile – or buyer persona – of your ideal candidate. Then and only then can you nail down a targeted recruitment marketing strategy that engages these specific candidates in a personalized manner.

Where to Start

There are many different ways you can segment your audience in order to learn more about them. Categorizing them by industry, experience level or seniority level, skill sets, and age demographic are helpful places to start. From there, you can start to look at the goals and challenges that are unique to each group. Most notably, these segments will also have different approaches to the job search.

For example, Millennials are more likely to use online job sites than Generation X or Baby Boomers, and they are twice as likely to search a company’s public career website than Baby Boomers are³. But, according to SIA, it’s also worth noting that regardless of generation, individuals who earn more are less likely to search online job boards or find jobs via search engines. Does your staffing firm keep close track of where your hires come from? If so, data analytics can reveal more insights about where your target audiences can be found. If not, make an effort to run in-depth market research to tell you more.

The Candidate Experience

Recruitment marketing is tied into the bigger picture of the entire candidate journey, from initial awareness to accepting the job offer (and actually starting the job!). The scary reality is, candidate drop off can average anywhere from 60-90% for organizations⁵. Every stage and point of contact should be scrutinized to avoid any negative experiences that contribute to drop off.



A Candidate Timeline

First Point of Awareness: Whether it's by seeing one of your social media posts, a Google ad, job posting on Monster, or hearing about you from a friend, this first point of awareness is the moment a potential candidate learns about your organization. If they were interested in what they heard or saw, and if it was positive, they will choose to interact with you or be receptive to future communications. The elements of your recruitment marketing strategy help to turn this awareness into consideration and interest; the crucial steps before a candidate converts to an applicant.

Initial Contact: With a foundation built, the initial contact builds on the candidate's awareness. It could be an email, phone call, or LinkedIn message, but this critical step must be a friendly, low-pressured way of touching base and getting to know a candidate. This begins a positive *feedback loop*, where candidates must be kept informed of the process at every stage and with each interaction.

The Proposition: Every candidate experience is unique, but at some point in the process the conversation and relationship will turn to the heart of what a recruiter wants to happen. This is where an interview is propositioned, and in order to be relevant to a candidate, the answers to several questions must be clear by now. Why would they want to work at the client company? What's the culture like, and how is it unique? What's different about their organization versus where the candidate is employed now? And what's the commitment to work-life balance?

The Interview: At this point, the candidate should understand that your organization is on their team. It's time to prepare them in any way possible, whether that includes insider tips on the types of questions expected, interview etiquette, coping with nerves, etc. Immediately after the interview, follow up with them to break down how it went and what the next steps are.

The Job Offer: While it's important to help a candidate negotiate a job offer when necessary, the timing of a job offer is as important as the offer itself. When faced with no follow up after an interview, 23% of candidates lose interest after a week and 46% lose interest after two weeks⁶. When 57% of interviewees say the most frustrating part of the process is a long wait after an interview, it's necessary to do whatever it takes to shorten this time span and hold the attention of a candidate⁶. Check in with your client regularly, and continue the feedback loop by keeping the candidate updated as they await a formal offer.

The Transition: Your involvement with the career of a candidate should ideally never end. Once they begin their new role, check in with them to make sure everything is as they expected. Over time, continue to touch base with them in order to maintain a relationship. Especially if they're a consultant working on a project with an end date, you'll want to be top of mind when the time comes for them to find their next opportunity.

Channels of Recruitment Marketing

RECRUITMENT MARKETING

CHANNELS

The right recruitment marketing channels help you meet the candidate where they are, capture their attention, and streamline the recruiting process. Let's take a look at the ones that have proven successful when incorporated into a staffing firm's recruitment marketing strategy.

Content Marketing



Content marketing includes updating your website and creating original blogs, infographics, eBooks, webinars, and other materials. Designed to set your organization up as a thought leader, the key is to provide something of real value. You want to build a relationship where a candidate begins to follow your work, appreciates the content, and starts to view you as someone they want to work with. At a time when 11% of contractors/consultants found their current staffing agency simply by searching Google, optimized content can capture traffic while building relationships². Plus, great content becomes the backbone of many other channels.

