

# Why These 4 Companies Are Getting Serious About Their Employer Brands

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**As job seekers become job shoppers, companies are starting to advertise their work cultures alongside their products.**

If you aren't familiar with the concept of "employer **branding**," here's the basic overview: it's when companies showcase what it's like to work for them in order to attract the right talent. HR specialists and recruiters have been embracing this concept for years on platforms like **Glassdoor** and **LinkedIn**.

Until recently, that strategy has been directed mainly at job seekers. But now some companies are starting to use their employer **brands** to appeal to customers, too.

## **JOB SEEKERS ARE NOW JOB SHOPPERS**

In our age of transparency, consumers want to buy from companies they trust and respect. In the recovery from the recession of the past decade, businesses are distancing themselves from any appearance of corporate greed. Not only does that turn consumers off, it's also impacting job seekers' priorities.

Job seekers are making a consumer decision, too: If you aren't good enough to work for, why buy anything from you?

A [study](#) by my company, CAREEREALISM, shows that some 80% of job seekers today will research an employer online before deciding whether to apply to a position there. When candidates don't find enough information to convince them you're worth working for, they'll pass. That much is obvious, but employers are only now beginning to reckon with the consequences. In other words, job seekers are making a consumer decision, too: If you aren't good enough to work for, why buy anything from you?

Showing pride and confidence in your company's employer **brand** sends a strong message: "These are our employees. See for yourself how they make our company great." And, like any good **brand** strategy, the key is to know how your employees are unique and then flaunt it.

Here are recent ad campaigns by four companies that have already jumped on the employer **branding** bandwagon, and why it may be working.

1.

## GE

**GE** made three hilarious commercials depicting an employee sharing the good news about a new position at **GE**, "What's the Matter with Owen?" This is one of them:

<https://youtu.be/OpDIEJrog3s>

Lars Schmidt, owner of the employer **branding** agency [Amplify Talent](#) and cofounder of [#HROS](#), an open-source HR platform, explains the power of the dual messaging: "From a consumer **brand** standpoint, **GE** wants to reposition itself as a **digital** industrial company. From an employer **brand** standpoint, it's trying to reintroduce itself as a place young technologists can go and do meaningful work."

What's effective here is the "us-versus-them" mentality **GE** is trying to promote with respect to the type of candidate it's after. The company wants to send a clear message: "If you don't want to do valuable, cutting-edge work, don't apply." Not incidentally, that's also a great way to show customers how important it is to **GE** that it hires bright, serious professionals to do this important work.

2.

## UPS

This holiday video tells the story of how one truck driver has impacted a little boy's life. The goal, it seems, is to show off the company's human side and stress why its employees work so hard delivering packages.

<https://youtu.be/0IsL5AMqLMY>

UPS does a great job exemplifying the type of caring, dedicated professional who gets hired to be a driver. At the same time, choosing to showcase Carson's passion for pretending to deliver UPS packages lends some much-deserved honor and respect to the job—consumer and employer **brands** match up perfectly here.

3.

## SAM ADAMS

In this commercial, an employee narrator explains what the company stands for and the sort of

work culture that results: "We bring our best friends to work. We treat every day like casual Friday."

[https://youtu.be/mU\\_ipDc79QM](https://youtu.be/mU_ipDc79QM)

Compare that with [this Corona ad](#) from last year, featuring models opening bottles on the beach. **Sam Adams** is trying to connect the people who make the beer to the people it wants to drink it ("We make beers we want to drink"), defining a shared spirit of passion and independence. At the same time that the company is reaching out to craft beer lovers who admire the work that goes into making a good brew, it's using its employees to demonstrate what happens when you work for a company you believe in.

4.

## FOUNDATION MEDICINE

Here's a much simpler (and less costly) employer **branding** video that's still effective. Foundation Medicine does a solid job of showing the commitment, creativity, and diversity of the people working to transform cancer care.

[https://youtu.be/hC6HMMS\\_RVA](https://youtu.be/hC6HMMS_RVA)

Ed Nathanson, founder of [Red Pill Talent](#), which also does employer **brand** strategy, explains why the organization's hashtag campaign is such a smart move: "Their #uniquelyFMI campaign is twofold: It tells their employees' unique stories but also intertwines with their work of testing each individual's unique cancers for proper treatment plans," Nathanson says. "By involving so many employees, their desire to share their participation in the video will help drive **social** media engagement."

If your **marketing** department is trying to find new ways to connect with customers, the answer might lie down the hallway in your HR department.

Foundation Medicine knows its ad won't air during a football game, but it doesn't need it to. The organization is tapping into the [swiftly growing power of social video](#) to boost its employer **brand**. As Nathanson sees it, this campaign makes an effective appeal to potential candidates and patients who may be learning about the organization's mission online.

What's more, this Foundation Medicine video isn't just a recruiting tool, but a retention tool, too. By encouraging employees to think deeply about *why* they're working at Foundation Medicine, it recommitments them to the mission and the importance of their jobs.

## BRAND AMBASSADORS MAKE FOR GREAT EMPLOYEES (AND VICE VERSA)

Another reason to incorporate employer **branding** into your **marketing** strategy is the feedback loop it creates. When your best customers are reminded that you're not just a company that

makes great stuff, but a great employer, too, chances are you'll see more of those passionate **brand** ambassadors applying for jobs—in other words, consumers becoming candidates.

If some turn out to be qualified, who better to hire than the people who already adore what you do? That can help employers crack [another growing puzzle](#): how to use employees to amplify company message through their own **social** channels. It's these passionate consumers-cum-employees who will become a referral engine for more candidates and customers alike, making for a cost-effective way to improve sales and recruiting simultaneously.

If your **marketing** department is trying to find new ways to connect with customers, the answer might lie down the hallway in your HR department. Just remember: that two-for-the-price-of-one advantage is only something you can expect to gain if [your work culture](#) really is worth putting on display.

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