



# A Brand Blueprint

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Building a Brand That  
Wins Customers and  
Candidates

## INTRODUCTION

Brands are like magnets — they attract customers, prospective employees and draw your current team members closer to you. Effectively telling your brand story can boost sales, turn customers into promoters and lower the cost to acquire key roles.

Your brand is the true outlook of how your company is perceived. It's much more than just your logo; it's what comes to mind — and what people feel — when someone hears your name. A company's brand is the essence of its unique qualities that set it apart from the competition. It's what makes your company, your company.

While a company's brand is influenced by the entire organization, it's most commonly promoted and managed by marketing and people teams. These two departments have the important job of selling people on their company; they shape the perceptions of customers and candidates to drive revenue and grow their workforce.

***“Your brand is what other people say about you when you're not in the room.”***

***-Jeff Bezos***

Branding your business to target both prospective customers and employees is not only a smart strategy, it's necessary. Today, consumers and job seekers are one in the same. They seek out the same qualities in companies they support and engage with your brand similarly. In fact, companies often try to entice customers to become employees.

## INTRODUCTION

Not only that, but candidates are 40 percent more likely to apply for a job if they recognize the company's brand. As a recruiter, you should consider your customers an essential part of your talent pool for any open role.

As a marketer, you must leverage your team members as a resource; happy employees make for happy customers and there's a direct correlation between positive reports of employee well-being and customer satisfaction.

Neglecting to keep both groups in mind when branding specifically for marketing or recruiting efforts makes your strategy half as effective and twice as expensive. This guide dissects the prism of a brand and its impact on both consumer and employer branding goals.

Keep reading to learn how you can take advantage of these points of intersection in your own branding efforts to simultaneously attract more candidates and improve your bottom line.

# 40%

CANDIDATES ARE 40 PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO APPLY FOR A JOB IF THEY RECOGNIZE THE COMPANY'S BRAND.

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## SECTION I

# The Differences: Consumer and Employer Branding

There are two main categories for branding, one is a company's employer brand and the other is a consumer brand.

While each of them have a similar goal of promoting their company in a good light, there are many ways in which the two are different. Keep reading to understand the goals of each type of branding and how they differ.

# Employer Brand

Your employer brand is your company's reputation among job seekers, employees and key stakeholders. It's what they tell their friends and family when you aren't around. Though it may not be tangible, your employer brand is an asset that requires constant cultivation. That's where employer branding comes in.

Employer branding is the process of managing and influencing your company's reputation with a goal to position yourself as an employer of choice. This is done through recruitment marketing efforts like employee spotlights, career pages, social media, events and even job descriptions. Every touchpoint in your recruiting and retention efforts leaves an impression with candidates and employees that shapes your employer brand. Without proper management, your ability to hire and retain great people will be diminished.

# Consumer Brand

Your consumer brand is your company's reputation among the audience who is prime for purchasing your products or services. It's your customers' and potential customers' impression of who your organization is and the purpose it serves. To influence this perception, marketers must track and manage their consumer brand closely.



## SECTION I

Managing a consumer brand starts with research and messaging and ends with strategic promotion. It's the act of getting your company in front of the right audience to drive revenue.

Each company will have a different promotion strategy depending on the target audience it is trying to reach but some common channels are advertising, email, social media and the company's website. Actively managing and promoting your consumer brand can make a big difference in the success or failure of your company.

# Recap: The Differences

	Employer Brand	Consumer Brand
Audience	Job seekers, Employees	End users, Shoppers
Goal	Recruit candidates & retain employees	Drive revenue through purchases
Channels/ Strategies	Employee Spotlights, Career Pages, Social Media, Events, Job Descriptions	Advertising, Content, Email, Social Media, Website



## SECTION II

# The Point of Intersection: Consumer and Employer Branding

Despite their differences, there are many ways in which consumer and employer branding strategies overlap. Adjusting your approach to play to these intersection points will bolster your brand in the eyes of both customers and candidates.

## SECTION II

You're already well-versed in the fundamentals of branding. But are you aware that you're unnecessarily duplicating your efforts?

There's no denying the impact of an effective marketing strategy — major corporations like Oracle and Salesforce have dedicated upwards of 20 percent of revenue toward marketing in recent years. As a result, these organizations grew revenue year-over-year.

