

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in
Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO NAVIGATE THE GREAT RESIGNATION IN THE
HOTEL SECTOR:

Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement

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Abstract:

Talent-related challenges have long been inherent to the hotel industry, yet the absence of research exploring technology's impact on talent attraction and retention remains. Given the phenomenon of the Great Resignation, this study seeks to offer insights on how to leverage technology to navigate talent shortages, focusing particularly on the highly impacted hotel sector. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods incorporating interviews and a survey was chosen to investigate the impact of technology on this challenge. Results show that Digital Employer Branding and its strategic implementation presents great potential in addressing the attraction and retention of hotel employees.

Keywords: Technology Adoption, Great Resignation, Talent Attraction, Talent Retention, Engagement, Digital Employer Branding, Employee Commitment, Training Programs, Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intention, Digital Platforms, Leadership.

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1 Introduction

The following study is a collective output obtained from a work project conducted for Westmont Hospitality Group.

The work project targeted identifying and exploring opportunities for technology implementation within the operational framework of four hotels within the Westmont portfolio. It was motivated by a selection of main challenges intricate to the hotel sector and presented a focus on two key domains: guest-facing technologies and staff management solutions.

The present research is a more specific exploration of one singular challenge encountered within the broader spectrum of the work project: the challenge of effectively attracting and retaining talent within Westmont Hospitality Group. The large scale and complexity of the original work project imposed a more focused approach in this research; therefore, while this research delves deeply into this particular challenge, it does not encompass the entirety of the work project. As such, the study presented is a combination of data collected from Westmont Hospitality Group in the context of the work project, as well as external research and data collection, to provide a generalized response that could benefit Westmont and other hotel industry players.

Considering the post-Covid context of the work project and the consequent challenges specific to Westmont Hospitality Group's context, the main challenge associated with the difficulties experienced in attracting, acquiring, and retaining talent inspired the decision to develop research on proposed strategies aimed at leveraging technology to address it.

Parallel to our work project with the Westmont Hospitality Group, this research represents a group effort that delves into the nuanced landscape of leveraging technological interventions to navigate the challenges presented by the Great Resignation within the hospitality industry, characterized by workforce attrition and its negative impact on hotel operations.

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Structured with a combination of both collaborative and individual research contributions, this study comprises four distinct yet connected individual research:

- Leveraging Technology to Navigate the Great Resignation in the Hotel Sector:
Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement
- Leveraging Technology to Navigate the Great Resignation in the Hotel Sector:
Empowering Talent Retention via Training
- Leveraging Technology to Navigate the Great Resignation in the Hotel Sector:
Streamlining Operational Workload
- Leveraging Technology to Navigate the Great Resignation in the Hotel Sector:
The Role of Leadership in Technology Adoption

Each topic presents its unique exploration within the overarching theme, followed by the product of a comprehensive group analysis, integrating the collective insights from individual research endeavors.

For an all-encompassing and accurate understanding, it is essential to consider this research alongside the respective individual topics contributed by each research group member. The result of this collaborative effort blends a multifaceted perspective, combining distinct insights and observations collected from personal research, thereby enriching the depth and breadth of the analysis presented within the present study.

1.1 Problem Statement

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, many industries have faced an enormous challenge regarding their workforce (Debata, Patnaik, and Mishra 2020; Fontinelle 2022), known as “The Great Resignation,” a current trend characterized by a substantial increase in companies’ workforce turnover rates (Lai and Wong 2020). The hospitality industry, particularly the hotel sector, is no exception and has been significantly impacted in recent years by this phenomenon,

worsening the already historically existing issues of the sector's attractiveness and ability to retain its talent.

This phenomenon, motivated by the change of modern workforce needs and preferences amplified by socio-economic shifts and globalization, not only represents a source of direct and indirect costs for companies but also poses a challenge to the organizational stability and sustainability of the hotel sector as it compromises the availability of current and future staff working in the hotel industry (Fontinelle 2022; Kwok 2022). Therefore, it is urgent to identify effective strategies to help hotel companies navigate this phenomenon and effectively attract, retain, and engage their workforce to reduce the high turnover rates currently observed in the sector.

Moreover, amidst this phenomenon, accelerated by the COVID-19 outbreak, recent technological advancements have opened new possibilities and opportunities for several industries globally, including the hotel industry (Forbes 2021; Balfe, Sharples, and Wilson 2015). Technology adoption has become increasingly popular in recent years, and it represents a critical factor in facing the ongoing challenges and continuous innovation that characterize the modern era (Soares, Mendes-Filho, and Gretzel 2021).

This research explores the potential role of technology in helping hotel companies navigate the Great Resignation phenomenon and better attract, retain, and engage hotel employees by focusing on critical areas such as digital employer branding, employee training programs, workload reduction, and leadership strategies needed for successful technology adoption.

1.2 Relevance of the Study

This research delves into current and urgent challenges confronting the hotel industry and their tangible consequences on the sector's sustainability. The hotel industry is essential to global economies, posing an expansive reach, scale, and integral role in international commerce and societal engagement. Moreover, it is one of the oldest industries worldwide (Khan et al. 2020).

In this context, it is essential to continue studying, evaluating, and strategizing alternative ways to ensure its sustained development and growth (Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022). By addressing the complex and immediate issues it faces, this research seeks not only to provide academic insights but also actionable strategies that may have the potential to fortify the hotel industry's resilience, stability, and continual relevance amidst evolving socio-economic landscapes, ensuring that future generations can experience the full scope of opportunities it offers.

Albeit tied to research-specific contexts and limitations, this research is aimed at enabling the leadership teams at Westmont Hospitality Group and other industry professionals an extra layer of information to better capacitate their teams to leverage technology to overcome persistent talent-related challenges and continuously improve their leadership teams' impact, at senior, corporate and property-levels, in the success of future technology implementations.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The focus of this research encloses four areas intending to analyze different technologies that may help fight the phenomenon stated before:

- (1)** Leveraging a robust online presence to attract and retain top talent;
- (2)** Creating effective training mechanisms to reinforce employee retention;
- (3)** Streamlining operational workflows for increased efficiency and reduced workload;
- (4)** Understanding the critical success factors and leadership best practices in implementing and optimizing new technologies;

In the joint part, an analysis of the sector attractiveness is done, combining, in the end, all individual insights to propose a comprehensive framework on how to leverage technology better to navigate the Great Resignation in the hotel sector and how to implement technology successfully.

1.4 Research Structure

The present research starts with a detailed overview of Westmont Hospitality Group, outlining its position and contribution to the international hotel landscape, followed by the specifics of the work-project collaboration with Westmont, highlighting the most relevant experiences and events. The following chapters set the stage, offering critical insights into the industry's historical significance and current state. An examination of the prevailing issue of the Great Resignation and its profound implications follows, highlighting the urgency to address talent retention challenges.

Following, an exploration of the technological landscape within the hotel industry includes an analysis of how technology is not merely a supplement but may be a fundamental tool in mitigating the previously identified challenges. Afterward, an empirical examination of the sector's attractiveness is made to provide additional insights into the research.

Following the initial group exploration, individual themes are developed, each comprised of a topic-specific literature review, diverse methods of data collection, and data analysis. Building upon these individual explorations, collective findings and insights derived are consolidated. This group analysis serves as a crucial combination of relevant information, allowing for the research of varied perspectives into a cohesive framework. Here, a comprehensive guide is proposed to facilitate technology adoption within the hospitality sector applied to the context of navigating the Great Resignation.

Concluding the research, a forward-looking perspective offers insights into anticipated industry trends and provides actionable recommendations for organizations. This section serves as a compass for future considerations, providing a roadmap for sustained growth and adaptability within the dynamic landscape of the hotel industry.

2 Work Project Context

2.1 Westmont Hospitality Group (WHG)

Westmont Hospitality Group is a multinational real estate company primarily focused on the hospitality industry, namely in the hotel sector, being an owner and operator of hotels worldwide. It is one of the most extensive global management and ownership groups, acquiring, developing, and managing hotel properties in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Majid Mangalji manages Westmont Hospitality Group, which operates on several continents and has over 500 hotels in its portfolio.

Westmont properties are mainly operated as a franchise, relying on several partnerships that the company was able to achieve with global hotel brands such as Fairmont, Hilton, Hyatt, Intercontinental (IHG), Marriott, Pan Pacific hotels, Radisson Hotels and Renaissance hotels, for example. Westmont Hospitality Group is one of the largest franchisees and co-owners of IHG and Hilton hotels worldwide.

This diversification allows Westmont to cater to a wide range of guest preferences and travel needs, with properties spanning from budget and aparthotels limited service, extended stay, and mid-market to full service, boutique, luxury hotels, and upscale resorts.

Across its properties, Westmont Hospitality Group is focused on providing valuable experiences to guests while being committed to quality and innovation.

Being a global company focusing on expansion, the company is concerned with the sustainability and competitiveness of the industry and the assurance of the implementation of excellence standards.

For that reason, not only environmental sustainability and social responsibility are a concern that Westmont Hospitality Group currently addresses, but also the attraction and retention of skilled workforce and the rapid technological advancements that characterize the modern era and that are being implemented in several industries, the hotel industry not being an exception.

2.2 Westmont Hospitality Group Work Project Overview

As stated in the introduction, the carried-out work project with Westmont targeted identifying and exploring opportunities for technology implementation within the operational framework of the hotel group and presented a focus on two key domains: guest-facing technologies and staff management solutions.

Considering the size and scale of the hotel group, with more than 500 properties in its portfolio, at the time of the project, the focus was narrowed down to four selected limited-service hotels owned and managed by Westmont Group while under the Holiday Inn and Hampton by Hilton brands, namely: Holiday Inn Oxford Circus in London, and Holiday Inn Arena Towers, Holiday Inn Express and Hampton by Hilton in Amsterdam.

Field trips to the properties were organized, and the student group spent one week in each city to get to know the properties, thoroughly diagnose the “state as is” of technology and understand first-hand the needs and wants of each one. During the field trips, the following main activities were carried out: property tours, meetings with key stakeholders (both management and operational employees), hotel operations observation, staff interviews, and competitor analysis. The field trips allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the technological landscape of each property, the leadership teams’ involvement, and implemented processes regarding the typical technology roll-out, as well as their main associated pain points.

The work project deliverables consisted of an initial diagnosis of existing technologies and associated pain points, an overview of solutions being used by competitors, and the group’s proposal of technology solutions for the following areas:

- Inside the scope of Guest Facing Technology: pre-arrival communication, check-in and check-out, concierge services, general hotel services, guest engagement, and contactless payments.

- Inside the scope of Staff Management: property management system (PMS), inter-departmental communication, shift organization, benefits and incentives, casual staff training, and automation options.

During the work project, the Holiday Inn Oxford Circus property faced a refurbishment project to convert the property from limited service to upscale. This change was considered in the project deliverables and presented an exciting opportunity to diversify the technology proposal due to the context change of the property.

Although more details cannot be disclosed due to confidentiality agreements, the delivered work project significantly contributed with insightful examples of technology, possibly being considered in the group's decisions and rollouts.

Different contexts and processes were identified, namely, the existence of a heterogeneous organization and the involvement of motivated stakeholders in diverse technology implementations, which, combined with the collectively shared difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified talent, motivated the group to develop the present research as a complementary response to the work project deliverables.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Overview of the Hotel Industry

The most significant growth in the supply-demand of tourism can be traced back to the period of “Fordism,” which extended from the 1940s until the 1960s (Christou 2022). The exact timeframe in which the airline industry experienced unparalleled growth, and travel opportunities grew to a broader spectrum of destinations, in addition to the common favorite ones of Europe and North America, by becoming more accessible to the public (Jayawardena et al. 2013). Within the same period, hotel chains, considered the hotel industry's backbone, emerged. This cleared the path for hotels to become international (Strand 1996), driven by companies such as Holiday Inn and Hilton, which, following World War II, were at the frontline

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of globalization in the hotel sector (Ivanova, Ivanov, and Magnini 2016). Hotel products and services became more standardized, with management and franchise agreements being utilized to encourage ongoing expansion (Chathoth and Olsen 2003) to target consumers from different market segments.

The evolution of hotels went through three different stages that significantly impacted the development and expansion of hotels (Economist 2013):

- Stage 1: Grand Hotels
- Stage 2: Standardization
- Stage 3: Market Segmentation

The first stage was defined as the “age of the grand hotel” (Economist 2013). In which the means of transportation were mainly ocean liners and railroads, and wealthy tourists were the main customers. This resulted in the creation of “Grand hotels” that were either independent or part of small chains, such as the known Waldorf Astoria in New York, the Ritz in Madrid, and the Savoy Hotel in London (Ivanova, Ivanov, and Magnini 2016).

The second stage witnessed the expansion of hotel chains and their internationalization with the entrance of new players in the market, such as Intercontinental, Marriott, and Hyatt hotels, which remain some of the biggest competitors today.

The third stage began with the birth of new hotel typologies, such as boutique hotels, catering to individual guests' specific and unique needs and desires (Aggett 2007). The emphasis shifted to a customer-centric approach to create distinctive and unforgettable experiences (Chathoth and Olsen 2003).

Following six decades of intense travel, the hotel sector is increasingly associated with entertainment and continuously growing. Guests are more traveled, demanding, and not easy to please; hotel managers are chosen based on their ability to blend in the business culture and

local environments, and hotel owners are more involved and knowledgeable (Jayawardena et al. 2013).

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, travel and tourism accounted for approximately 1 in 5 new jobs created and 10.3% of all global jobs. In 2022, economies started recovering from it, with travel and tourism contributing 7.6% of global GDP, only 23% under 2019 levels (World Travel & Tourism Council 2023). Currently, international tourism is set to regain almost 90% of pre-Covid levels at the end of 2023, with an estimation of 975 million international travelers between January and September and estimated receipts to reach 1.4 trillion USD until the end of the year (UNWTO 2023). According to Statista (2023) latest analysis, the leading hotel brand classified according to brand value in 2022 was Hilton, followed by other major hotel brands such as Marriott, Holiday Inn, and Hyatt. In addition, a forecast of 2,707 hotel openings is set for 2024 worldwide.

3.2 Overview of the Great Resignation in the Hotel Industry

The Great Resignation can be described as the superior rate at which workers resigned from their jobs in the spring of 2021 (Fontinelle 2022). While opinions differ amongst diverse authors on the actual start of the phenomenon (some sources state it originated from a growing trend that started one decade ago (Fuller 2022)), there is a general agreement on the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on escalating the phenomenon. This impact is considered more of a catalyst than a creator (Fuller 2022; Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022) and was mainly derived from a natural response to the pandemic, where amongst diverse factors, individuals reevaluated life priorities, reduced working hours or left the labor force entirely (Fontinelle 2022).

While the pandemic had an evident impact, the top reasons identified by quitting workers were low pay, poor working conditions, burnout, and lack of career growth opportunities. In that sense, it is suggested that most of the workforce that quit did not irrevocably do so but changed

their professional path in search of better working conditions (Fontinelle 2022; Fuller 2022; Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022).