Email Marketing



There's a reason that \$1 spent on email marketing returns an average of \$38 for businesses⁷. Email is a channel that's effective at quickly reaching people wherever they may be. What makes email good for business is the same thing that makes it good for recruiting. Campaigns can include content your organization has created, and can be personalized according to demographics. For example, emails with personalized subject lines see an open rate increase of over 22%⁸. Email data provides a host of instructive information once analyzed, allowing you to tweak things and hone in on more effective messaging with each campaign.

Social Marketing



Social media is another home-run channel for recruitment marketing, as 79% of job seekers use social media during their job search³. Social channels like LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are a fantastic place to show off your culture, humanize the recruiting experience, and make it personable by sharing relevant content and fun photographs of your workplace.

Glassdoor is often neglected as a social channel, but you can bet candidates will be looking at current and previous employee reviews in order to gauge your culture and environment. Actively tending to your company's Glassdoor page is key to a successful overall social marketing strategy.



LinkedIn

It may be categorized as a social channel, but LinkedIn is in a class all its own. LinkedIn is one of the best places to discover and interact with those actively looking for or open to a new role. The platform is a big reason why posting a job on social media increases applications by 30-50%⁹. Additionally, sponsoring posts here can build brand awareness by reaching a specific demographic who may not have been initially looking for you. Talent solutions such as [LinkedIn Recruiter](#) can even be tailored to staffing agencies and provide powerful tools to harness the channel.



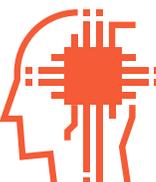
Digital Ads

The increasing reliance on computers, phones, and other devices has seen a 22% year-over-year increase in digital ad revenue, surpassing TV revenue for the first time in history¹⁰. Companies are putting their money into the most effective channels, and that means mobile, desktop, and pay-per-click advertisements. Google's AdWords and sponsored Facebook or LinkedIn ads are great places to start, and can directly reach the exact types of talent you're looking for at the places they visit the most.



Events

While digital tools can make a big positive impact when appropriately harnessed, they can portray a spammy, impersonal message when done wrong or relied upon solely. Any good recruiting strategy is a well-rounded one, and that means incorporating face-to-face interactions whenever possible. Such activities can include holding recruiting events, sponsoring industry meetup groups or speaking engagements, participating in charity events, and attending any other event happening in the community of the talent you're trying to recruit. The bottom line is to look into people's eyes, shake hands, and simply begin a relationship without the pressure of an aggressive recruiting pitch.



Artificial Intelligence

AI is a tool that, when applied to an appropriate recruitment marketing channel such as email or content, can provide unrivaled candidate identification and targeting capabilities. By analyzing data and adapting to the results, artificial intelligence produces more meaningful interactions and personalized messaging on a level not previously possible. This creates a custom experience for a candidate, which in turn makes them feel valued and strengthens their relationship with you.

RECRUITMENT MARKETING PLATFORMS AND ATS ADD-ONS

A conversation on recruitment marketing is not complete without looking at Recruitment Marketing Platforms, essentially software packages that promise to assist in social and mobile recruiting, career site management, analytics reporting, and relationship management. In theory, these platforms sound like a singular marketing solution, but in practice they are rarely magic bullets.

**Recruitment Marketing
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When a piece of software is designed to work for any organization looking for talent, how specialized can it be? Can it take into account your firm's specific goals, strengths, and weaknesses? And what about the human touch? Inbound marketing that draws people to your content and has talent seeking you instead of the other way around requires people. Whether it's a Marketing Director or a team of professionals, the personal touch is needed for effective recruitment marketing. A piece of software may help, but cannot be effective on its own.

With this in mind, it turns out that Applicant Tracking Systems often work extremely well as a marketing platform when used appropriately and balanced with human contact. As recruiters are already likely using an ATS, it requires little transition to beef up the software through add-ons designed to increase engagement with candidates. This can include assisting in several recruitment marketing channels through social, email, and job board integration. Processes can be streamlined while still allowing a recruiter to be in the driver's seat of the activity. In other words, a customizable ATS can make better use of a recruiter's time while simultaneously enhancing the candidate experience.