In fact, marketing is responsible for leading revenue growth at 38.4 percent of companies. As we know, when revenue grows, you need to scale your team — quickly. **However, what marketing professionals fail to realize is that their talent acquisition colleagues are trying to tell a different aspect of the same story — the story of what makes your brand unique.**

The goal of employer branding is to successfully position your company among competitors as a brand of choice. Sound familiar? Marketing is after the same end goal, just with a different audience. Plus, strong employer branding helps people teams recruit up to two times faster and reduce cost-per-hire by 50 percent.

# 38.4%

**MARKETING LEADS REVENUE GROWTH AT  
38.4 PERCENT OF COMPANIES.**



## SECTION II

Combining your efforts unifies your brand, which is essential to maintaining a stable foothold in the marketplace. Furthermore, a joint effort helps grow your presence externally and internally; as you build your customer base, you'll draw in eager candidates for your open roles. This allows you to scale your business proportionally to your revenue goals.

**On top of that, a dual branding strategy cuts costs while improving outcomes.** Marketing knows how to brand, but recruiters know who you need to attract in order to keep up with aggressive growth goals. Combining your efforts — and budgets — means more bang for your buck. Read on to see how it's done.

# The Three Pillars of Branding

A consistent use of the three pillars of branding is vital to create a cohesive brand. Your voice and tone, messaging and imagery must be stable; regardless of platform, content format or even target audience, your brand should be constant.

## Messaging

Your brand messaging is the language you use and the value it conveys. It's your brand story, company value proposition and how you position yourself all rolled into one. The story of your business doesn't vary, nor should it change across strategies.

## Voice and Tone

Your brand voice and tone is the inflection you add to your messaging. It conveys your brand's personality and level of emotion. More formal organizations use "Hello" where startups might use "Hey" or "Sup?"