Economists considered this a natural response to the observed increase in job openings, boosting competition among players (Fontinelle 2022). Although generally global, this phenomenon was highly predominant in the North American continent, specifically the United States of America, where “in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 47 million Americans voluntarily quit their jobs” (Fuller 2022) followed by around 50.5 million in 2022 (“JOLTS Home: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics” 2022).

Accommodation and Food Services were the industries with the highest resignation rates in the Spring of 2022 and those with the highest job openings (Fontinelle 2022). According to the 2022 Work Trend Index by Microsoft Corporation, 60% of U.S. workers hired during the pandemic stated that they were highly likely to consider changing employers in 2022.

Some sources report that the hospitality industry might have been one of the most impacted since care obligations fall disproportionately on women, and women comprise most hourly workers in hospitality, causing a higher number of quits during the pandemic. A “Women in the Workplace” report by McKinsey (2023) also found that one-third of the female workforce was considering quitting, switching jobs, or reducing working hours in 2022 due to their necessity to meet caregiving obligations (Women in the Workplace 2023; Fuller 2022).

The hospitality and tourism industries are generally characterized by a combination of intensive labor and low wages, which heavily contribute to workforce shortages and historically high turnover and absenteeism rates (Zagorsky, 2022; Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022). Although frontline operational staff plays a crucial role in the quality-of-service delivery and the success of the hotel business, directly impacting revenues, guest satisfaction, and loyalty, they frequently report emotional exhaustion, stress and burnout, lack of appreciation, and low pay. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have been a catalyst in worsening talent-related challenges,

with a survey by Joblist showing it drastically impacted job satisfaction in the hospitality industry (Joblist, 2021). However, highlighted workforce issues have existed in the hospitality and hotel sector long before the pandemic (Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022; Huertas-Valdivia, Gallego-Burín, and Montes 2019).

When the hotel sector re-opened following the pandemic lockdowns, most companies prioritized creating a safe environment for guests over the evolving needs of its employees, leading to a generalized feeling of neglect that could have a direct impact on employee performance, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Croes, Semrad, and Rivera 2021).

This trend naturally varies across hotel companies, as not all display the same challenges in attracting and retaining talent, and some organizations associated with a positive reputation and healthy workplace culture have been identified to experience below-average attrition during the Great Resignation (Baum et al. 2020; Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022).

Studies also show that attracting new talent may be a better solution to address the high attrition, as former hospitality and tourism workers appear to generally be hesitant to return to the industry, with 25% to 33% wishing to pursue a career in alternative industries (Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022). The temporary layoffs faced during lockdown often resulted in permanent decisions to opt out of the hospitality industry, motivated by the employment uncertainty aligned with the unsatisfying conditions, and has provided an opportunity for a lot of these workers to seek additional education to enable a more promising career path (Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022).

To this day, the hotel sector has not recovered from these challenges, facing a shortage of both skilled and unskilled professionals due to its remaining reputation as a less attractive, less innovative, and less tech-savvy sector (Venzin 2023).

Following this information, empirical research will follow to measure and understand the current attractiveness of the hotel sector among students and professionals from within and outside the sector.

3.3 Technological Landscape in the Hotel Industry

Technology innovations are being implemented in the hotel industry. As per Law, Sunny, and Chan (2019), it began with the first in-room telephone and hardware technology introduced to the hotel industry in 1894. Fast forwarding, after technological developments such as websites, booking engines, hotel applications, Wi-Fi networks, and software developments, the hotel industry has arrived at a new paradigm regarding technology adoption. In 2015, the first hotel operated by robots was opened, which marked an essential step towards innovation in the industry (Law, Sunny, and Chan 2019). Part of this new paradigm is several other technology innovations, where self-service technologies should be highlighted due to their numerous advantages, not only financially, but for guest service personalization (Buhalis and Leung 2018).

As mentioned, technology adoption in the hotel industry has been gradual. Law, Sunny, and Chan (2019) have divided technology development in the hotel industry into three phases. The first is characterized by hardware development and implementation. The second phase is Information Technology, characterized by software development and programming. Examples of innovations part of this phase, according to the authors, are mobile technology and apps, where services/communication is centralized and easy to access, mobile reservations instead of solely desktop reservations, self-service procedures, such as check-in, check-out, and faster connectivity. The third phase, Data Technology, has already started, allowing hotels and other businesses to automate and offer more personalized experiences due to the data available and its analysis. All these phases had technology implementation both in front of the house departments (Front Office, Food & Beverage, Housekeeping, Spa, Maintenance, among others)

and back of the house (Administration, Finance, Commercial, and HR, among others), which has been shaping the industry throughout these years of evolution.

The hotel industry, like many industries, did not put all of its trust in technological innovations when they first started to be implemented (Law, Sunny, and Chan 2019) due to its lack of credibility, as its positive consequences were still not available to the eyes of industry stakeholders. Although trust in technology adoption has been growing throughout the years (Kazandzhieva, Ilieva, and Filipova 2017), the hotel industry has the reputation of being a late adopter when it comes to adopting technology (Chan, Okumus, and Chan 2018) since owners of hotels businesses are usually cost-oriented and adopt a strategy of second mover advantage, instead of first mover advantage. This brings advantages to owners as they are less exposed to risk and can observe the first mover's actions before deciding (Grepperud and Pederson 2021). However, it delays technology adoption in the hotel industry.

Recently, the implementation of specific technologies has accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a tremendous impact on the hotel industry (Lau 2020; Jiang and Wen 2020). Several scholars have mentioned this technological impact through the COVID-19 pandemic as an advantage, and McKinsey & Company (2020) has stated that the pandemic accelerated digital transformation by ten years. In this renewed technological landscape, self-service technologies should be highlighted, as some were mandatory and pivotal for the industry's continuity during critical times of the pandemic (Pillai et al. 2021). Thus, despite this acceleration having brought technologies that represented quick-fix solutions for hotel operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, post-pandemic operations have been using and benefiting from them. Some examples are automation technologies, such as self-check-in and check-out, food ordering and pay software, and automated messaging (Kucukusta, Heung, and Hui 2014). In hotels, automation technologies were implemented mainly on the guest-facing side to reduce face-to-face interaction. However, some changes in the back of the house were

implemented, such as work-from-home technologies - video conferencing, and communication software (Chi, Saldamli, and Gursoy 2021). The latter-mentioned technologies were mainly used by management-level employees who do not need to be face-to-face with guests.

Therefore, despite being a late adopter in comparison with other industries, the hotel industry is already implementing technologies in several areas.

Specific technological innovations such as automation robots, generative and predictive AI, and big data, are essential for the industry's future (Law, Sunny, and Chan 2019). If implemented, hotel competitiveness can be positively impacted (Chevers and Spencer 2017).

3.4 The Role of Technology in Addressing the Great Resignation

Following the impact of the Great Resignation phenomenon on the existing issues of the hotel sector, a question arises on the potential within technology to possibly address it.

The Great Resignation, especially the one continuously experienced in hospitality, can generally be dissected by the workforce wanting change: a better lifestyle or improved working conditions and pay (Kite-Powell 2021).

The primary problem with this scenario seems to be that larger companies are set up in a way that hinders appropriate response: the lack of data, insight, and structural agility to make better-informed decisions on how much they can offer adapted working models and realistically increase salaries or safely modify pay, where needed, without compromising rules, is lacking (Kite-Powell 2021). Experts identify data and technology as the tools to pave the way for changing this dynamic. Data and technology can be applied to improve and enable organizations to accurately assess the present rewards and benefits structure across multiple businesses and properties to support the development of proactive, strategic approaches (Kite-Powell 2021).

While technology is not a quick fix for shortcomings, diverse opportunities exist to tackle talent attraction and retention.

Regarding automation, its increasing adoption is both fueled as a response and a consequence of the labor shortages brought about by the Great Resignation, as many companies cannot fully operate under their current labor conditions, which is also true in the hotel sector.

Long working hours and work-life balance are directly connected, as automation technology poses several opportunities to address it directly, with existing literature confirming its potential to reduce workload by eliminating repetitive, monotonous tasks (Forbes 2021; Balfe, Sharples, and Wilson 2015).

The lack of or the inconsistent nature of current employee training in the hotel sector is mentioned as an obstacle to employee retention, providing a further avenue for scholars to study how technology can further improve training (Ameliya and Febriansyah 2017). Providing access to career growth paths and mentorship opportunities is easily done today via digital platforms. Personalizing and delivering training is also increasingly more accessible and easier to implement in fully digital or hybrid contexts, accommodating diverse needs (Wickstead 2023). E-learning platforms allow employees to improve their skills remotely, making the process easier and more user-friendly, as per Kim et al. (2011). Artificial intelligence has been shaping employee training in several industries, as it personalizes training to each employee (Maity 2019), bringing employee engagement and value. Moreover, employees will feel valued as companies invest in their professional careers.

Optimized and improved onboarding experiences powered by the proper technological structure can impact employees' experience. Harvard Business Review estimates that over 60% of managerial tasks have the potential to be replaced by automation, leaving managers more available to focus on employee experience management, further supporting employees' professional development goals, work-life balance, and other necessities (Shapiro 2022).

Together with employee turnover ratio or talent retention, the hotel sector faces challenges with talent attraction. As automation technologies and training can be addressed as potential

solutions for talent retention, other solutions can be investigated to attract talent better. Employer branding is a potential solution, as it is known to be a significant influence in the recruitment process (Wilden, Gudergan, and Lings 2010). Moreover, employer branding has been evolving to a digital paradigm, which has made communication much prompter and more updated (Chhabra and Sharma 2012), able to reach higher numbers of potential applicants through several digital channels (Mičík and Mičudová 2018). Leveraging technology as a platform to build stronger connections between employees and the organization holds the potential to improve working environments and morale (Wickstead 2023).

As per Forbes (2022), technology is critical for employee retention and attraction and should be considered a tool part of the solution. However, after highlighting potential technological solutions for employee attraction and retention, it is essential to mention the role of leadership in its implementation, which should be active and prepared to embrace innovation with their teams, as technology adoption will continuously increase, regardless of the size of companies or the industries they are part of (Cortellazzo, Bruni, and Zampieri 2019).

4 Methodology

Different data collection methods were used to gather relevant information about the attractiveness of the hotel sector and to collect insights to propose a comprehensive framework on how to leverage technology better to navigate the Great Resignation in the hotel sector.

To assess the sector's attractiveness, quantitative data was collected through a survey created via Microsoft Forms. The survey was sent to university students and professionals currently employed in the labor market in different industries in Portugal.

In the first part, the survey included questions regarding the demographics of the respondents. Then, questions assessing relevant factors and challenges when choosing a job were addressed. After, questions specific to the hotel sector were assessed, such as the interest in pursuing a hotel career and perceptions of the hotel as an employer/ potential employer, as well as possible

appealing aspects of the sector and perceptions of career growth opportunities. The last part assessed perceptions of the best strategies hotels could implement to attract and retain talent. Survey questions were asked in a multiple-choice, multiple-response, and 5-point rating scale format.

After closing the survey, the final sample consisted of 135 responses for analysis.

To create a comprehensive framework on how to leverage technology to better navigate the Great Resignation in the hotel sector, quantitative and qualitative data were collected through surveys and interviews with professionals in the hotel industry. The methodology used to assess each part of the framework is explained more in-depth within the study of each topic: digital employer branding, training, workload, and leadership.

5 Data Analysis: Attractiveness of the Sector

The demographics of survey respondents were first analyzed (Table 1 in Appendix). Please refer to the Appendix for further Tables and Graphics mentioned.

Most participants are between 18 and 35 years old. 72,6% of total respondents are between 18 and 24 years old, while participants between 25 and 34 years old represent 18,5% of the sample. The gender distribution of respondents is relatively balanced, with 52,6% male and 47,4% female respondents. Regarding education level, the group is split mainly between bachelor's (43.7%) and master's degree holders (47.4%) and answered mainly by hospitality students, who represented 61,5% of the sample.

After being asked about their interest in a hospitality career, 54,1% of respondents said they were not interested. In comparison, only 31,1% stated an interest in pursuing a professional path in the hotel sector (Graphic 1).

The most popular reasons for being interested in pursuing a hotel career indicated by respondents were guest interaction (25,3%) and work environment (24%) (Graphic 2), also confirmed by the collection of qualitative data where respondents mentioned "passion for the

industry and dealing with guests” and the existence of a “multicultural environment.” On the other hand, qualitative data collected concluded that low salaries, high working hours, lack of attractive work conditions such as flexibility, and lack of career growth opportunities were indicated as reasons for not having an interest in pursuing a hotel career.

When asked about important factors they consider when choosing a job, salary was the most chosen option (23,4%). In comparison, career growth (21,2%) and work-life balance (19,1%) were also indicated by most respondents as necessary (Graphic 3). Regarding how these factors align with actual opportunities in the hotel sector, 55,6% of respondents found a misalignment (Graphic 4).

Career growth opportunities were only perceived as good by 27,4% of respondents (Graphic 5). Moreover, the general perception of hotels as employers was considered “Somewhat poor” by 50,4% of respondents and “Extremely poor” by 5,9% (Graphic 6), which shows the low attractiveness of the hotel industry, confirming expectations from the literature.

When asked about strategies hotels could implement to attract and retain talent, the three most indicated were the existence and promotion of growth opportunities (22,8%), better salary compensations (22,3%), and good leadership (19,2%) (Graphic 7), strategies that are aligned with the factors considered as important when choosing a job by respondents.

To conclude, a concerning lack of interest among young, educated individuals in pursuing careers within the hotel industry is identified. Reasons for this disinterest include low salaries, demanding work conditions, and limited career growth opportunities. Respondents perceive a significant misalignment between factors they value in a job and what the hotel sector offers. This discrepancy contributes to a negative perception of hotels as employers. To improve attractiveness, the industry should address these issues to better align with the expectations of the current workforce, yet if not possible, other strategies may be considered to help change this perception, namely leveraging technology to tackle attraction and retention.

6 Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Problem Statement

As stated before, the hotel industry is enduring significant labor shortages (Liu-Lastres, Wen, and Huang 2022). Within this context, there is a need to implement innovative strategies for attracting and engaging talent since the traditional human resources methods have not sufficiently addressed the problem. Employer branding, a concept that has gained prominence within human resources strategies, is essential in many industries. With technological advancements, digital employer branding (DEB) initiatives have emerged, leveraging various digital platforms to enhance an organization's image as an attractive employer. However, how the hotel sector addresses these initiatives presents room for further research.

6.1.2 Relevance of the Study

There is a need for hotels to adapt and strategically use digital initiatives to secure top talent, as available talented employees are becoming a rare find (Bharwani and Butt 2012). Various studies have explored the broader concepts of employer branding and its importance in securing a competitive edge in the talent market of many industries. However, when focusing on the hotel sector, there is less comprehensive research addressing practices related to digital employer branding based on primary data. Therefore, this research aims to contribute valuable knowledge by understanding how digital employer branding strategies are being leveraged within the hotel industry with insights from existing studies and first-hand insights.

6.1.3 Objectives of the Research

By examining how firms exhibit their employer brand in their job postings, Elving et al. (2012) suggested that future studies focus on how employer branding initiatives affect attractiveness in their particular industry. Following this, this study examines the hotel industry and its unique characteristics, addressing limitations from previous studies that exclusively rely on secondary

data. Therefore, the objectives of this study are: **(1)** Analyze how DEB strategies are currently being implemented in the hotel sector; **(2)** Explore the extent to which DEB strategies impact talent attraction, engagement, and retention in the hotel industry.