REFERRAL MARKETING

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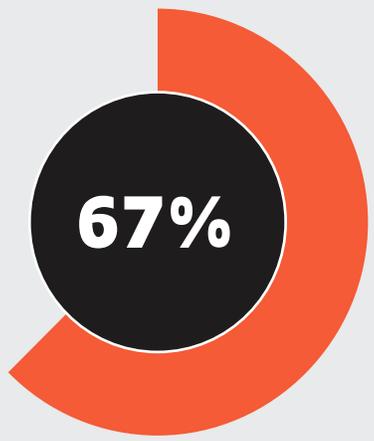
29%

Found their current jobs through someone they knew at the company

A circular infographic with a black center containing the text '40%'. The center is surrounded by a thick orange ring that is partially filled, representing the percentage. The background is a light gray triangle pointing upwards.

40%

Applicant conversion rate for employee referrals

A circular infographic with a black center containing the text '67%'. The center is surrounded by a thick orange ring that is partially filled, representing the percentage. The background is a light gray triangle pointing upwards.

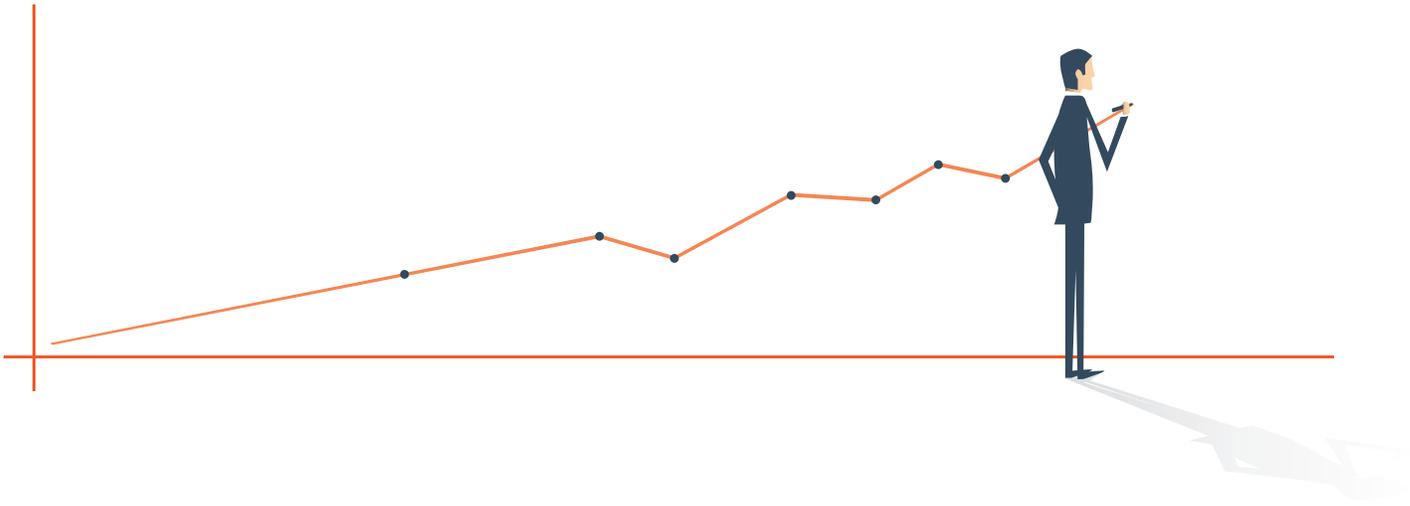
67%

Of recruiters report a shorter recruiting process for referrals

Referral marketing is an essential component of your recruitment marketing strategy. 15% of active candidates are reaching out to their personal network to find a job³. Similarly, 27% of Millennials, 30% of Gen X, and 33% of Baby Boomers found their current jobs through someone they knew that was already working at that company³. These significant segments of the talent pool indicate that trust in a peer review or recommendation can give any organization a big leg up on the competition. Therefore, referrals are a badge of honor that should be encouraged through marketing efforts.

The best part isn't even the fact that you'll have more candidates at your disposal. Employee referrals have a 40% applicant conversion rate, stay longer with an organization, and provide a shorter recruiting process for 67% of recruiters¹¹. In other words, not only does the number of candidates improve, but quality of talent rises as well. A pattern begins where an employee refers a friend through good word-of-mouth, that friend gets a job, has a good experience, and in turn speaks highly of you and refers someone else. This snowball effect is why referral programs should be incorporated into recruiting strategies, and when there are rewards in place for referrals, they should be advertised.

Measuring the Success of Your Recruitment Marketing



Measuring Your Success

It's clear that capturing and captivating the attention of passive candidates in the current market's white noise requires a full complement of marketing strategies. However, the exact return on investment that staffing firms see is dependent on how thoroughly they measure the success of those strategies from the start. And, as always, it's a matter of metrics.