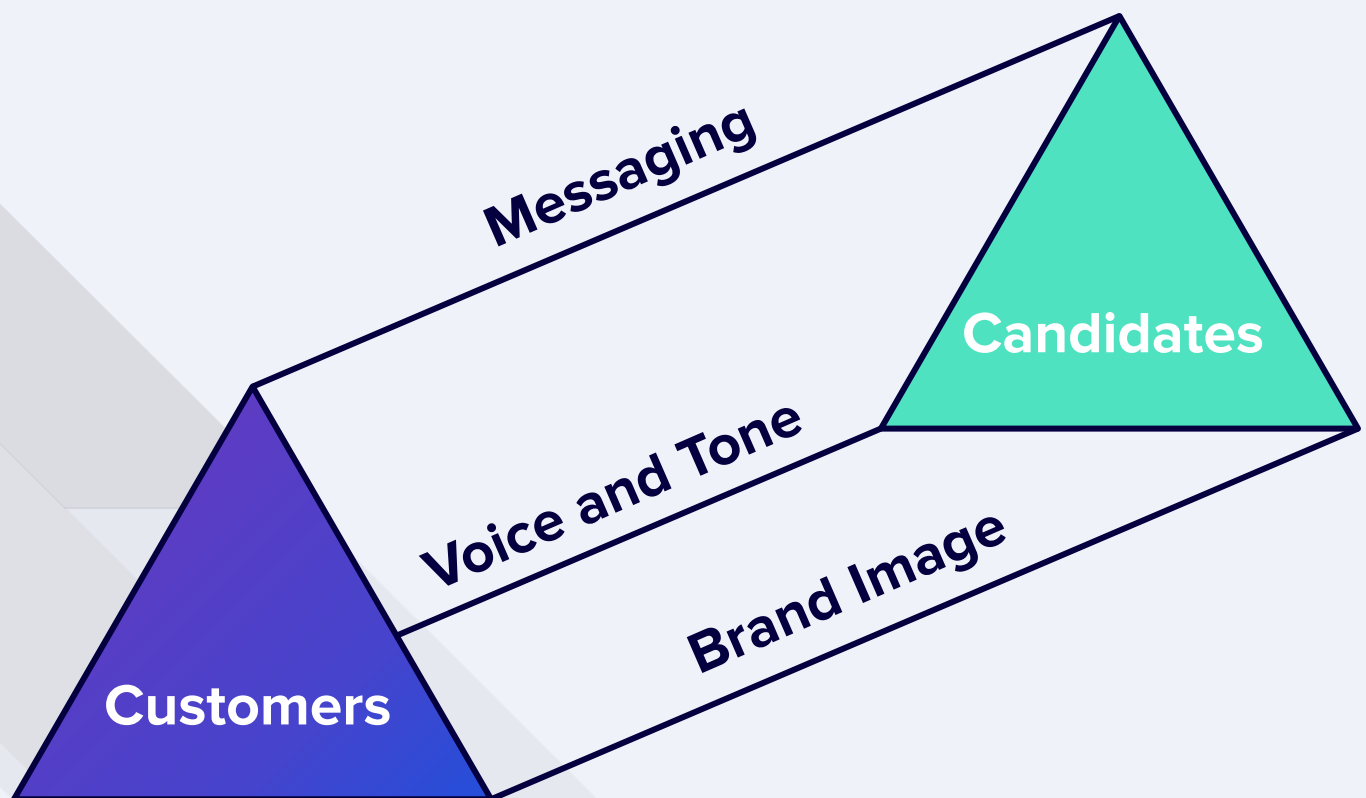
## Brand Image

Your brand image is how you visually present yourself. It's your colors, font, logo and image guidelines — the elements that come to mind when job seekers and consumers think of your brand.

## SECTION II

What changes across strategies is who you're speaking to. Because of that, the words used in branding should vary, but how you communicate them must be consistent. The pillars hold true and provide several connectors between consumer and employer branding efforts.

Consider your branding efforts like a prism — the sides are the same, but when tilted against the light, it projects different colors. How you brand your company to attract prospective employees should be built with the same foundational elements as your branding for customers.



### SECTION III

# How Employer and Consumer Branding Can Work Together

Streamlining your efforts and combining budgets gives your brand additional legs. Job seekers and consumers seek out several similar qualities in the brands they support. Incorporate these tactics into your branding strategy to target both customer and candidate audiences.



# 1. Leverage Your Leaders

Involving members of your leadership team in your branding efforts gives your business credibility and helps establish your brand as an industry thought leader.

## SECTION III

People want to hear from leaders of the brands they trust — 79 percent say CEO visibility is very important, and they want leaders to share the company’s mission and vision.

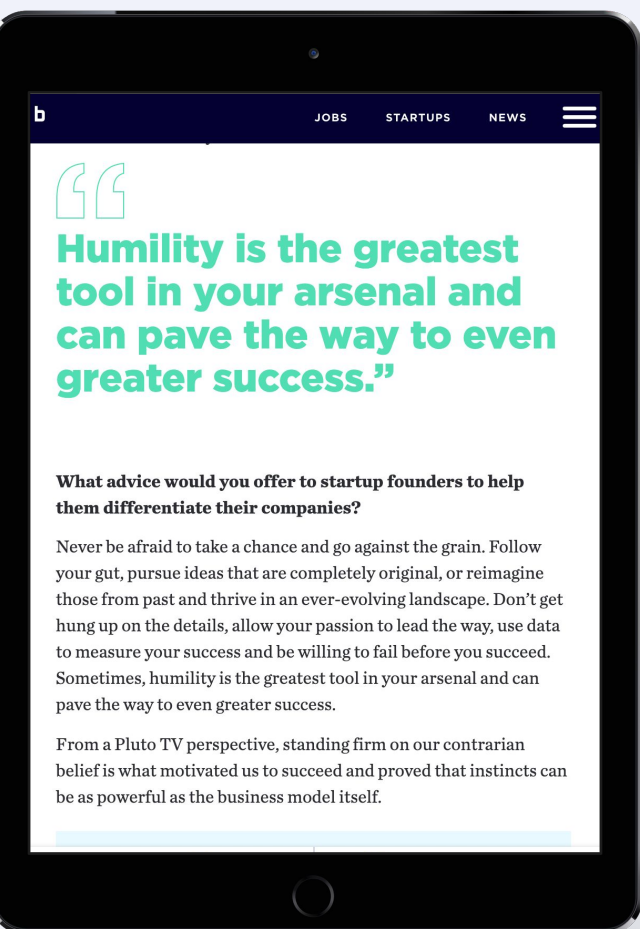
## Example: How 5 LA Tech Leaders Stand Out in Their Industries

Your leaders are shaping the future of your company, and job seekers and consumers want to get a sense of the direction you’re headed in. This article gives tech leaders the opportunity to highlight their business objectives in the context of their company mission.

In doing so, they showcase how their organization is on the cutting edge of the industry and stand out from the competition.

To prospective employees, these organizations are seen as thought leaders — an employer they can learn from and lean on for growth opportunities. For customers, leadership-focused content humanizes your brand, demonstrates your value and explains your mission.

[Read the full article.](#)





### SECTION III

## Example: Perdue's Thank You

When COVID-19 sent most employees home, those deemed essential became heroes. Perdue Farms took the time to thank them for their contributions. Foregoing professional photography and set design, chairman Jim Perdue spoke on behalf of the brand and shared a heartfelt message.