With the main goal of answering two main research questions:

- **RQ₁:** What digital employer branding strategies are currently being implemented by companies in response to the recent resignations in the hotel industry?
- **RQ₂:** How does implementing digital employer branding initiatives impact talent attraction and engagement in the hotel sector?

6.1.4 Research Structure

Two approaches were considered to address the objectives. A literature review was made in Chapter 6.2, adopting a funnel approach (starting with broader aspects of the topic and gradually narrowing to the specific topic addressed), referring to the main concepts related to the study. Afterward, semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals in the hotel sector, with the outcomes shown in Chapter 6.4, concluding with a gathering of findings in Chapter 6.5, and its limitations on Chapter 6.6, including avenues for further research.

6.2 Literature Review

6.2.1 Employer Branding and its Position in Human Resources Management

One of the main goals of branding a product is to assist consumers in differentiating between brands in a particular product category, highlighting the potential benefits of purchasing and using that specific product. For this, a company must create brand components such as a unique name, a sign, a creative design, or a combination of them, whenever it brands its goods (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004). These components help customers understand “what” the product is and “why” they should buy it rather than any comparable goods existing in the same market (Keller 2013). A company can build distinctive brand associations through the development and management of the brand's core aspects, leading to the creation of a positive brand equity (BE)

that, according to Zinkhan and Aaker (1992), is a collection of brand assets and liabilities a brand has (e.g., name, design) that increase or decrease the value a product or service gives to a firm and its customers. One may argue that a company's brand has good BE when consumers compare two similar products - one branded and one without - and prefer the branded one. Therefore, building a strong awareness and image associated with a specific brand, particularly, its uniqueness and distinctiveness, strongly influences the differential response (Keller 1993). Branding can also have its principles applied in the field of human resources by being used to differentiate individuals, places, and companies, according to Peters (1999), using the term "employer branding" (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004). In this case, the "product" is the package of benefits given to an employee, the "consumer" is the potential or current employee, and the "competitors" are the other firms looking to recruit the same employee (Cascio and Graham 2016; Backhaus and Tikoo 2004).

6.2.2 Definition of Employer Branding and Its Historical Evolution

The term "Employer brand" (EB) was formally published in 1996 by the pioneers Ambler and Barrow (1996), as a collection of psychological, functional, and economic benefits given by employment. Meaning it is the number of benefits given to an employee and linked with a certain job and a company (Ambler and Barrow 1996). It is also considered a company's overall effort to externally communicate the attractiveness of its workplace (Lloyd 2002), by demonstrating the values, behaviors, and policies applied to attract and motivate individuals (Dell 2001). As stated by Lievens (2007), EB strategies are divided into three key levels: **(1)** Starting by describing a company's value through the Employer Value Proposition (EVP), by creating an understanding of the unique value an organization provides to employees through its unique characteristics such as organizational culture, management style, image of current employees and perceptions of the quality of the services provided (Sullivan 2002). It is the initial message communicated by a brand and is meant to be a precise portrait of what it has to

offer to its employees (Eisenberg et al. 2001). **(2)** Then, the company markets the message to its targeted talent pipeline (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004) using *external branding*. **(3)** Lastly, *internal branding* is applied, which emphasizes the need to integrate the promises made to individuals before hiring into the firm's actual workplace scenario (Frook 2001).

Literature on this topic states that EB and corporate and product branding share commonalities, while also differing in two critical ways. Firstly, EB describes the company's identity as an employer and is employment-specific. Secondly, unlike corporate and product branding, which mainly focus on external audiences, EB targets internal and external audiences (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004). Also, it fosters emotional attachment, contentment, and loyalty among the current workforce when their opinions are valued, being less likely to leave unless confronted with stressful work environments, job discontent, or a lack of commitment from the employer (Davies 2008).

6.2.3 Employer Attractiveness and its Five Dimensions

Experts have studied the dimensions of Employer Attractiveness (EA) since its creation by Ambler and Barrow (1996). Years later, Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005) built the EA scale, which included the previous dimensions within their own: **(1)** *Interest value*: measuring how much a person is attracted to an employer who offers a challenging and exciting job in a stimulating environment, fostering creativity and innovation. **(2)** *Social value*: estimating the attraction for a pleasant work environment fostering good relationships and team spirit. **(3)** *Economic value*: rating the importance of factors such as benefits package, career growth opportunities, job security, and salary. **(4)** *Development value*: evaluating the need for a workplace offering confidence, acknowledgment, and experience.

(5) *Application value*: measuring the value of using skills and knowledge to benefit others in an altruistic work environment (Berthon, Ewing, and Hah 2005). This scale was often applied in later research featuring how important it is to fully comprehend employer attractiveness

values to implement EB strategies successfully (Alniaçık and Alniaçık 2012). Moreover, various studies have stated the importance of job values and organizational characteristics for a firm attractiveness as an employer (Lievens, Van Hove, and Schreurs 2005), connecting organizational attractiveness to the person-organization fit theory (P-O fit), which indicates that individuals prefer to work in a company that shares the same interests, beliefs, culture, and values (Edwards 2009).

6.2.4 Employer Branding Practices in the Hospitality Sector

As stated before, one of the critical levels for implementing a successful EB strategy is creating a strong EVP, and the hotel industry has a low one (Baum 2015; Janta et al. 2011). Without a clear EB, individuals will probably lean on the industry's negative stereotypes regarding job quality (Burmman, Schaefer, and Maloney 2007). To fight this, hotel managers need to focus on elements that are essential for talent management, such as career progression, training opportunities, salaries, and work-life balance (to the extent the industry can provide) (Bharwani and Butt 2012; Frye et al. 2020). A study by Worsfold (1999) identified that human resource management (HRM) practices were ranked last among hotel priorities. Even though a lot has changed, the hotel sector continues to struggle to attract and retain talent. Hotels can strategize paying above the industry average, place a higher value on specific job functions, and highlight the industry's advantages and benefits: bonuses, personal development, training provided, and discounts for hotel stays that already exist (Gehrels and de Looij 2011). Nevertheless, attempts to improve the industry's image are being made. The Hospitality Rising collaborative movement formed by Mark McCulloch set in motion a campaign - #RiseFastWorkYoung – (Figure 1 in Appendix), to entice youthful talent to work in the sector, having as investors big names, such as Hilton, and having successfully increased the number of job applications (Hospitality Rising 2023). Another example is Hilton's first large-scale employer brand campaign – “Every Job Makes the Stay” – (Figure 2 in Appendix), featuring the variety of

careers available in hotels and focusing on the Hilton team members “who make the stay” (Betsymiratsky 2023), being ranked as number two in Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work for in 2022 (Great Place To Work® 2022), and proving that a strong EB image that highlights the many positive aspects of the sector, currently unnoticed and underutilized, is a significant step towards addressing the talent shortage that pressures the long-term viability of the hotel industry.

6.2.5 The Digital Transformation of Human Resources: Industry 4.0

The digital transformation brought by a variety of innovative technologies is known as the fourth industrial revolution, or “smart industry” (Thomas et al. 2020), and due to the changes in the business landscape, human resources (HR) functions had to evolve and adapt to the market demands. The new shift to a 4.0 globalization led to the progressive digitalization of HRM processes, also stated as HRM 4.0, creating an opportunity to encourage the sector to adopt digital systems and transformational solutions (Isari, Bissola, and Imperatori 2019). HRM is a logical and strategic approach to managing an organization’s workforce (Armstrong and Taylor 2020). Combined with disruptive technology, its strategic relevance for enhanced corporate performance grows (Stone and Dulebohn 2013). Technologies can completely change the HRM landscape (Bondarouk and Ruël 2009; Strohmeier 2020). Social media, cloud computing, big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are the advancements with the most significant impact on HR (Waddill 2018). A large part of candidate recruitment and selection is conducted through social media, streamlining the process of notifying job vacancies, skill evaluation, and profile checks (Bersin 2017). Playing an essential role in shaping and spreading an employer’s storytelling (Waddill 2018). Big data analytics helps smooth hiring processes, evaluate engagement patterns, and measure satisfaction levels, providing crucial data for targeted EB strategies and personalized candidate experiences. Cloud-based technology helps HRM tasks automation, employing the usage of human capital

management software systems that process data and generate insights (Waddill 2018) while the integration of IoT enables advanced performance management, job design, and employee tracking (Priyashantha, De Alwis, and Welmilla 2022). Businesses now understand the value of having a strong EB, and technology allows various innovative approaches to implement EB-associated strategies (Thomas et al. 2020).

6.2.6 Digital Employer Branding

The development of the internet has revolutionized the way people look for jobs and apply for them (Cober et al. 2003), quickly being able to research employers and decide where they want to work while easily sharing their opinions about companies, possibly affecting a firm's positioning in the market (Cascio and Graham 2016). Businesses are unable to grow without the necessary talent and skills and, in today's world, traditional methods of recruiting and engaging are not enough anymore (Mičík and Mičudová 2018). Companies can strategize their EB campaigns in various digital ways, from social media (e.g., LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, X), recruitment websites (e.g., Indeed, Glassdoor, Job Teaser), to their company websites, representing a more comprehensive source of information for job seekers than conventional methods such as job fairs and printed job advertisements (Allen, Mahto, and Otondo 2007). This method is called Digital Employer Branding (DEB), consisting of a series of initiatives carried out by the company to enhance its reputation as an employer and executed using digital technologies (Kurek 2021). This study focuses mainly on the internet tool of social media, whose significance has been steadily growing over time (Dineen et al. 2007). When a company uses social media to share accurate and comprehensive information about its work culture, career progression, and business ethics, it can establish a positive brand perception and be perceived as attractive (Zoghbi and Aoun 2016). According to a Glassdoor (2021) survey conducted with 1162 respondents in the US, 68% of Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) and 54% of Gen X (born between 1965 and 1980) specifically visit an employer's social media

page to assess the company's EB. Beyond this, social media usage can also benefit current employees' empowerment and loyalty if the brands' external message does not have a big gap with the experienced reality within the organization (Lissaneddine, El Manzani, and El Idrissi 2021). Maintaining talent requires honoring the commitments made by the company before hiring (Kapoor 2010). Figure 3, in the Appendix, visually represents a model of the discussed concepts in the study.

6.3 Methodology

The research goals were carried out by collecting primary and secondary data. Qualitative data was gathered through eight in-depth semi-structured interviews with human resources and employer branding experts in the hotel industry. The interviews were conducted with a pre-set of open-ended questions, and the selection of interviewees was carefully done from international to Portuguese hotel chains, offering a broad overview of the implications of DEB. The interviews were recorded with the professional's permission and later transcribed, following a line-by-line review and coding of the content with MAXQDA software. A well-organized result analysis was done through rigorous analysis, creating a clear and comprehensive display of results, in addition to the previous literature review.

6.4 Data Analysis and Results

6.4.1 Introduction to Interview Analysis

As discussed previously, the need to attract, engage, and retain talent is crucial when the hotel sector suffers from growing challenges. Each interview contributes significantly with pieces of information that fit together to create an image of the current state and challenges of EB in hotels, with the primary goal of gathering insights and experiences of individuals actively involved in this topic.

6.4.2 Participants Profile and Role

Representatives from well-known hotel chains contributed to this research with insights from their unique corporate cultures and operational directives. Perspectives were gathered from an HR director at Hilton Hotels, a General Manager at SANA Hotels, a Talent Acquisition manager at Marriott Hotels, HR directors at both Intercontinental Hotels and Discovery Hotel Management, an Accor Hotels Employer Branding director, and a Talent Acquisition manager from IHG Hotels and Resorts.

6.4.3 Participants Understanding of (Digital) Employer Branding

To comprehend the interviewers' perspectives on digital employer branding, the interviewer defined DEB as a strategy that leverages digital platforms to create a compelling employer image and communicate its values and culture, tailoring its approach to different talent target audiences. The definition was accepted by the entirety of the interviewees and expanded upon. The hospitality leaders agreed with the definition and emphasized the importance of creating authenticity and a coherent narrative when digitally representing a brand, distinguishing it from competitors, and captivating candidates to become part of the organization. The need for a company's culture to "deliver on its promise" was highlighted, stating that the message needs to match the real workplace experience, and managing expectations is essential. These opinions align with the consistent academic perspectives that support that an organization's online identity needs to align with its actual reality. The interviews also covered the differences in maturity of DEB strategies between international hotel chains and smaller national chains, the second ones being in a preliminary implementation phase. It was also corroborated that DEB should be multifaceted, using diverse platforms to engage with talent.

6.4.5 Participants Perception of Industry-Level Talent Attraction Challenges

It is widely acknowledged by the interviewees that talent attraction is a challenge the industry faces, with regional differences impacting the labor market. In the UK, the human resources

director at Hilton mentions Brexit as a turning point that reduced talent sourcing from Europe to a domestic focus, aggravated by an educational system that does not encourage hospitality. In Portugal, the general manager at SANA Hotels recognizes the “old school” approach to talent attraction among hoteliers and focuses on the need to change the narrative in hotels with the contribution of key stakeholders such as schools and tourism organizations, also stating that relying on foreign talent with less financial goals is not a sustainable approach. Demographics were also stated as a factor for the talent shortage, given the example of Germany, such as the aging population and the non-competitive benefits provided by the industry. Other interviewees described the current climate as “terrible,” with the COVID-19 pandemic aggravating the existing issues, leading to a talent exodus to other sectors with better benefits such as work-life balance, better working hours and salaries, quoting, a mismatch between the incoming workforce expectations and the benefits provided by the industry, particularly concerning entry-level positions and career progression.

6.4.6 Participants Perception on the Relevance and Effectiveness of DEB

Experts perceive the importance and effectiveness of DEB strategies as a multifaceted approach. The Hilton participant emphasizes the need for solid digital messaging across various channels to combat common negative conceptions of the industry, indicating DEB as a vital strategy. However, the importance of having governmental and educational support for creating a sustainable talent pipeline is also referred to. Similarly, the SANA Hotel interviewee focuses on the role of leadership in DEB, stating that personal branding and engagement of leaders on platforms such as LinkedIn can significantly increase recruitment efforts. The Marriott Hotel expert states that DEB’s effectiveness varies by market and the amount of competition within that same market, suggesting that a tailored approach is necessary. This view is reinforced by the Accor and IHG hotels interviewees, noting that while DEB is a critical factor for reaching younger demographics that favor digital engagement, it should also operate alongside

traditional recruitment methods such as continuous presence in job and tourism fairs, indicating a need for a hybrid approach. At Intercontinental Hotels, the strategy focuses on a holistic approach, embracing recruitment but focusing more on internal employees, celebrating achievements, team morale, and growth. Discovery Hotel Management also states that although DEB can attract candidates, it must be backed up by better tangible benefits and salaries.