Unfortunately, surveys indicate that at least 39% of companies face recruitment challenges because they lack metrics to measure the effectiveness of their sourcing¹². Moreover, 33% lack full-cycle metrics that offer reliable insight into the precise problem in their strategies from sourcing to hiring¹².

Here are the metrics successful staffing firms use to identify which recruitment marketing strategies are most effective.

Cost-per-applicant

By definition, this metric is total expenses divided by applicants. Cost-per-applicant can be used to measure the cost-effectiveness of individual marketing tactics or your overall marketing spend. This helps to identify which recruitment marketing strategies are most and least cost-effective when attracting candidates into the funnel in the first place. The better you can differentiate between effective and ineffective marketing spend, the better your ROI will be.

Consider digital ads. Looking at the cost-per-applicant of the individual channels can identify which one is best at targeting and converting prospects into applicants. Even if a specific channel is not eliciting the most results, reviewing the overall cost-per-applicant can offer a warning sign when the execution is the problem rather than the channel itself.

Cost-per-hire

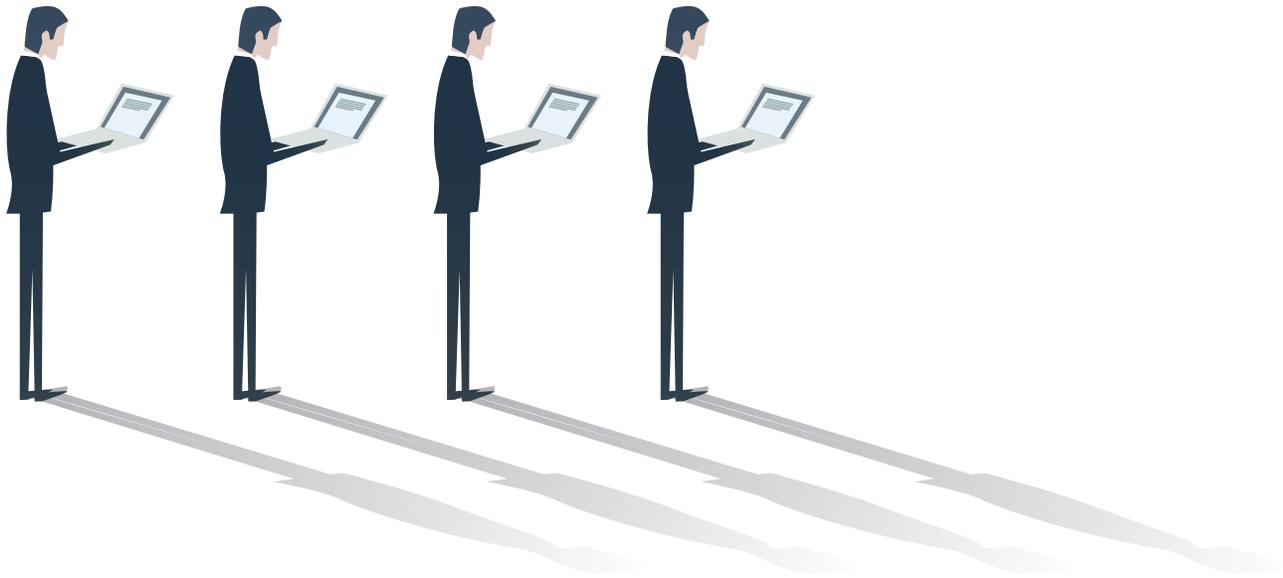
This metric is the total expenses divided by the actual hires. Once again, your firm can take a granular or holistic approach to breaking down this metric. It all depends upon whether you want to determine the big picture ROI or make actionable adjustments to specific activities.

The difference between the cost-per-hire and the cost-per-applicant metric is that the cost-per-hire metric is designed to measure more strategic conversion. Strategies with better cost-per-hire do more than pique curiosity or build brand awareness. They directly address the specific goals and pain points of your target audience and foster the relationship throughout the recruitment lifecycle. Activities that satisfy this metric are well worth the investment.

Website visitors-to-applicants

Want to see how wide your funnel is? This metric helps to identify whether your website is optimized to convert visitors into applicants. The overall number of applicants is divided by the number of total visitors to the website. On average, the visitor to applicant conversion rate is 11%, but that can be improved when businesses optimize their marketing to funnel people in the right direction³.