Perdue is seen with his arm outstretched toward the camera, holding a smartphone to record the ad, which shows that the brand is cognizant of what truly matters; **in uncertain times core values reign far superior to production value.** This demonstration of humility appeals to customers by making the brand appear naturally empathetic. A humble leader also motivates employees, which attracts job seekers and retains talent.

[Watch the ad.](#)



*Image via Perdue*



## 2. Prioritize Social Impact

People support brands that make an impact. Using your mission to support the surrounding community resonates with job seekers and consumers alike. Doing so will benefit your business — 86 percent of consumers want companies to get involved in social action, and doing so drives 64 percent of them to make a purchase.

### SECTION III

Being a good corporate citizen will also help you attract and retain great talent. Today, millennials make up 30 percent of the entire workforce, and 64 percent of them would reject a job offer if the employer didn't commit to and practice corporate responsibility.

## Example: Ikea's ThisAbles Project

In this ad, Ikea demonstrates how the business identified a gap in its product offerings. Affordable, quality home furnishings are Ikea's bread and butter, but a large part of the population is unable to use its product.

The brand recognized that special needs customers couldn't enjoy the quality of life offered by its products. In response, Ikea Israel went out of its way to develop multiple solutions during a hackathon. Not only does the event show Ikea's emphasis on ingenuity and innovation, but also **compassion and consideration for underserved customers**. That kind of generosity appeals to both consumers and job seekers.

[Watch the ad.](#)