6.4.7 Participants Involvement in the Implementation of DEB Strategies

The state of implementation of DEB strategies in the different hotel companies shows a mixed scenery, each considering their particular needs and opportunities. The HR director at Hilton showcases their approach with their DEB campaign “Every job makes the stay,” being brought to life across various social media platforms, also emphasizing their internal engagement strategy with the use of an intranet platform called “Lobby,” which connects Hilton members globally, as well as a partnership with “Work Jam” to facilitate workforce flexibility and communication. At SANA hotels, the focus is on the “Merytu” platform, enhancing the connection between talent and their available job opportunities. Their DEB brand strategy is centralized, allowing for a streamlined talent placement across their many brands. Intercontinental Hotels focuses on retaining and developing current employees, aiming to create a productive and fulfilling work environment, leveraging digital platforms for professional development, including the IHG University and accelerator programs to help employees progress in their careers. Accor Hotels focuses on a hybrid strategy by applying its digital presence through the “Heart of Hospitality” channels (from social media storytelling to podcasts with the CEO) and in-person recruitment fairs. It also tests new innovative methods, such as WhatsApp as a new recruitment source. The Marriott Hotel expert focuses on regional market strategies, emphasizing the impact of storytelling by highlighting employees' experiences on social media and creating strong campaigns on job platforms such as “Hotel Career” and “Hoga Page.” The IHG participant states that every brand has a distinct EVP,

personalized application methods are being trialed, and the current focus is on programmatic targeting by partnering with the “Placed app” company to create a more personalized experience. Overall, companies are aware of the negative consequences of not showing a digital presence and the need for a diversified approach that aligns the companies’ goals with the workforce's expectations.

6.4.8 Platform Effectiveness and Selection

Companies use digital platforms differently, and based on the insights gathered, their decisions are made based on targeted demographics, available budget, and company goals, which can differ across countries, even within the same company. Each hotel is developing its website to varying degrees, with a more significant emphasis on developing career pages for all job levels. LinkedIn is prioritized for professional engagement with more senior and mid-level roles, while Instagram and TikTok target a younger audience, Twitter is excluded by being considered less engaging. Mass-market platforms such as “Net Empregos,” “Merytu,” “Hosco,” “Placed app,” “Caterer,” and “Konunu” are shown to be effective in various countries for a more generalist reach of talent (primarily operational roles).

6.4.9 Experienced Challenges in Implementing DEB

While DEB is crucial for the success of modern recruitment, its implementation also brings some challenges. According to the interviewees, these range from educating traditional HR teams on effectively utilizing the various digital channels, to training staff to understand content relevance and keep a continuous communication flow, while maintaining brand coherence across hotels. The need to align DEB strategies with the target audience’s preferred platforms is also considered a challenge since this can change according to demographics and region and due to the need for platform-specific content. In addition, generational diversity poses the challenge of different engagement preferences, with many senior talents still favoring face-to-face interactions, suggesting a need to balance digital initiatives with traditional communication

methods to ensure inclusivity. Skepticism around the effectiveness of DEB strategies and concerns about the capacity to execute them is also noticed, emphasizing the need for adequate staffing and tools often lacking in the HR department. Lastly, budget constraints are highlighted since many platforms are costly, and the return on investment is not immediate.

6.4.10 Impact of Implemented DEB Strategies on Talent Management

When asked the participants if the implementation of DEB strategies impacted or not the attraction, engagement, and retention of talent, the answers were overall positive but also stated that it is not a singularly effective strategy. DEB has been proven to attract diverse candidates and is particularly effective among younger generations. Despite this, other methods such as word-of-mouth and employee referrals were proven to be equally important to attract talent, with a higher likeliness to be engaged and stay longer within the company. DEB also plays a vital role in increasing talent engagement; featuring real stories about employees in campaigns fosters a sense of pride in them and increases their connection with the brand. Regarding retention, quantifying the role of DEB remains challenging and could not be easily answered by the interviewees. While there is an observable increase in applications and hires, long-term retention considers other benefits that have a more significant weight, such as salary, training, and the creation of a supportive and inclusive workspace culture.

6.4.11 Participants Measurement Strategies on the Effectiveness of DEB

To assess DEB's efficiency, a robust set of metrics and key performance indicators are needed to capture the tangible impact of such strategies. Many interviewees noted a significant increase in CVs per job post since the start of DEB implementation. It emphasized the importance of engagement metrics such as the number of impressions, click-through rates (having to be above 0.5 to be considered a successful campaign), the drop-off rate, and the cost-per-hire (relating the campaign cost with actual hires done through it). For the companies that used outsourcing firms for DEB, monthly meetings with platform account managers to review detailed statistics

were proven efficient, allowing better-informed decision-making. According to the interviewees, implementing DEB strategies also translated to increased engagement, visits, and clicks on their official websites, with a 30% increase in applications, according to IHG hotel participants. In contrast, some interviewees did not provide specific data, suggesting either a lack of measurement tools or the premature stage of their DEB strategies. Overall, there seems to be a consensus on the importance of analyzing metrics to evaluate implemented strategies, even though not all participants have them yet.

6.5 Conclusion

The research aimed to answer two final research questions toward understanding the implementation of DEB strategies and their impact on talent dynamics. Regarding *RQ1*, the findings reveal a proactive adoption of DEB strategies by most hotel companies, pointing out that hotels apply them to their HR practices. However, there is still a significant gap in adoption between big and smaller hotel companies, mainly due to the financial support needed to adopt these strategies. Considering *RQ2*, the evidence gathered suggests that DEB strategies significantly increased talent attraction and engagement, in which campaigns that take on authentic employee storytelling cultivate a sense of pride and affiliation with the company. However, the retention aspect remains challenging to quantify.

Overall, experts widely recognize the need for an authentic narrative of their brand and aligning the online perception with the real workplace environment. Talent attraction and retention remain a challenge due to factors such as COVID-19, Brexit, demographical changes, and better benefits in other industries. DEB is seen as a great tool to overcome industry negative perceptions by using a tailored approach focused on each market requirement, and a hybrid strategy combining traditional and digital methods has proven to be the best sustainable option. Companies are proven to be at different stages of DEB implementation, with big hotel chains far more advanced than SMEs. The chosen digital platforms must consider specific targeting,

demographics, and company goals. Some challenges in implementing DEB strategies include educating HR teams to be experts on digital tools while maintaining brand coherence throughout the whole brand and knowing how to align strategies with the targeted audiences that can vary widely. Additionally, it can be stated that digital employer branding strategies have positively impacted the attraction and engagement of a diverse set of talent. However, retention depends on more significant factors, such as better benefits, in which the hospitality sector cannot yet compete with other industries.

6.6 Study Limitations and Avenues for Further Research

The present study also faces some limitations. Firstly, the size of the interviewee sample is relatively small and mainly composed of representatives from some large hotel chains, meaning that the insights gathered do not fully include the strategies and experiences across the entire industry. Secondly, the requirement for partial anonymity of the interviewees also restricted the level of detail in the analysis. Thirdly, when analyzing the measurement of the strategies implemented, measuring the direct benefits they represented on the brands was sometimes difficult. Moreover, the dependence on subjective responses from the participants possibly induces biases. Therefore, the findings presented should be considered indicative rather than definitive.

There is still an open path for future research on this topic. Expanding the research to include independent hotels or a more significant sample of SMEs may provide different results. Including quantitative methods could also provide a higher degree of robustness and reach. As the war on talent continues, applying creative and strategic solutions is necessary. Digital Employer Branding is increasingly demanding, and its benefits are more tangible. Continued research will be essential to lead the sector in navigating the complexities of the labor market, ensuring resilience and adaptability.

7 Collaborative Analysis of Individual Findings

This chapter presents a joint interpretation of individual findings applied to the problem statement of the research, comprising a comparison and synthesis of commonalities and differences in the findings across the individual chapters.

This chapter aims to answer:

- a) Are companies in the hotel sector aware of the opportunities that lie with technology implementation to address the challenges brought by the Great Resignation?

From the companies surveyed and interviewed in the individual chapters, there is reason to state that most hotel organizations are aware of the existing technology opportunities to address talent-related challenges worsened by the Great Resignation.

From the context of digital employer branding, the participants interviewed are aware of the opportunities presented by technology, especially using digital platforms such as social media, job posting websites, and career pages to attract and engage with talent. However, they recognize that the hotel sector is far behind in terms of innovative approaches in comparison to other industries due to a more traditional mindset and the financial availability needed to set their presence in motion within digital platforms.

From the context of training, hotel companies are aware of the potential of technology to benefit the training experience. According to the study, 75,3% of respondents indicated that training programs and career development opportunities are important factors that affect their commitment to the company and, therefore, reduce their turnover intentions. Moreover, 57,4% of respondents agreed that career advancement is more important than monetary incentives.

This shows the importance that training programs, by increasing employees' skills and enhancing their career growth, have in helping to fight the Great Resignation in the hotel sector. It was then possible to conclude that technology-based training, increasing training engagement, and enhancing employees' perceptions of organizational investment in their

development and future career growth can help increase job satisfaction and reduce employee turnover intentions.

From the context of automation, some of the biggest challenges faced by the workforce, such as intensive workload, stress, and poor work-life balance, were identified as predominant in operational departments, essentially Front Office, Food and Beverage, Maintenance, and Housekeeping, and data collected showed a variety of automation technologies implemented across diverse properties, in a possible effort to tackle these challenges.

Thus, hotels seem to be aware of opportunities for technology implementation despite existing room to grow.

- b) Are companies investing in these technologies to overcome the challenges brought by the Great Resignation in hospitality?

Hotel companies seem to be investing more in technology that directly impacts talent-related challenges. However, they are still behind other industries in regard to investment allocation.

Hotel companies are starting to fund the referred technologies and DEB strategies as part of their expansive talent management focus. Larger hotel companies are more open to it and are already implementing strategies, while smaller companies still focus a lot on traditional recruitment options.

According to the data collected, online training was the most popular method among respondents. Therefore, technology-based training is being used, followed by in-class and on-the-job training. Although still not very significant, virtual reality training was also used by 7,4% of the respondents, showing evidence of the increasing implementation of innovative training technology by the hotel sector.

Regarding online training, while basic learning management systems were predominantly used, more advanced platforms such as social learning platforms and adaptive learning were also used

for employee training, further showing companies' increasing implementation of technology-based training.

Additionally, hotels surveyed indicate investing in automation technologies, betting on innovation, and fighting financial and human resources obstacles. According to the data collected, hotels use automation technologies to streamline workload. It seems to tackle employee retention by decreasing workload, improving work-life balance, and increasing employee commitment.

From a leadership research context, the focus of the interviews was not on which technologies but instead on the role of leadership in successfully implementing new technologies and positively influencing their adoption. Still, the interviewees' insights suggest that the focus can often be on implementing the latest technologies available rather than considering the specific business needs and challenges first. In this sense, if one of the central business challenges is attracting and retaining talent, that may not be one of the first considerations when planning new technology rollouts.

c) Were these investments successful?

From the context of digital employer branding, the success of the strategies varies, with several companies reporting positive outcomes. The combination of both digital and traditional strategies proved to be the best choice. A significant increase in curriculums per job post was identified since the implementation of digital strategies, as well as more substantial engagement with the current workforce through the execution of storytelling with real employee stories.

Technology-based training was proven to potentially increase training engagement and employee's perceptions of organizational investment in their development and future career growth, factors that are negatively correlated with employees' turnover intentions. However, it was not possible to conclude that mainly using technology-based training could lead to higher

training satisfaction. Therefore, for successful implementation a hybrid approach to training is recommended.

Regarding automation technologies, challenges brought or worsened by the Great Resignation seem to be being addressed and partially mitigated, as a positive correlation between automation technology, workload, work-life balance, and employee commitment was identified.

From the context of leadership, the insights showed that implemented technologies' success is sometimes somewhat subjective. A relatively poor job of measuring success was identified. While opinions on this topic vary, there was a consensus that improvements can be made regarding accurately measuring the success of technology implementation. This practice needs a higher rigor to represent the actual impact generated.

d) Reasons for success: do they align with theoretical studies on each topic?

The successes described by implementing digital employer branding strategies, in the interviewed companies, are consistent with the theoretical studies on the topic. As seen in the interview results, strategies related to integrating employees within the campaigns, leveraging technologies for a more targeted messaging, and fostering a culture of internal recognition are aligned with the studies stating that a strong employer brand can significantly impact attraction, and engagement. The continuous and authentic storytelling content was emphasized on both sides (theory and real cases). The literature also states that there is a need for both external and internal approaches to employer branding. Although the study understood that digital employer branding helps with attraction and engagement, the retention aspect was not fully and homogenously agreed upon.

According to the data collected, training engagement is positively correlated with job satisfaction and negatively correlated with turnover intentions, relations that are enhanced by the use of technology-based training as it increases employees' training engagement. Furthermore, the use of technology-based training enhances employees' perceptions of

organizational investment in their development and future career growth, which can lead to employees acting reciprocally and, therefore, reduced turnover intentions. These factors align with theoretical studies regarding training programs that show that they are essential in increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover intentions, as well as with Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005).

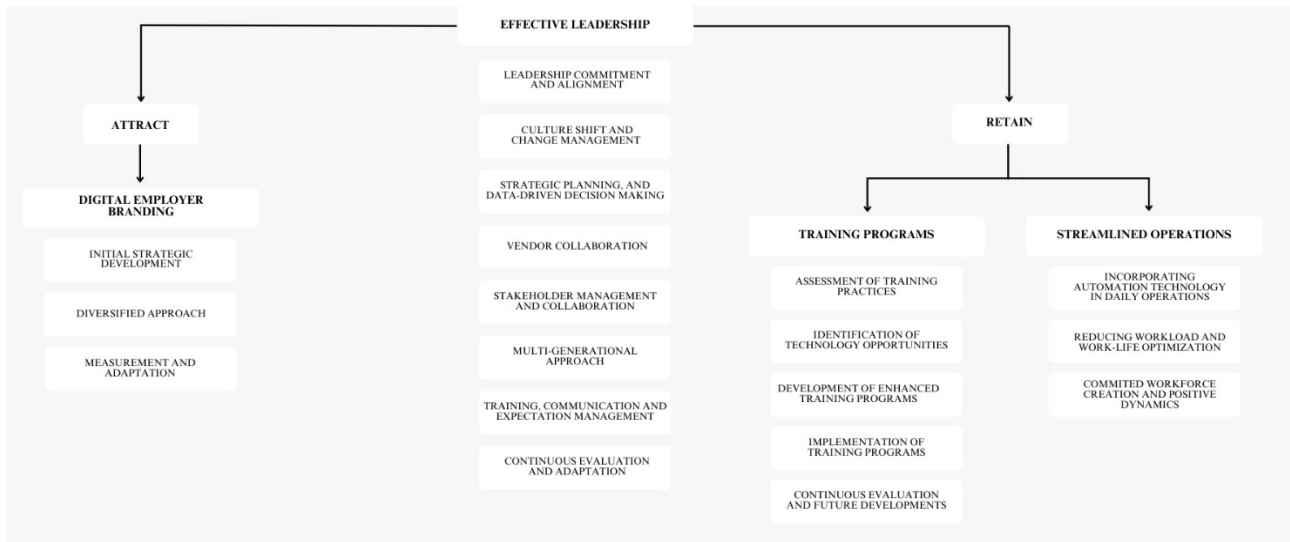
The insights obtained regarding automation technology affirm that the strategic implementation of such technologies has successfully streamlined operational workload by enhancing efficiency, improving employees' work-life balance, and fostering a more committed workforce, which aligns with and supports the literature on this topic. The data also indicates a positive reception of technology among at least some survey respondents and an openness to future technological advancements, suggesting a cycle of continuous improvement and innovation within the hotel industry.