Application-to-hire

Want to measure how well you handle conversions? This metric divides the number of applicants by the number that are eventually hired. On average, the industry conversion rate from applicants to interview is about 12%³. This metric is about the entire customer journey. Application-to-hire metrics identify where marketing messages need to be strengthened versus where recruiting activities (interview prep, relationship building, closing activities, etc.) need to be reinforced.

Time-to-hire

Speed is crucial in a candidate-driven market. Time-to-hire is directly related to the cost-per-hire. Though the metric itself appears straightforward, staffing firms should be conscious about whether they are measuring the time from the initial engagement with marketing channels versus the initial application. These two separate measurements help to break down which aspects of the recruitment lifecycle are running efficiently and which need to be optimized.

As recruitment marketing strategies become more sophisticated and fine-tuned, the overall time-to-hire can improve by as much as 39% from less refined programs¹².

Quality-of-hire

Metrics such as retention ratios and performance ratings looks at the long-term deliverables of recruitment marketing strategies. Are the candidates who are being hired qualified for the position and compatible with the culture? Are they performing at the level that organizations come to expect? Today's marketing tools empower staffing companies to get granular with the way they target potential passive candidates and provide measurable increases to the overall quality of placements.

By optimizing recruitment marketing campaigns, research finds that staffing companies are capable of improving the quality of their candidates by 31% compared to those that lack a focused and mature strategy¹². Retention rates even promise to go up by 25% as staffing firms improve their ability to target the right passive candidates and propel them through the full recruitment lifecycle¹².



Measuring Your Employer Brand

How do you measure the more intangible elements of recruitment marketing? These measurements are essential for assessing your progress, ROI, and room for improvement. For example, take a look at how your brand is being perceived on Glassdoor. Are employee reviews consistently positive? Are you quickly (and publicly) responding to negative reviews? 62% of Glassdoor users say their perception of a company improves after seeing an employer respond to a review, underscoring its importance¹³.

Likewise, consider assessing the growth of your social media channels and website engagement each quarter. This includes follower counts, engagement rates, web traffic, bounce rates, and more, all of which indicate the rate of conversion among your audience. If they aren't trending upward, it may be indicating a weak employer brand.

How to Implement Your Recruitment Marketing Strategy: A Checklist

- Evaluate existing processes and marketing efforts
- Decide who's in charge and establish a communication plan
- Craft a value proposition to reflect your history, culture, niche, etc.
- Determine your Buyer Personas in order to customize your messaging
- Map out the Candidate Experience to ensure engagement continues from start to finish
- Explore and invest in a variety of recruitment marketing channels, including:
 - Leveraging your ATS and available add-ons
 - Getting the help of a marketing agency that specializes in staffing
 - Training your recruiters in recruitment marketing
- Measure your progress, using specific ratios and statistics
- Conduct a regular evaluation

Sources

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About echogravity

echogravity is an inbound marketing agency.

Wait, why would a marketing agency know anything about staffing and recruiting?

Because that's the foundation of our experience. We've been there, in your shoes. We know the challenges and expectations that you face every day in the staffing industry.

We also happen to be passionate about marketing and about making

your brand known to as many quality candidates as possible. That's why we're an inbound marketing agency for the staffing industry.

Skip the guesswork and partner with someone who understands how marketing strategy, content, social media, SEO, web design, and sales campaigns all come together to help you grow your business.

We can't wait to hear from you.

Contact Us Now!

Phone: 847.960.3302
Email: info@echogravity.com
www.echogravity.com



echogravity

echogravity is nationally known as the leading provider of marketing solutions for the staffing industry. We've mastered the communications of client's awards for Best of Staffing over the past four years and are gearing up for the 2018 awards. Leveraging the success of a Best of Staffing award is essential to a company's brand communication.



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If your client satisfaction scores qualify your firm for the Best of Staffing award, the next steps are to **modify your company's brand identity, communicate the achievement and to let the world know that your company is a brand to recognize.** echogravity offers the following programs to communicate your success:

NEWS FLASH

\$1800

**STOP THE
PRESSES**

\$2800

RED CARPET

\$6000

To learn more about these and other marketing plans, contact Kevin O'Brien at **847-960-3302**, or email at kevin@echogravity.com



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