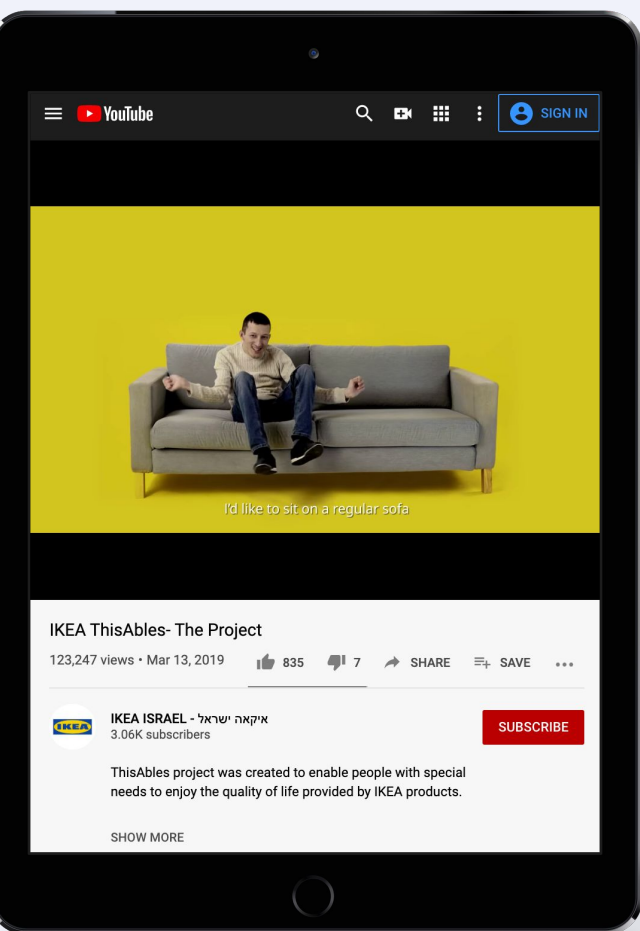


Image via IKEA Israel



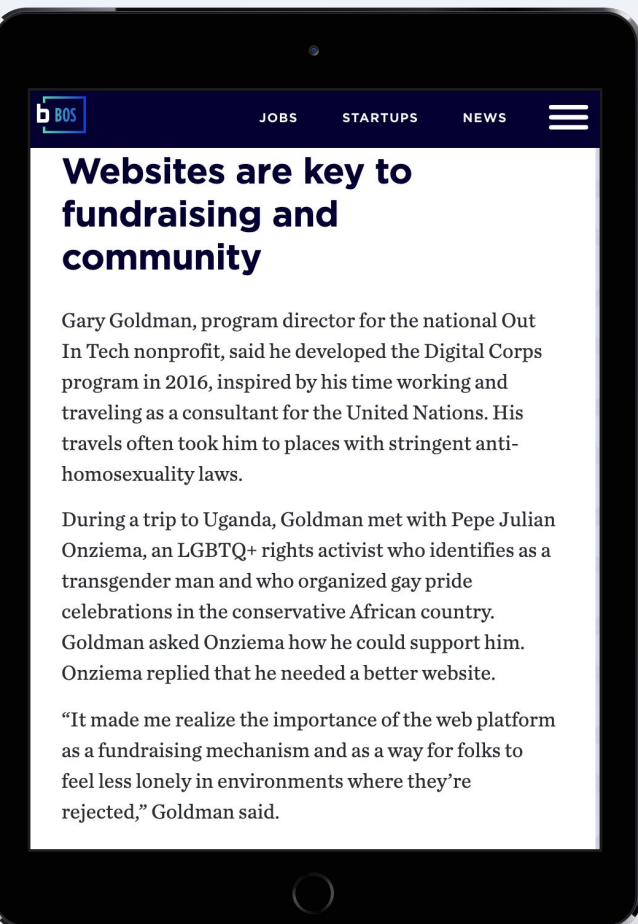
## Example: Out In Tech's Volunteerism

Connecting your outreach efforts with your company mission makes your social impact all the more powerful. Out In Tech volunteers to design and maintain websites for LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations around the world.

Through its actions, the advocacy nonprofit supports similar organizations by giving them a high-tech fundraising platform to elevate their impact on communities where LGBTQ+ members are ostracized or persecuted.

Out In Tech is using its talents to uphold its mission and support members of the community. The article promotes the brand's efforts while telling its story and generating empathy from the community. Seeing the positive impact Out In Tech has on society endears job seekers and potential donors to the brand.

[Read the full article.](#)





# | 3. Showcase Your Company Culture

Your company culture is your brand's personality; it explains who you are, your mission and illustrates how you treat people, both consumers and employees. Highlighting your culture helps prospective team members and customers get a sense of your authentic brand.

## SECTION III

Company culture is the shared set of values, beliefs and attitudes that make up your workforce.

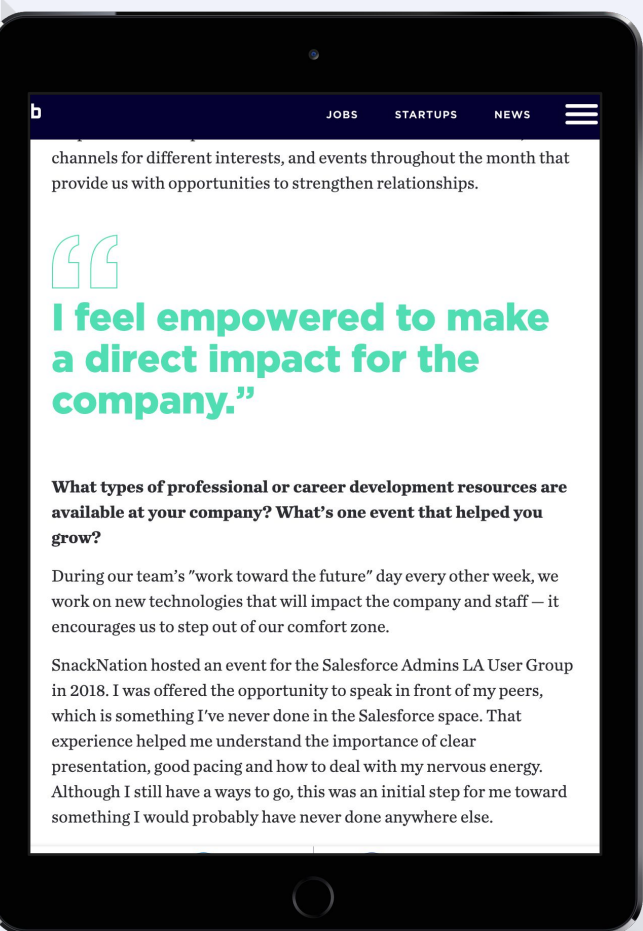
## Example: SnackNation's Culture Spotlight

In this article, SnackNation team members share how the company's culture reflects its mission, what sets it apart from other companies and how the leadership team supports employees.

Culture matters to job seekers. **In fact, 56 percent say culture is more important than salary when it comes to job satisfaction.** This article shows prospective employees they'll have a voice and be able to make an impact on the team.

Culture plays a big role in consumer behaviors, too. **Research shows** that brand personality has a significantly positive impact on both brand love and brand loyalty among consumers. To customers, the article suggests that SnackNation is an accommodating company that values its people.

[Read the full article.](#)



### SECTION III

## Example: Apple’s “Taylor vs. Treadmill”

Again, your company culture is your brand personality. For a brand like Apple that’s seen as cutting edge, featuring two major celebrities (Taylor Swift and Drake) is the perfect fit. The spot shows Taylor Swift begrudgingly running on a treadmill — after admitting “Man, I hate cardio” — something that many people can relate to.