Generally, the main reasons for successfully implementing and adopting technologies align with theoretical studies and literature on leadership to guide the change. The challenge remains in the thoroughness and consistency in which they are applied in real-life settings and operational contexts, and this will also highly depend on the type of technologies being implemented and the challenges they intend to address.

8 Framework Proposal

Given the evident challenges related to the attractiveness of the hotel industry, this chapter proposes a comprehensive framework, drawing from collective and individual research efforts, aiming to facilitate technology adoption within the hotel sector applied to the context of navigating the challenges heightened by the Great Resignation. The following figure visually represents the framework.

Figure 1: Proposed Framework



The framework follows four main chapters, namely:

1. Effective Leadership for Successful Technology Adoption
2. Attracting and Engaging Talent through Digital Employer Branding
3. Training Programs to Improve Talent Retention
4. Leveraging Automation Technologies for Streamlined Operations

Inside each chapter, steps are highlighted to help guide the successful execution of each one.

8.1 Effective Leadership for Successful Technology Adoption

The role of leadership has been identified and demonstrated as central to the success of any technology implementation and adoption, as navigating the digital transformation within the hotel sector demands more than the mere integration of cutting-edge systems, but robust and informed leadership teams to steer the course toward effective technological implementation successfully. Effective leadership should launch and guide change while inspiring the workforce to embrace technological innovations.

In this sense, engaging capable leadership through the adoption and implementation journey is a crucial investment and a success enabler.

The following steps were formulated to better guide leaders in achieving this success.

Step 1: Leadership Commitment and Alignment

Throughout the technology adoption and implementation process, organizations should aim to establish a cross-level alignment between all stakeholders: senior, corporate, and property leadership, owners, managers, and technology vendors.

Step 2: Cultural Shift and Change Management

Any successful technological advancement needs a fostered culture of innovation, openness, and adaptability toward inherent change. The “champion approach” through the identification and empowerment of key internal stakeholders (especially at the levels that will be using the new technology) to positively drive and sustain technological change is key for this cultural shift, as it encourages the workforce to follow and adapt to change confidently. Resistance will likely always occur, and transparent communication strategies to recognize and mitigate it are crucial across all organizational levels. Furthermore, promoting a culture that sees failure as an opportunity for learning and continuous improvement may further reduce resistance to change and enable adaptive growth based on insights from successes and failures.

Step 3: Strategic Planning and Data-Driven Decision-Making

Considering the likelihood of a continuous increase in the pace of change, strategic road mapping is advised. Balancing long-term strategic plans with adaptable short-term implementation strategies lowers the chances of business disruption and may help mitigate resistance to change without compromising innovation and a competitive edge.

Leveraging data-based insights to make informed decisions in technology investments is a necessity, both for accuracy in appropriately adjusting the solutions to each business context, as well as to mitigate resistance.

Step 4: Vendor Collaboration and Technology Selection

While the relevance and importance of unbiased vendor decisions can be discussed, establishing strategic partnerships with technology vendors may facilitate the development of tailored solutions that cater directly to specific business objectives and needs, adaptability, and scalability. Rigorous assessments should be carried out to mitigate biased decisions.

Step 5: Stakeholder Management and Collaboration

Hotels are collaborative ecosystems and should, therefore, be managed as such, especially regarding technology implementation, where systems should be connected and communicate across all parts of the business. Facilitating collaborative relationships among brands, owners, management organizations, properties, technology vendors, and other stakeholders will likely foster this and ensure seamless implementation.

Step 6: Multi-Generational Approach

Hotels have different profiles of guests and employees and should offer an inclusive technological approach. Incorporating diverse age group perspectives helps bridge digital literacy gaps and meet varied expectations. If possible, establishing a multi-generational support team can further mitigate resistance to change as it allows more employees to feel involved and understood in the different ways they approach technology.

Step 7: Training, Communication, and Expectation Management

Clear, all-level, transparent communication has been established as decisive in the success of any technology implementation. Still, early communication may further aid this success as hotel business operations are demanding and intense. Providing knowledge of change before the implementation may support operational teams in getting used to change and providing timely operations adjustments to accommodate this change. Expectation alignment is also essential and should be done across all organizational tiers. Gathering this feedback and input from the internal end user is a great practice to maximize expectation alignment. Finally, while most

organizations will provide training for new tools, not all organizations customize and adapt this training to their property-level reality. Customized training programs for varying digital literacy levels empower staff to learn to use new tools effectively.

Step 8: Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation

As with any strategy deployed, establishing continuous reporting, monitoring, and measurement mechanisms is fundamental to assessing its success. This is true for any technology adoption and will enable continuous improvement and adaptation based on real-time insights and feedback loops through constant evaluation.

8.2 Attracting and Engaging Talent through Digital Employer Branding

To build a successful company, one of the starting and most essential points is to have the right people working for it. The right employees understand the company deeply, stand for its values and find satisfaction in their workplace. In exchange, they offer loyalty and exceptional performance, ultimately contributing to the firm's success in the long run. However, the initial challenge is knowing how to find and attract the right talent from a sea of job seekers. It takes creative and effective strategies to navigate the complexities of the job market and attract the right talent for a company. In this study, Digital Employer Branding was proven to be an effective and powerful tool to address this challenge. The following steps provide a targeted list of considerations companies should account for when starting their DEB strategies.

Step 1: Initial Strategic Development

The first step starts with developing the clear goals and objectives a company wants to achieve. Defining the profile of the candidates they want, reflecting on the company's culture and benefits provided, and comparing them to the ones offered by other firms within the same market. The goal will be to give the best opportunities compared to the competition's. After this, authentic and truthful storytelling needs to be created, with a strong Employer Value Proposition to differentiate the brand and show the company culture in an evident and enticing way to

potential candidates. This narrative must be captivating and customized according to each market, considering local culture, expectations, and talent pool characteristics - acknowledging that what works in one region may not work in another. After the strategy is created and aligned, the company can start researching digital platforms to which the strategy can be applied based on the target demographics, budget, and defined goals. The research showed that in the hotel sector, LinkedIn was a better fit for senior roles, Instagram and TikTok for younger talent, and mass-market job platforms for operational positions.

Step 2: Diversified Approach

After the platforms are chosen, the activation part of the process starts, where the human resources team, in alignment with the marketing team, create compelling content that demonstrates the available professional development opportunities, showcases real employee stories, celebration of achievements, and highlights, in the best way possible, the value of working for that unique company. Besides this, from the analysis done in this study, only having a presence on digital platforms is not enough. An integrated approach is needed by combining digital employer branding strategies with traditional recruitment methods, such as continuous appearances at job fairs and employee referral methods (standard in other industries), building a sustainable and diverse talent pipeline for both present and future needs. In addition to this, it was also stated that encouraging leaders and staff members to engage and maintain a presence on digital platforms was efficient and enhanced the company's efforts.

Step 3: Measurement and Adaptation

Lastly, after the implementation, there is a need for constant measuring, analysis, and monitoring of the content and strategies applied since there might be a need for refinement or changes. Many digital platforms already offer access to various analytics tools, simplifying processes and offering essential insights to make faster data-driven decisions on metrics such as click-through rates, drop-off rates, and actual cost-per-hire of each campaign (previously

talked about and very important to evaluate the success of a DEB strategy). In addition, there is also a need to stay up to date on the latest developments and emerging HR trends, which might revolutionize the way companies present themselves.

Although the framework can help companies thrive in the market if followed, during the analysis, some considerations companies need to be aware of were also brought up, mainly:

- The need to reshape and train HR teams on digital strategies
- Maintain brand coherence across different channels and hotels
- Expensive technological tools and need for attention to budget allocation

If these challenges are considered, and the framework's steps are taken into consideration, hospitality professionals can ensure that their Employer Branding strategies stand out in a competitive talent market. However, the new generation of workers relies on a new set of benefits and needs of great importance to them when choosing their next place to work, such as better salaries, work-life balance, flexible and hybrid work style, and support of diversity, equity, and inclusion, that also need to be taken into consideration by companies.

8.3 Training Programs to Improve Talent Retention

To fight the Great Resignation, training programs can act as a partial solution to the problem. By enhancing employees' skills and knowledge and providing the tools for employee career development and growth, training programs can help increase employees' job satisfaction and reduce their turnover intentions.

Technology-based training can further help solve this problem, as this type of training presents several benefits in addition to traditional training methods and increases employee engagement during training sessions.

Following, a five-step approach supports the strategic implementation of training programs, also including technology-based training.

Step 1: Assessment of Current Training Practices

The first step to leverage training programs is to assess how current training programs are being developed in the company. Having the as-is perspective of training programs is crucial to propose changes.

Some variables that can be assessed are the frequency and number of training sessions employees attended, the topics covered by training and possible gaps existing in the current programs, the type of training utilized to provide training sessions (online, in-class, VR training, on-the-job training) and the digital platforms used for online training, if any.

It is also important to measure the current levels of employees' training engagement and training satisfaction as these indicators can provide insights for training program improvement. Gathering employee data regarding their perceptions of current training programs attended is also crucial to understand potential problems or gaps that employees identify in training programs regarding their content or delivery method and to collect their suggestions for improvement. Employee perceptions regarding the several benefits that different digital platforms and technologies can offer during training (ex. flexibility, collaboration, personalization) should also be assessed during this phase.

Step 2: Identification of Technology Opportunities

After conducting a comprehensive analysis of the current state of training programs, collecting employees' suggestions regarding training programs, and how employees value the benefits each type of training platform can provide, companies should evaluate which type of technology-based training and/or digital platforms (VR training, LMS, Social learning platforms, Adaptive learning platforms, etc.) are aligned with suggestions proposed, gaps and problems identified and with the strategic vision of the company. Factors such as technology providers, costs of hardware and software, necessary integrations with company systems and infrastructure capacity must be accounted for in order for the implementation of technology-

based training to have a positive ROI estimation. This estimation, however, must account the potential impact technology-based training can have on job satisfaction, training engagement and reduced employee turnover intentions.

Step 3: Development of Enhanced Training Programs

After choosing which platforms are the most appropriate according to the criteria mentioned in the previous step, the design of training content and delivery must be done. HR teams must create training programs according to the diverse employee needs, focusing on areas that directly impact their day-to-day operations, but also on their personal development. Employees of hotel companies that receive training by their company report lack of autonomy choosing the topics of the training sessions they attend. The personalization of the learning path either by collecting suggestions of training topics from employees, creating a tailored training program for each employee according to their interests, needs and goals or using more advanced adaptive learning platforms to do it can be leveraged to potentially increase training engagement and effectiveness. Assessing this topic in the first step is important as it allows HR teams to understand the extent to which personalization of training programs is valued by company employees.

The creation of high-quality tailored programs that increase employee training engagement and satisfaction, using technology-based training potential is the ultimate goal of this step.

In this step it is also important to have in consideration that as presented in the research, a hybrid approach to training is recommended to cover the potential drawbacks of technology implementation that cannot be so effective as other training methods for some training topics.

Step 4: Implementation of Training Programs

After the design and plan of training programs, the rollout-phase must begin. The implementation of new technology-enhanced training programs must be done gradually, ensuring that proper briefing and initial training sessions are provided to employees on how to

utilize the new training platforms effectively. It is relevant, not only in this phase, but particularly in this one, that leadership and change management programs are deployed to overcome employees' natural resistance to change.

Step 5: Continuous Evaluation and Future Development

During and after the rollout-phase, feedback regarding the training experience, content, and quality of training as well as the effectiveness, engagement and satisfaction levels with the new training methods should be continuously monitored and adjustments made accordingly.

The impact of technology-based training on skills and employee development and on how employees perceive organizational support for their development and career growth must also be measured frequently as these are indicators associated to higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions. KPIs for the variables mentioned above must be defined.

Additionally, using these metrics to continuously refine and adapt training strategies, addressing any identified limitations or gaps is crucial for the success of technology-based training implementation in the long-term. Also, as technology is constantly evolving, identifying further possible technological implementations is also very relevant.

As an end note for this five-step approach, it is important to state that leadership must be aligned with technology implementation and change management programs must be created accordingly. The existence of actual career growth opportunities and promotions resulting from internal employee development through training programs is also vital for employees to perceive training programs as effective and crucial for employee advancement.

8.4 Leveraging Automation Technologies for Streamlined Operations

Operational efficiency and employee commitment play a crucial role in shaping the success of the industry. Automation technology offers opportunities to streamline operations and reduce repetitive and monotonous workload, which enhances employee's work-life balance and their commitment towards the companies they work for.

The following steps help guide the strategic implementation of automation technology to streamline operations.

Step 1: Incorporating Strategic Automation Technology into Daily Operations

This step has the main objective of enhancing operations efficiency. Firstly, critical operational areas should be identified by assessing which departments are the most important for the healthy functioning of the property. Aligned with this, tasks which can be streamlined should be pointed out. Following is the type of technology that will be implemented, as there is an array of existing solutions. To ensure that the implementation of these technologies is helpful in streamlining operations, user friendly and intuitive solutions should be prioritized. This will ensure a smooth transition and employees will more likely not be an obstacle to this implementation.

Step 2: Reducing Workload and Work-Life Optimization

This step has the main objective of leveraging the implemented automation technology, to optimize workload and employee's work-life balance. To optimize workload, employees should properly get used and adapt to the implemented technologies, through proper training. Together with this, monitoring the impact of automation technology implementation is pivotal, so it is possible to measure quantitatively the improvement of workload and work-life balance. For this, key performance indicators are a great solution. Amongst different objectives, implementation of automation technology visions an improved work-life balance for employees. Thus, as workload is expected to decrease, employees should be encouraged by their managers/supervisors to have an improved work-life balance. Potentially, automation technology will enable hotels to offer flexible schedules, where employees will have greater control over their working hours. It is important to consider that automation technology itself is not the solution, but part of the solution.

Step 3: Creating a Committed Workforce and Positive Organizational Dynamics

This last step has the main objective of fostering a positive organizational dynamic or a positive atmosphere in the organization and assure employee's commitment with automation technology implementation. In this last step, assuming that implementation of automation technology was successful, and as consequence, workload and employee's work-life balance was positively impacted, hotels should maintain a constant feedback relation with the users of these automation technologies to know how commitment of employees is increasing throughout time, similarly to step "workload and work-life balance", where constant monitoring is necessary. KPIs such as employee turnover ratio in departments where automation technology should be measured. Additionally, to reducing workload and improving work-life balance, automation technology can also improve guest satisfaction scores and increase revenues. Thus, hotels could improve benefits and bonuses of operational employees, since by streamlining workload, it is easier to measure several operational KPIs (Guest satisfaction index, upselling, cross selling, productivity, amongst others). With this, hotels will be maximizing employee commitment.