Seeing her stumble and soar off the back of the machine, then pop up still singing along to the song adds some levity. **The spot shows Apple’s brand personality while touting its services;** the ad is both cool and compelling, thoughtfully highlighting the relaxed culture that appeals to both candidates and consumers.

[Watch the ad.](#)



*Image via Apple*



*Brand is the sum total of how someone perceives a particular organization. Branding is about shaping that perception.”*

**Ashley Friedlein**





## 4. Be Purpose-Driven

Companies with a mission beyond just selling a product attracts top candidates and loyal customers. Being purpose-driven pays off, and can help save you money: 67 percent of employees want to work for a company with a mission they believe in more than they want a higher paying salary.

## SECTION III

Having an overarching mission can increase revenue: a majority of consumers (86 percent) purchase goods and services from companies that are purpose-driven. Take a look at how these branding examples promote two organizations' broader purposes.

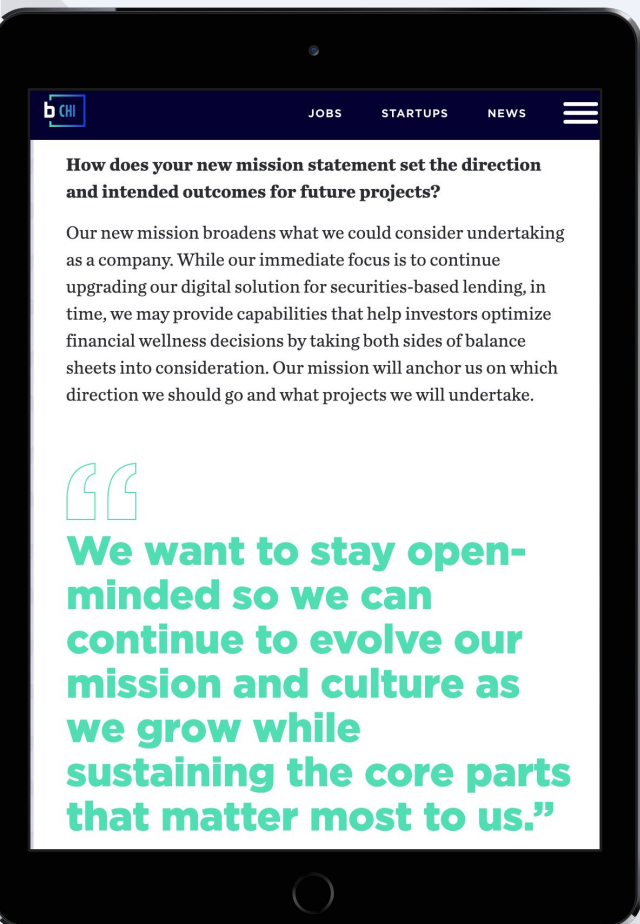
## Example: Supernova Companies' New Mission

A mission statement is a hugely important part of a company's success. It should reflect the current state of the company, inform its goals and guide its path to achieve them. As your business grows and evolves, so should your mission.

When Supernova Companies adapted its mission statement to better fit its customers' needs and scaling business, it promoted the change as part of its branding efforts.

This article gave its leadership team an opportunity to explain the intention behind the new mission and how it's shaping the company's future. **It highlights the brand's mission, leverages the team's leaders and shows how it is making an impact in the space.** It's a solid example of several branding tactics that appeal to both job seekers and customers.

[Read the full article.](#)



## Example: Ulta’s “The Possibilities are Beautiful”

Your mission statement articulates the “why” of your company — why you exist, why you matter and why you do what you do. It should reflect your core values and company culture, as well as inform your long-term business goals. The foundation of what makes your company valuable to the industry and community you’re in is something that prospective customers and employees will relate to.

This spot by Ulta — a beauty retail chain — flips the concept of makeup and manufactured beauty on its head. Ulta says that people shouldn’t turn to its products to become beautiful, but to enhance their natural, true beauty. That powerful message coupled with a diverse, non-gender conforming cast of actors conveys Ulta’s purpose of redefining beauty standards.

[Watch the ad.](#)



*Image via ULTA Beauty*



## 5. Practice and Show Empathy

Empathy is hugely important to both job seekers and customers, especially during difficult times. Having a boss who practices compassion and empathy matters to employees: 96 percent say it's vital for employers to demonstrate empathy. On top of that, 60 percent would take a pay cut to work for an empathetic employer.

## Example: Facebook's COVID-19 Response

Effective branding is essential, even in the midst of the most uncertain times. In response to COVID-19, Facebook released a powerful ad reminding people that despite feeling lonely, we're not alone. Not only does the ad highlight Facebook's mission to connect people, it also demonstrates the brand's empathy toward the challenges COVID-19 caused.

The social networking platform is home to billions of users with more than 400 million active in groups; Facebook is a hub for connectivity. During a global pandemic when face-to-face contact is restricted, the platform leveraged its mission to bring people together and inspire hope in a time of anxiety. The spot also urged those who needed or could offer help to reach out through Facebook's online COVID-19 community.

# 60%

**OF EMPLOYEES WOULD TAKE A PAY CUT TO WORK FOR AN EMPATHETIC EMPLOYER.**

### SECTION III

It's a brief but incredibly moving spot that ultimately positions Facebook as a force for good and a solution to the challenges of our new reality. In short, **it shows a brand with a mission and an important story to tell, which resonates with job seekers; 38 percent** of employees want a job that aligns with their passions and interests.

From a customer's perspective, the spot shows Facebook as a solution and place for connection. Through its uplifting UGC, Facebook's ad reminds consumers they're not alone in their struggle and encourages them to band together to help others. People buy with emotion, which means a heartwarming story like the one Facebook's ad tells will resonate with customers.

Watch the ad.




Image via Facebook



## 6. Spotlight Employees

Who better to tell your story than the ones who live it every day? The best representation of your brand is your people — they have first-hand knowledge of your company's values and mission, and are seen as a reliable third-party. Allowing your people to tell your brand story builds a more authentic connection with customers and candidates.



### SECTION III

Not only does employee-driven content resonate with job seekers and consumers, it also reaches a broader audience. Messaging that is shared by employees receives 561 percent more impressions than when a company sends it. Content also gets shared 24 times more when distributed by employees.

## Example: Tempus Is Changing Healthcare — And the World

The result of employees telling your brand story is much wider and more impactful than what your company could ever do on its own.

Tempus' spotlight gives employees the chance to articulate the company's global-scale impact and highlight their favorite parts of the company. This type of content bolsters Tempus' employer brand by establishing the company as a desirable place to work.

Additionally, seeing that employees are treated well and feel valued at the company makes consumers more inclined to support the brand; 45 percent of consumers consider how a company treats its employees when making a buying decision.

[Read the full article.](#)





### SECTION III

## Example: Johnsonville's Focus on Family

Nothing is as personal and intimate as sharing a meal together. As a provider of pre-packaged meats, Johnsonville played up the focus on family by including its own in its branding efforts — its employees. **This strategy helps the brand establish its reputation as an employer of choice and build a relationship with customers.**

This commercial starring a 30-year team member speaks to both job candidates and consumers. Prospective employees interpret long-term employment as a mark of an exceptional employer, one who values and appreciates its employees. From the consumer's perspective, a hardworking employee spending time with his family makes the brand more relatable and increases the likelihood they'll be loyal customers.

[Watch the ad.](#)



*Image via Johnsonville*



## 7. Emphasize Your Core Values

Your core values are the foundation of your company. They dictate how you do business with customers, how your employees work together and what you stand for as a team. A strong set of core values resonates with customers: as many as 72 percent of US consumers look to buy from companies that align with their personal values.

### SECTION III

Core values have a huge impact on the employee experience and overall engagement at your company. In fact, employees who understand their organization's core values are 51 times more likely to be “fully engaged” in their work. See how this company put its core values front and center in its branding efforts.