9 Conclusion

Technology offers countless opportunities to address pressing challenges and guide progress. Aiming to facilitate technology adoption within the hotel sector to better navigate the challenges heightened by the Great Resignation and the low attractiveness of the industry found both in literature and in this research's analysis, this study proposed a comprehensive framework that can be used by Westmont Hospitality Group and other industry players to leverage technology for the attraction, engagement, and retention of talent within hotels, particularly in the areas of digital employer branding, training programs, streamlining workload and leadership for successful technology adoption. This research concludes that the road to overcome talent-related challenges in the hotel sector goes beyond technological solutions, residing in the integrated synergy of people, processes, and technology, encompassing both technological

advancements and the fundamental human aspects intricate to the hospitality industry that drive this transformative journey.

10 Future Outlook

As technologies evolve, talent management strategies, mainly in the areas of attraction, retention, and engagement, will continue to advance as well.

The interviewees predict major changes on the topic of digital employer branding, as shown in the interview transcripts in chapter 18.5 of the Appendix, with AI-driven customization and Big Data set to shape the way companies engage with prospective and current employees, allowing to target audiences that better fit their opportunities. In addition, monitoring of online reputation, real-time feedback and competitor benchmarking are expected to become automated processes and help increase brands' visibility.

Digital training will continue to evolve as well, with AI and VR tools enhancing the structure and implementation of training programs. A shift from traditional approaches to optimized personalization with higher levels of engagement will possibly happen, allowing for employees to further upskill and reskill themselves in a more efficient and streamlined way.

Hotels are yet to reach full capacity in automation and streamlining operations, but as technology evolves the opportunities to do so increase, improving not only the quality of the services provided to guests but also the quality of work delivered by employees.

In order for all of these new possibilities to succeed, efficient, strong, and visionary leadership is needed. Future leaders are expected to demonstrate agility, tech-savviness, and the ability to successfully foster and manage change, keeping an open mind when it comes to new implementations and the continuous evolvement of talent needs. A focus on a culture of innovation and improvement will be encouraged, with leadership being the bridge between technology and its employees, ensuring the overall satisfaction and well-being of all stakeholders.

11 Future Research Directions

Future research can focus on numerous avenues. Important areas to explore include new technologies that are still in an embryonic stage in the hotel sector such as the use of artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Blockchain in talent management strategies. Further empirical studies are warranted to better understand the actual impact of specific technology implementation on talent attraction and retention.

12 Limitations

Parallel to the insights raised in this study, some limitations were identified. Firstly, the sample sizes are limited and do not fully represent the general population of the hotel industry. Moreover, the geographical location of respondents, different employee roles and degrees of responsibility, the potential bias of surveys and subjectivity of interviews further limit the interpretation of this study. As mentioned in the outlook, AI will be one of the main characters of future technological implementation in talent management and this study has not fully studied its current and future potential in addressing challenges worsened by the Great Resignation. Moreover, other technological solutions were not explored in depth, due to the vastness of the topic. Finally, as technology is rapidly evolving, this study will need to be complemented by further research to ensure its relevance throughout the years.

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14 Appendix

14.1 List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BE	Brand Equity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CTO	Chief Technology Officer
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DEB	Digital Employer Branding
EA	Employer Attractiveness
EB	Employer Branding
EVP	Employer Value Proposition
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
IHG	Intercontinental Hotel Group
IoT	Internet of Things
IT	Information Technology
JB	Job Satisfaction
JOLTS	Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey
K-12	Kindergarten to Twelfth Grade
LMS	Learning Management Systems
PMS	Property Management System
P-O	Person-Organization
QR	Quick Response

RFI	Request for Information
RFP	Request for Proposal
ROI	Return on Investment
RQ	Research Question
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TE	Training Engagement
TI	Turnover Intentions
TS	Training Satisfaction
TSA	Training Sessions Attended
UK	United Kingdom
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
US	United States
USD	United States Dollar
UTAUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology
VR	Virtual Reality
WHG	Westmont Hospitality Group

14.2 Overview of in-text figures

Figure 1: Proposed Framework

14.3 Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Hospitality Rising Attraction Campaign - #RiseFastWorkYoung



Figure 2: Hilton's Digital Employer Branding Campaign on Social Media - #EveryJobMakesTheStay

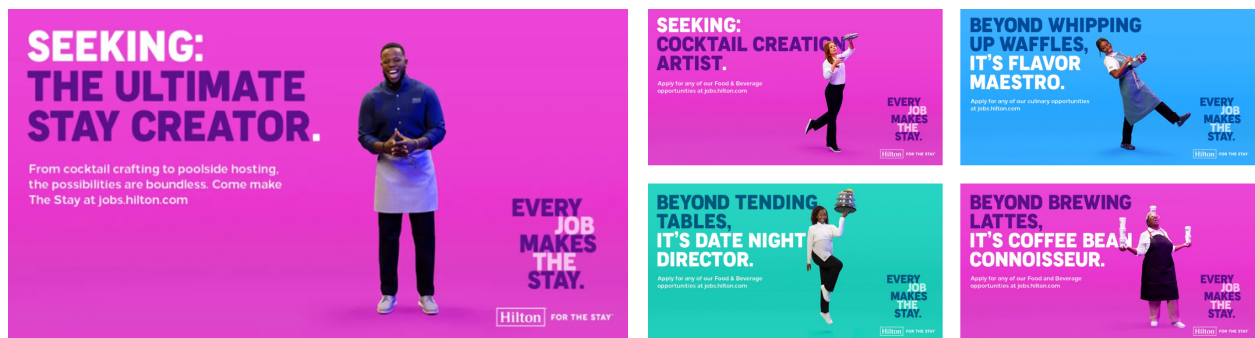
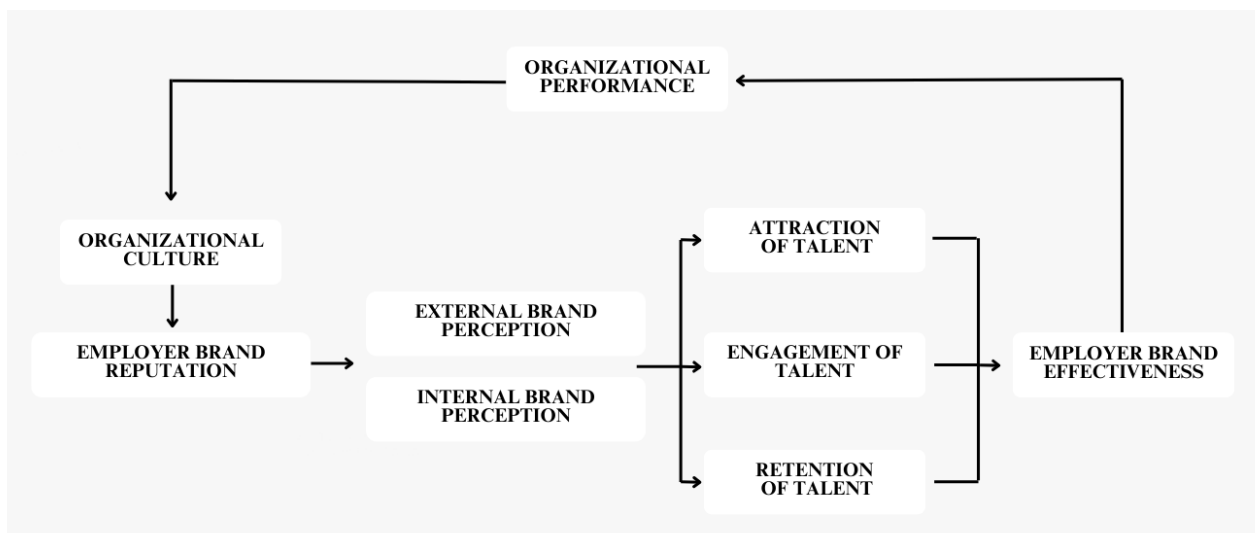


Figure 3: Employer Branding Study Concepts Model



15 Interview Guide

Related to WP Chapter: Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement

Introduction

- Short introduction.
- Express gratitude for participation in the interview.
- Ask for permission to record and transcribe the interview for analysis.
- Inform the interviewee about the confidentiality of responses.
- Explain the context of the interview and the scope of the specific part to the interviewee.
 - Master research on technology as a tool of acceleration for talent attraction, training, and retention in the hotel sector
 - Individual part of digital employer branding as a tool for talent attraction and engagement in the hotel sector

Start recording of the interview:

Section 1: Background information	1. Can you provide an overview of your background and experience, particularly in human resources or employer branding roles?
Section 2: Strategies for employer branding	1. Are you aware of what “Employer branding”, and “Digital Employer Branding” means? • If yes, please share what you think “digital employer brand” means. 2. Do you consider that in your company/industry it is difficult to attract talent? 3. Do you consider Digital employer branding a good solution for this challenge, or are there better strategies/ more impactful?

	4. Do you have digital employer branding strategies being implemented by your company? • If yes, please provide examples. 5. In which digital platforms are you implementing employer branding strategies? 6. Which platforms do you consider more valuable/effective or that your company uses the most? 7. What challenges did you/your company face when implementing (digital?) employer branding? 8. In comparison to other HR strategies, do you consider that using “Digital employer branding” strategies impacted the attraction and engagement of talent significantly? • If yes, please explain. • If not, why not? And what kind of strategies do you use to: i. Attract talent. ii. Engage with talent. iii. Retain talent.
Section 3: Result of Employer Branding	10. By implementing digital employer branding strategies, where you able to • attract • engage • retain, more talent? 1.4.1 If yes, please provide quantifiable results. (e.g., percentage of candidates was higher?) 11. How do you measure the effectiveness of digital employer branding/ talent attraction efforts? 12. Are there specific metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) that you find most valuable?

Stop recording of the interview.

15.1 Overview Expert Interview Participants

Related to WP Chapter: Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement

Interview No.	Name	Job Title	Company	Industry
A	Anonymous	Head of Employer Branding	Zuhlke Group	Strategy Consulting
B	Anonymous	HR Director	Hilton Worldwide	Hotels
C	Anonymous	General Manager	SANA Hotels	Hotels
D	Anonymous	People & Culture Specialist	Nova SBE	Education
E	Anonymous	Industry Program Manager, talent outreach/employer branding programs	Google	Technology
F	Anonymous	Employer Branding & Talent Acquisition Specialist	Marriott	Hotels
G	Anonymous	Strategist in Employer Branding & business development	Universum	Employer Branding Specialist Firm
H	Anonymous	Human Resources Director	Intercontinental	Hotels
I	Anonymous	Human Resources Director	Discovery Hotel Management	Hotels

J	Anonymous	Director Employer Branding	Accor	Hotels
K	Anonymous	Talent Acquisition Manager	IHG	Hotels
L	Anonymous	Professor with publications in Employer Branding	Universidade do Algarve	Academia

15.2 Interview Analysis

Related to WP Chapter: Digital Employer Branding as a Tool for Talent Attraction and Engagement

15.2.1 Interviewee Code: A

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Head of Employer Branding at Zuhlke (IT)

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 14.11.2023 (duration $\approx$ 26 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

A	N° 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Head of Employer Branding Zuhlke
A	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I see it in a holistic way and employer branding, it's the area that brings together the business goals with talent attraction and also the internal engagement. And it acts in these three dimensions and supports the company to achieve their business goals and also to become an employer of choice. This is how I see employer branding, and this is how I'm working employer branding. Digital employer branding is just a way that you have to work employer branding.
A	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we implemented this year and last year an advocacy program
A	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	employees are the best ambassadors that you can have not only to attract future employees
A	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	and we have a platform, and we share content that then each employee can go to that platform, and they can choose the content that is there available for them to share on their social media
A	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we also have is also we create a series of social media content that is more tech-related and then we invite our employees to share their expertise and we also promote and try to engage and make them to become top leaders in the market.
A	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We also organize social media campaigns and here we also have a very tight collaboration with our marketing department because the marketing department is responsible to take care of all the external communication, more having in mind the clients and then employer branding it's more attracting and retaining talent.
A	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	we work with Google, we work with LinkedIn, X, Instagram, Facebook. We are not on TikTok yet.

A	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	we also work with external agencies that give us support. So, to set up campaigns, to also create content for social media.
A	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	When it comes to employer branding it depends a little bit on the country that you are working.
A	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	LinkedIn is our strongest platform in Portugal
A	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	In Serbia, it's Facebook
A	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	we stopped using X this year because yes, I stopped using Twitter because the numbers were decreasing
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	you can't make the mistake of thinking that one size fits all.
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	when it comes to diversity and inclusion some topics are really important in Portugal, other topics it's not a question in these kinds of countries.
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	it's really important for you and also what is important for people and how you communicate so you really need to pay attention to this to the cultural diversity and to be cross-cultural.
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	The second thing is for you to having this in mind to have a good balance between global and local, so you need to have in mind that you need to follow the global guidelines but at the same time you need to have and maintain the local flavor and sometimes they collide.
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	the third thing that I would say it's really how can you stand out in a very competitive market
A	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	sometimes you need to take a step back and not to go crazy and follow what everyone is doing

A	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	how can I show without being another company advocating we are great, and we have an amazing work-life balance so how can I show this and stand out from all the thousands of companies that are there shouting out almost the same things.
A	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	digital strategy really helped our strategy to increase our brand awareness and to showcase what we are doing
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when it comes to our engagement rate on social media, we had an increase of 39 percent
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	We had an increase of 60 percent in the number of followers on LinkedIn.
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	We had an increase of 92 percent when it comes to reactions.
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	When it comes to our website visits, I can share with you that comparing we have an increase of 125 percent of the number of visitors to our website also when it comes to applications
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	before we implemented digital EB strategies, we had around 30 candidates that said yes, I heard about you before and now our rate it's in 95 percent to 95 percent of the candidates that apply to Zuhlke say yes, I already heard about you
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	apply internal surveys to our people and try to collect their feedback what they like the most what they didn't like what we could do better what work what it doesn't didn't work and I always try to apply their feedback
A	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when the new joiners come, I also have a meeting with them and try to understand because they just arrived at the company okay what resonated to you what you saw about Zuhlke what caught your attention

A	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	will start using more and more AI artificial intelligence and this will support a lot by generating content images creating giving here a boost to the creative part side
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15.2.2 Interviewee Code: B

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Human Resources Director at Hilton Worldwide Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 14.11.2023 (duration ≈ 40 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

B	N° 1	Background Information	Professional Role	HR director with Hilton Hotels looking after the UK, Ireland, and Israel.
B	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	employer branding boils down to the message you put out externally to potential applicants coming into your company.
B	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	it defines what you're offering.
B	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	your company must deliver the promise.
B	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	generally, yes
B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	it's one strategy. And on its own, I don't think it will resolve the issue
B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	we have to get our message out to the population about our industry
B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	we have to overcome the general public's perception.