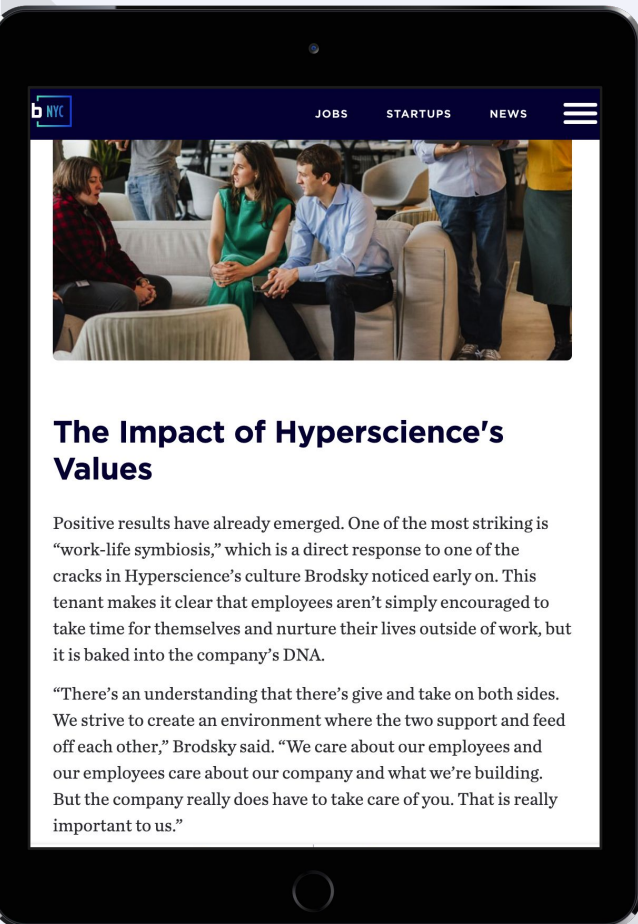
## Example: How Core Values Are Guiding Hyperscience Through Its Next Chapter

Without a set of core values, your workforce is more susceptible to outside factors that can weaken your company culture.

When Hyperspace leadership recognized the need to reevaluate its core values, the team looked inward to develop new values that reflected their employees and company mission.

This spotlight article allows Hyperspace to promote its commitment to its people and the company's future. Furthermore, **it allows them to explain the intention behind their new core values and the purpose they serve in unifying the team.**

[Read the full article.](#)





## 8. Be Authentic & Transparent

Being transparent is vital to retaining top employees and creating lasting relationships with loyal customers. Authenticity and transparency are the hallmarks of effective branding, especially in today's marketplace when both consumers and job seekers are well-informed and diligent brand researchers.

### SECTION III

Brand authenticity means aligning your branding principles — message, image, tone and voice — with your core values. People will interpret a disjointed brand strategy as the mark of a disingenuous company.

Transparency is also key. Rather than hiding criticisms or business challenges, put it out there. Additionally, leaders who practice transparency and demonstrate positivity are viewed as more trustworthy and effective by employees.

**Being honest with prospects will serve you well: 86 percent of consumers consider authenticity when determining which brands to support.**

## **Example: Domino's "Pizza Turnaround"**

For an example of transparency and authenticity in a branding strategy, look no further than the national pizza franchise, Domino's. Back in 2009, the brand completely reinvented itself. In response to a slew of negative reviews from customers, Domino's leadership launched "The Pizza Turnaround" campaign.

The brand released commercials promoting the harshest criticisms received from customers and how the business responded internally. Allowing consumers this access shows that Domino's is a brand that values customer feedback and works hard to earn loyalty.

### SECTION III

Domino's completely pulled back the curtain, demonstrating its core values and ability to proactively respond to adversity. Ultimately, the approach combines several of the key branding overlaps between marketing and recruitment. **It highlights employees, leverages leadership, focuses on core values and prioritizes transparency.** This is an extreme example of what should happen behind the scenes every day.

Neglecting to be transparent with job seekers and customers will significantly undermine your reputation as an employer and brand. Again, authenticity is the expectation; prospects will spot and denounce your shortcomings more than they will praise your efforts. If you're not being transparent and open with your audiences, you're not branding correctly.

[Watch the ad.](#)



Image via Domino's

SECTION IV

# Key Takeaways

#### SECTION IV



## **Working Together Makes a Difference**

Despite the ultimate goals of employer and consumer branding being different, both are responsible for influencing the perception of your company externally. Achieving a well-liked brand with consumers will influence candidate perceptions of your company and vice versa.

Leaning into this fact can help both marketers and talent acquisition professionals more effectively reach their goals. Like we've said before, candidates and customers are one in the same so take advantage of this by working together.



## **Build a Solid Brand Foundation**

A brand that's built with a cohesive foundation of messaging, voice and tone, as well as imagery is one that will be successful. Rooting both your employer and consumer brand in these pillars will allow you to work together more easily. It solidifies that no matter if you're speaking to a candidate or consumer, your brand will be recognized.



## **Tell Stories That Matter**

The expectations of your company and the topics candidates and consumers want to hear about are very much aligned. This gives you plenty of opportunities to join forces and tell better stories with more knowledge and a bigger budget. Stay informed on the campaigns each group is planning so you can easily tap into extra resources when applicable.



# United We Tech.

Built In helps tech professionals stay on top of trends and news, expand their networks and carve out futures at companies they believe in.



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