B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	having really strong messaging on lots of different media channels is really important
B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	However, if we can't get our message through to our government and through education, we will never be able to staff hospitality because we will not have children coming out of education interested in hospitality with the right skills, with the right qualifications.
B	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	it's not the only solution, but it's really important right now to be able to get your message to the people you want to attract
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	in terms of recruitment and attraction you will absolutely see some of our strategies
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	The new campaign “Every job makes the stay”, that's our employer branding at the moment.
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	clearly is supporting the Hilton general campaign about make the stay in hospitality and Hilton
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	across all the different social media channels to attract more potential employees into joining our hotels
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	On the other side of engagement and retention, so for internal team members we have something as well.
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We have an intranet called the lobby and it is huge, evolving every member of Hilton worldwide.
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	if you want to find any information, news, etc, it is on the lobby
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	to get our communication to our team members, we are partnering, doing a pilot with a company called Work Jam.

B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	It does things around workforce flexibility and rostering. That's one element of it. But it also has great communication and channels
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	it has an element of training, and it has an element more focused on the inside of each department, and rosters, shifts, birthdays
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	when it comes to employer branding, you need clear communication, a team member needs to have access to things really quickly at their fingertips.
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	And it seems to be really popular, our people really like it. Simple, easy, you have your phone with you all the time, you can really get involved in the communication flow.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	It depends on the market
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	t depends on which audience we're going to talk to.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	if I want to talk to females between 24 and 36, I got a Facebook.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	If I want to talk to a younger audience, actually for us, Snapchat, TikTok works quite well.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	f I want to talk to perhaps a more managerial type of audience, I'll go to LinkedIn.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	different platforms for a different population and the messaging is slightly different as well.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	I would say we have a presence on our employer branding point of view pretty much everywhere apart from Twitter, that doesn't seem to work for us.

B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	LinkedIn definitely.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	It's definitely really important from a recruitment point of view.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	for recruitment and to get that message out, you've got to use Facebook.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	also use Google search type or Google ads. TikTok and Snapchat would be the ones that also are particularly useful.
B	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	the most important ones for you are LinkedIn, Facebook, and Google.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	it is a reasonably new concept in terms of the employment side, recruitment, and human resources.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	You are taking a traditional HR team and you're asking them now to be marketers or greater e-commerce.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	first challenge is shifting knowledge
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	As an HR professional you have to get knowledgeable about the new trends such as employer branding and how to showcase it.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	understanding how to use the different channels, to educate the HR team on how to use these channels, on how to tailor the message to target the audience that you want
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	The second challenge is how to keep it relevant and how to keep it up to date.

B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	We cannot say I'm just going to post one thing today and that's done for the month, it is a continuous flow of communication.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	Another challenge would be we encourage our hotels to post things on the communication channels.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	You've got to be really clear on what is your message. Otherwise, it's very random and diluted. You've got to try and give guidelines and clear messaging.
B	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	last challenge is having sufficient funding, moreover if you want to do big campaigns, and if you talk to our marketeers, they have a budget to do certain things but if you talk to a lot of HR departments, they don't have a budget for this topic.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes, but not only
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	we found that it was team members that came because they had someone that recommended to them Hilton.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	this strategy they seemed to be more engaged, stay longer.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	we absolutely had to get our message out there through digital channels but, some of them would not be loyal to the brand and would not stay long.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	overall, we would not be able to recruit the number of team members without having a digital strategy.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	But we also found that referring a friend and word of mouth where very efficient as well.
B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	And we had a financial reward for the employees that referred someone, and they stayed for a period of time.

B	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	And if you were referred, you have someone inside that is your buddy and will help you out in the first few months, and that really helps in keeping people.
B	N° 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	Yes.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when we came out of the pandemic, for every job we advertised, we would get on average 11 CVs. We are now nearly 35, 36 CVs for every job advertised.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	that reach, I think, has generated more applications.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	I look at the number of impressions, so basically how many people have seen the advert our message.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	The click through rate as well, so how many people then click through and actually do something.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	And the click through rate for us has to be above zero point five. If so, that's then in my eyes a good campaign, meaning that We've got the right target audience, the right message that audience have engaged.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	We see thousands of people look at the campaigns and on average a seven-point eight percent click through rate.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	another indicator we are quite aware of is the drop off rate and if it's too big means that we are doing something wrong.
B	N ° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	the final measure is from all of that activity, how much did I spend and how many people did I offer a job to? Meaning, the cost per hire of that campaign.

B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we do also work with a company called Socially Recruited that we can then target different audiences so they will place our ads in different places.
B	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we also work with a company to take some of our jobs and put them into perhaps different job boards
B	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	We started our recruitment centre back in 2016
B	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	we noticed that advertising in newspapers wasn't working anymore so we decided to go in for social media
B	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	it was a little bit of trial and error and working with some external providers.
B	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	We are still to understand the dept of what AI will do for us in the hospitality field.
B	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	Now we are investigating.
B	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	We have asked team members in the past per example, how do you like to receive internal communication, team briefings, whatever... and all of them said I just want everything in one place to access really quickly.

15.2.3 Interviewee Code: C

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: General Manager at SANA Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: Face-to-face at the Hotel

Time and date: 15.11.2023 (duration ≈ 23 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

C	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	General Manager at SANA Hotels
C	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I think the definition is what you told pretty much spot on.
C	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	international brands are way ahead of national brands when it comes to employer branding, especially digital
C	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	we still have a long way to go in Portugal in the Portuguese hospitality industry to have that digital employer branding experience.
C	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	at the group SANA, we are starting to take the first steps to have a digital employer branding where all the communication is already targeted to the talent and not just to the customers
C	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	we are starting to take the first steps to have a digital employer branding where all the communication is already targeted to the talent and not just to the customers that stay in hotels.
C	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	you attract talent, but then you really need to deliver on what you've sold.
C	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	it's always a challenge because the industry itself is a bit tired.
C	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	the storytelling of the hospitality industry needs to change a lot.

C	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	we'll be ending up with no qualified talents in the industry.
C	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	I still feel that hoteliers are quite old school in the way they operate, the way they try to attract talent
C	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	I think having the concept we have, which is basically professional casual hospitality, what is called nowadays a lifestyle hotel, attracts a lot of young talents to join this company versus Hotel Palacio, for example.
C	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think it's not the only answer
C	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I'm very active on LinkedIn because that brings me a lot of return.
C	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I have a lot of people like applying for job offers in my hotel because they have an idea of what and how we do things here
C	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	digital employer branding is very important both at the corporate level, but also on the leader level.
C	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I incentivise a lot my team to be present on LinkedIn, to have their LinkedIn profiles updated because that's where people are looking nowadays.
C	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we are using a lot nowadays is called Merytu
C	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	It's basically an Uber for casual staff.
C	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	It's a very strong tool based in basically talents, finding workplaces on a very efficient way and pragmatic

C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we've chosen to focus our employer branding on Sana Hotel's level because Evolution has two hotels.
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	that allows us to basically use the CVs where they are better suited.
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	If somebody that likes to work in a more casual environment, then we can send it to Evolution brand.
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	If it's a person that is looking for a five-star experience, then we can send it to Epic.
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we've centralized all our digital communication and all our digital employer branding on a Sana level.
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	at local level, we basically have an HR manager that represents the three evolutions
C	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	Sana LinkedIn account and that's where we post all the jobs regardless to which brand, we have.
C	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We have LinkedIn
C	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	we have Merytu
C	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	and Net empregos
C	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We have the typical recruitment platforms that are used in Portugal.
C	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Job Teaser

C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Hosco
C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Depending on different levels of the position you're trying to hire, we target it to different platforms
C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	LinkedIn is very good for senior positions
C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	if you're trying to hire somebody from housekeeping, like a maid on LinkedIn, you won't find anybody. You need to go to Net empregos, you need to go to more mass market platforms
C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Trainees, entry-level positions, I would say that Merytu is helping us a lot
C	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	the best ones are LinkedIn and Merytu
C	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	being active on digital platforms then it allows you to be more attractive to young talents to join your company
C	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	I don't have any data that I could share with you
C	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	that's where talents are, and you want to be in the marketplace where people are looking for jobs so that's what led us to choose those platforms
C	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	I think Merytu is a great tool and
C	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	they are basically one of the few platforms that it's shaping the talent and talent acquisition market.
C	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	it's all based on reviews, reviews both talents and reviews of the workplaces

15.2.4 Interviewee Code: D

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: People & Culture Specialist at Nova Sbe

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 17.11.2023 (duration ≈ 26 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

D	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	People & Culture Specialist at Nova School of business and economics
D	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I think it's exactly that
D	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	using digital channels and platforms to kind of position the company strategically and sell and promote this positive employer brand.
D	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	you must share your values, your culture, the different testimonies from different employees at the company
D	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think there are a lot of strategies.
D	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	the employer branding strategy of a company is extremely, extremely important.
D	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	If you don't have an employer branding strategy, it's very difficult to know the talent that you have and the talent that you're going to need and what is your target.
D	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	The employer branding strategy is, of course, using all of these digital tools but also being present, for example, in conferences, making sure that your company is being talked about, the way that you live your culture and in the way that you want this message to be transmitted.

D	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	the whole marketing department kind of helps, obviously, with this employer branding strategy because they obviously increase NOVA's reputation as a whole and not only for recruitment purposes.
D	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	everyone that joined the company gets a post template to put on LinkedIn and they're kind of supposed to share this post and explain what they've been doing, what position they started at NOVA.
D	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We have our head of people and culture, and she's going to a lot of conferences talking about NOVA SBE, talking about what it means to be an employee at NOVA SBE.
D	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We are increasing our wellbeing strategy and our wellbeing benefits, which also passes this message that we care about wellbeing. One of our future goals is to have it presented in our website
D	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	the website is very administrative and not appealing to the candidate. So, we're trying to see how we can work and to change that and to have a few testimonies of different employees also shared in there.
D	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We are focused, I could say on LinkedIn and, in the future, our website
D	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Currently, as people in cultural departments, we're not measuring it.
D	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	one of the KPIs of the team is the NPS score, the net promoter score.
D	N° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	Besides this, we're not really measuring
D	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	I think artificial intelligence for sure. I think data analytics, the more data we have, the more we can kind of predict what our talent wants and needs.
D	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	Eventually, we can personalize a little bit more the employer branding strategy to know each employee preferences

D	Nº 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	Maybe you can even use virtual reality to do this so that people get a bigger sense and a real sense of the company day to day.
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15.2.5 Interviewee Code: E

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Employer Branding Programs Manager at Google

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 14.11.2023 (duration ≈ 37 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

E	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Talent Engagement Specialist at Google, building the pipeline of future potential talent
E	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	Whenever I talk about employer branding, my goal is to change the perception of potential talent
E	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	employee branding, in my perspective should always have a humble approach.
E	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I think the goal has to be that the company is engaging with talent that they're sending out the message
E	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	And I think my job as an employer brand manager is to make you see yourself at the company
E	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	first of all, storytelling is super important.
E	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	if you want to position yourself as a potential employer of choice, you should take multiple approaches.
E	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	But I also think that besides digital we need to create the purpose and a unique experience.

E	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	it has to be a mix of multiple communication tools. it can be digital via social media, it can be mailing, keeping people informed, it can be in person events, inviting people to experience the hotel brand.
E	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	Maybe kind of like a growth platform where people can develop new skills. Imagine a hotel brand would say, hey, I'm providing free, wine tastings, or trainings, you know, for people who are interested to learn more, providing them with learning trainings.
E	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	And ideally taking people on a journey.
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	I think whenever companies are sharing real life stories of their employees, I think that's quite impactful.
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	And in the ideal scenario, diverse pool of voices, you know, so that people, as I said, can see themselves.
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	showcasing that everyone can see themselves working on the company is important
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	employer branding initiatives or campaigns, which are providing authentic behind the scenes insights told by real life employees, I think that's very impactful in my opinion.
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	another important tool is if I want to convince talent to join a company should be provide them with engagement opportunities. And that's why I think events are an important complement
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	ask me anything session or like a Q&A session with real life employees, which really can make the impact.
E	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	I think the two-way communication is very, very powerful

E	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	If it comes to showcasing professional roles, I think LinkedIn is very powerful.
E	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	When it comes to giving it more like a human and fun touch, I would say Instagram.
E	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	I think Facebook becomes less relevant.
E	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Try to pick up the people where they are. Maybe local platforms, or job search engines focusing on hospitality and hotel business.
E	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	I also believe that YouTube shorts are also becoming a thing. I think these are tools you can use when it comes to engaging with potential talent in the very early stage.
E	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes, definitely.
E	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	employer branding is a super powerful tool.
E	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	But still companies, haven't really realized the importance of employer branding.
E	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	the brands, they are replaceable, so you need to come up with a strong story, you need to position your brand, you need to build these emotional touch points.
E	N° 10	Results of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	these types of initiatives, they can definitely lead to actual hires.

E	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	I think it's also hard to sometimes then justify why you need a certain amount of budget, because all the companies are usually very money metric driven. And then also, a lot of companies, they think about next year, they don't think about the next three or five years. And I think employer branding is a mid to long term investment, you know, so you won't see an immediate impact.
E	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	I think what you can definitely do is, for example, measure employer brand perception, pre and post initiative by sending out service surveys, you know, or by interviewing candidates.
E	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	you can also do is virtual follow up sessions, this will allow you to gather additional information and insights. It also showcases that the company values the candidate
E	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	you can still investigate application rates
E	N ° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	Definitely, AI, machine learning will definitely play a huge role.
E	N ° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	when it comes to transparency, you know, I can now ask ChatGPT or BERT, the Google tool, and just say which are the strongest hotel brands, you know, which brands do have the strongest brand perception and so on.
E	N ° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	For example, Google launched a tool which allows you to practice for interviews, so you can help better equip talent, and if you better equip talent, there's a high likelihood that it will succeed in the interview.
E	N ° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	technology can help you to better equip the people you want to hire.
E	N ° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	these tools can maybe also help you, in the long run, to figure out what type of profiles should you be looking for.

E	Nº 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	AI can help us to maybe screen CVs and spot strengths of people which might not be obvious to a recruiter because a recruiter is also a human.
E	Nº 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	there are many ways that you can leverage digital technologies to easy the process for the human recruiters.

15.2.6 Interviewee Code: F

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Employer Branding and Talent Acquisition at Marriott Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 21.11.2023 (duration ≈ 18 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

F	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Employer Branding and Talent Acquisition Specialist at Marriott
F	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	it a 50-50 or a 60-40 mixture of these digital platforms where we can show the culture and the values of the company with people who work with the company showcasing their stories and their experiences.
F	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	it is not only LinkedIn and social media
F	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	There are also other platforms
F	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	such as Konunu
F	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	But overall, I agree with this definition.
F	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	Yes

F	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	We do not have many employees or possible employees left on the market.
F	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	benefits given by the hospitality sector, mainly salary, it's a tough market to attract the right people.
F	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think this really depends on a market
F	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	and how many hotels are there in the competitive market.
F	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think it is like a general need to be visible in the digital markets.
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	Yes
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	for Marriott international we have big campaigns
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	started focusing on platforms like Hotel Career, Hoga page, where you can put on job adverts and really highlight the open positions you have.
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We also really shook up our Instagram strategies
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	developed new series of videos where we highlight more the people and their stories
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	to showcase the story in hospitality of our employees, so we really focused on the emotional stories of the employees.
F	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	another successful strategy is our TikTok channel.

F	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we opt for something more emotional and focusing on the digital markets.
F	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We're now working on the employer branding funnels
F	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	It's not implemented yet, but we have that in a pipeline.
F	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	LinkedIn first, Instagram second, and TikTok third.
F	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	if we post something about an operational position such as an F&B waiter or an entry-level chef, they are not on LinkedIn and they are the people that we need the most
F	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	we need to adapt our digital strategy to the target we want.
F	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	Channels for younger adults and for entry-level positions, Instagram is more useful
F	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	we are using a campaign where we use our own employees' faces for billboards
F	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	And they are proud.
F	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	it really has an impact on the retention rate and engaging and that they stay with our company and identify with our company.
F	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	talking about digital employer branding on a different level where we interact. The Konunu platform is helpful

F	Nº 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	where you can rate your company and the company can engage with the people and answering positive and negative evaluations. Leading to an improvement of the image perceived.
F	Nº 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	No. We don't have
F	Nº 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	we will have like more platforms like TikTok
F	Nº 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	it gets more and more digital because of future generations.

15.2.7 Interviewee Code: G

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Strategist in Employer Branding at Universum

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 22.11.2023 (duration ≈ 20 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

G	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Employer Branding Consultant and Strategist
G	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	employer branding for is to build an attractive employer and is to attract, retain and engage with the right talent, not any type of talent.
G	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	it's very important when we talk about employer branding to talk about why we're doing it. What we're trying to do is not just put ourselves out there as an attractive employer. But why do we do that? Because we want to attract and retain the right talent.

G	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	if you really want to position yourself as an attractive employer, first, you need to build a strong EVP. So, an employer value proposition. And that's very important because that's the strategic framework that will help employers build themselves as an attractive employer. And then once you have the EVP, then you can activate it on digital platforms.
G	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	You need to look at one, find the talent you're trying to attract, what's important for them. You need to look at what are your employees saying about you as a company? And then what is your leadership saying? And once you identify those three aspects you can start building a strategy. And once you have a strategy, then you should activate it on the digital platforms.
G	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	We first understand what the landscape is, and then we activate it, and we use the digital platforms to do so. And yes, I think digital platforms are absolutely the best way to go about this nowadays. All the talent is on LinkedIn, all the talent is on Instagram and Facebook in some countries.
G	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	it depends on what your target group is. If you really want to do a targeted approach, you need to post ads on platforms focused on that target group. If you're looking for businesspeople, definitely LinkedIn is a great place.
G	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	If we're looking for a very young talent, we can engage them on TikTok
G	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	If we're looking for millennials, Instagram is the right place to go.
G	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	Often there is this problem of putting content on social media or digital platforms without really thinking through. Lacking strategy. And when something lacks strategy, it might work, but it might also not work, leading to a big failure. Not using the right platforms can also lead to not reaching the targets you need and not having the right content.
G	N° 8	Strategies for	Challenges for Employer	you need to build content around the strategy.

		Employer Branding	Branding Implementation	
G	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	Another challenge is that companies are having unrealistic targets and then they find it difficult to attract or to hire the people they want.
G	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	another challenge is to create differentiation. Nowadays every company is saying we are innovative, we are high tech, and we have work-life balance. And if you don't create the messaging that is a little bit different and that is more authentic to you as a company, you're not going to create any differentiation.
G	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	One big problem is that sometimes companies try to sell something that isn't their product or try to enhance it in a way that once an employee goes into the company isn't what they will encounter.
G	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	You can include some aspects that are aspirational. And usually, we say to our clients that maximum 20% of the aspects of the strategy should be aspirational. So, it is very important to keep the messaging authentic. Don't try to sell a company as something that is not, because at some point people will realize and they will leave.
G	N° 10	Results of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	Yes, and data shows exactly that. Data tells us that companies that have a strong employer brand are really doing much better at attracting and retaining talent.
G	N° 10	Results of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	If you have a strong employer brand. First, you will attract much more and better. Second, people will remain in your company. And when you are able to retain people in a company, your costs are reduced because every time an employee leaves, it costs a lot of money to hire someone, train them and have the person up and running.

G	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	first of all, you can measure the levels of awareness that your company has, the levels of consideration and the levels of attraction. Meaning how many people are aware of your company as an employer, how many people would consider working for your company and then how many people see your company as their ideal employer. And how many people have applied for your company. We build a funnel and then we can calculate with percentages or numbers how you convert talent down the funnel. So, a very important metric is awareness or desire.
G	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	You can also track your employer brand perception, how is my employer brand perceived externally by talent.
G	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	You should also track it internally. It is very important that you understand how your employees perceive you as an employer, because you want to retain your people.
G	N ° 11	Results of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when you talk about digital employer branding specifically you can use click through rates, how many people convert from the Instagram ad all the way down to the application, so how many of them are going from the Instagram ad to the application. And then you can start tracking how many applications you got. And out of those applications, how many did I hire.
G	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	I think there is one that I find very interesting. It is building internal marketplaces in companies.
G	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	a really good way to do that is to reuse the talent you already have in your company. So, it's about identifying what skills you need and whether those skills already exist in your company and how you can use them.

15.2.8 Interviewee Code: H

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Human Resources Director at Intercontinental Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 23.11.2023 (duration ≈ 36 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

H	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	HR Director for Intercontinental Hotels
H	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	employer branding is a process
H	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	it is a way for us to share, to communicate and to highlight what is more important in our culture, in our vision, within our values.
H	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	When we speak in employer branding, we have to be very serious, very honest, very confident in the way we lead, and we treat and take care of our people.
H	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I work a lot with everything that is employer branding. On the way I want to share what I feel that it is right, our values, our culture, our purpose, our best practices, our goals, our objectives. And how we put in place all the processes, not only to attract, but mainly to retain and develop.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	mainly to retain and develop
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We do not lose lots of time on attraction
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	My philosophy is to have wow moments and to create wow and phenomenal and positive work environments where people feel strong, comfortable, and positive on what they are, that they are fit for the way we work and the tools we use. and on the projects that we give them and that need to be implemented by them.

H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We have as well the recognition of the best culture and the seal from the best workplaces in Portugal.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we integrate people with disabilities, physical, psychological. And we strongly focus on the ESG practices
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We do lots of campaigns during the year on the social responsibility field, all the way we embrace the sustainability and everything that we do in order to become even a greener hotel.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we share everything, not only on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, that we have everything for everybody that works here.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We work a lot on the digitalization as well, on the way we promote the development of the capabilities, we call it the “room to grow” facilities, where everybody has access to a lot of information, including online courses
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	recently, a university created by Intercontinental group, the IHG University, where every worker can select the way, they want to lead the journey.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	if they have a dream to become a GM, with all the solutions that we have available, they can choose the ways they lead their journey
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We also have RISE, the financial accelerator program, where employees have information available and all the tools available and support necessary to success in their careers.
H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	Yes, it is terrible
H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	The people that we need to work to perform in our sector of activity don’t want to work in this sector
H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	People disappeared from our sector of activity and went for other opportunities, mainly in the service areas, with better benefits.

H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	hotel industry is not attractive
H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	We cannot offer jobs from 9 to 6 with days off on Saturdays or Sundays, we do not have appealing salaries
H	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	We cannot offer remote work; it is not flexible, and it is not for everybody
H	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think that a mix of several strategies is the best option
H	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	Employer branding is a must because people want to be aware, people want to be informed, people want to be involved and to participate.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	Every time that we win something, it is not a result of the GM, it is of the team of Intercontinental Lisbon.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we promote everything and we celebrate all the achievements and the way we identify that in our culture, say, “let's go for it together” and “let's inspire incredible together” and together we inspire incredible.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	For prospective employees, we have some websites such as the IHG Academy that I previously told you about. And it was built focused on attracting and developing the workforce.
H	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	The programs usually take six months to 12 months to 18 months, and they will go and jump to many IHG proprieties
H	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	The most impactful ones for us are LinkedIn in which we work a lot and our company website. Then for some target audiences, Facebook is still a must and not only externally, but as well in an internal point of view, our current employees. For the youngest generation, our focus is on Instagram and TikTok. To showcase the soul of our hotel, showing what we are and what we have to offer to them by showcasing stories of current employees.

H	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	Internally it's the different generations that we have. We have a quite interesting mix of talent, senior talent, and junior talent. Senior talents, they really like proximity to be honest. They really don't like digital information, employer branding, etc. So, they are rather preferring to have physical connections.
H	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes, for sure.
H	N° 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	Yes, for sure.
H	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	We need to move fast and to be bigger and better, we need to embrace and to put employee branding and digitalization in everything we do
H	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	the connections we have with our current and prospective employees through digital channels such as social media also help us to receive feedback, comments and improve our service as an attractive company to work for.
H	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	One of the key factors is the turnover indicator
H	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	84% of the few people that left in the last two years, they left because other sectors of activity.
H	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	we measure the impact of all the actions that we do and the way they're impacting the people's journey in our hotels.
H	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	our sector of activity we have lots of problems and the industry must be fast finding out solutions otherwise we will drown.
H	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	artificial intelligence solutions will really impact the way people will find the right solutions for these problems.
H	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	employer branding will be for sure another solution that can fix some of the problems that we are facing in this moment.
H	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	Finding ways to differentiate themselves and become better workplaces and much more attractive.

15.2.9 Interviewee Code: I

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Human Resources Director at DHM Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 23.11.2023 (duration ≈ 23 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

I	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Human Resources Director at Discovery Hotel Management
I	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	it's a new concept and it's not even digital now. So, we still we still starting off by understanding what we have to do, planning out the actions and then moving forward with digital tools.
I	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	yes, it's very difficult to attract talent.
I	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	it's not an interesting industry anymore.
I	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	all the youngsters and people that are starting off by studying hotels and the tourism areas, they don't want to start off by working in the low positions that are offered in this industry.
I	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	you work long hours and working with other people, which is very challenging, you don't have normal working schedules any weekends off and the wages are very low compared to other industries. And that leaves that leaves us with little market options to leverage from.
I	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	It's not the only solution that will fight the problem, but a combination of employer branding strategies can attract, motivate, and retain the workforce
I	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	you also need to add better salaries and conditions that buffer the less attractive things the industry has.
I	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	Nowadays it's a more candidate-led market and not a job led market, and maybe that's also going to play a part in the shift of interactions between employers and talent attraction, mainly the benefits offered.

I	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We've been promoting our company internally, by promoting people but also doing company events
I	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	LinkedIn and Instagram are the most powerful
I	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	ast year we had two big recruitment campaigns, and it has a lot of employer branding in it
I	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We also had a huge event in March and April
I	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We went to Benfica, Sporting and Porto stadiums and we did a big event, and people would trade their CV for a visit to the stadium.
I	Nº 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	another example of a talent attraction strategy we did was renting a huge surfing van, we decorated it with our brand and then we drove around Portugal, and we would stop in the main cities, and we would give food out. So, people would give the CVs in exchange for food.
I	Nº 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we are one of the first hospitality companies in Portugal to have a specific coordinator only for employer branding.
I	Nº 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	some skepticism around the question if these strategies were going to work and if the investment done would have a return on investment. Another challenge is the ability to have enough people to execute the defined employer branding strategies and ideas. Because we can have the ideas, but we also need people to execute them and having the tools to go along with the ideas.
I	Nº 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	I do yes.
I	Nº 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	And that's why I also, pushed the company to bring someone specialized in employer branding.

I	Nº 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	I am sure that we are able to retain, engage and attract talent but it is difficult to measure where did the attraction come from, if it was because of our digital strategies, or physical ones or because of the referral program we have.
I	Nº 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	We don't measure them now because we started a short time ago.
I	Nº 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	AI is a big facilitator, and it helps accelerating the time that we spend doing some workload.
I	Nº 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	We can streamline workload on an easier way, but I think that in hospitality there is something that will never be replaced by AI and technology and is the hospitality part and in human resources, the connection to people.

15.2.10 Interviewee Code: J

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Employer Branding Director at Accor Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 23.11.2023 (duration ≈ 25 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

J	Nº 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Employer Branding Director at Accor Hotels
J	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	Yes, I think I would agree
J	Nº 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	It's everything that comes in the digital world. Not just how they access information, but also, how we get the message across as a company.
J	Nº 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	Yes, absolutely. Statistics speak for themselves. And our industry is one that struggles the most.
J	Nº 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I wouldn't say better but hand in hand with others.

J	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	a lot depends on the target audience you're trying to reach
J	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	most of our talents, especially the front-line staff, are the younger generation so the digital approach is the way forward. So, I would say it's definitely one of the key ones, but obviously complementing also with other tools such as face to face events, school fairs, job fairs.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	most of our talents, especially the front-line staff, are the younger generation so the digital approach is the way forward. So, I would say it's definitely one of the key ones, but obviously complementing also with other tools such as face to face events, school fairs, job fairs.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	Yeah, absolutely.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	career side that has information from Accor, our EVP, our values, and the culture, it has all the job positions available.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We also do virtual job fairs for universities and schools in various countries.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	on the recruitment side, we've tried to implement applying through WhatsApp, a pilot in the Netherlands. And it's something that's very quick, because people don't have the time, or necessarily the wish to spend too much time on submitting a job application.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	from a communications perspective, pretty much everything we do is of course digital.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we have social media channels and strategy. The main channel for us is the “Heart of Hospitality” Instagram account and “Heart of Hospitality” website, plus some smaller accounts on Facebook.

J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we leverage the same content in every social media, from talent stories, job profiles, different roles in hospitality, also talking about our hotels as a wonderful network, and then what it means to work for Accor. Apart from that, we also have a “Heart of Hospitality” podcast that is available on all the mainstreaming platforms.
J	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	But we cannot forget that we need to have in-person events and experiences. We produce content for job fairs, because these sorts of events are still attractive to some people, necessary, and everyone loves them.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	the key one for us is Instagram
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Globally we are also trialing also TikTok, but it's quite an expensive tool. So, we are collaborating a lot with our global team and on the global channel and it has proved a great success in the last year.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Obviously, on Instagram, it's everything organic, but also, we've done dark ads for especially when it comes to recruitment in certain markets.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We also use YouTube, to some extent, yes, but it's the global account of Accor and not every country has its own.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Accor has also a career website, which is currently being refurbished. And it's the main platform for our recruitment, but also for transmitting what Accor is as an employer and getting the main information on our values and our positioning.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	And then we have the “Heart of Hospitality” website, which is very much linked to our Instagram account, and it has more in-depth interviews with our employees, it has the podcast, and the overall story of Accor as an employer.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	We also use LinkedIn quite a lot but it depends on the countries I can tell.
J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	But it's a channel more focused on a more senior and mid-level talent.

J	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	When it comes to positioning ourselves with entry-level talent, we have to focus more on engaging channels that sit more with younger audiences, like Instagram and TikTok.
J	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes, I think there's no doubt that social media has a massive impact. And that Digital channels have a massive impact on the way, mainly the younger audiences see Accor as a brand to work for. I think companies need to put much, much more effort now in building their employer branding and their positioning on all the digital platforms whenever it's possible. If you're not on any digital platform, then I think it's very Difficult, especially for big players like us with so many roles open and more hotels coming and we're always in need of new talent.
J	N° 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	Yeah definitely.
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	The engagement statistics are very high in comparison to other channels we use, around six times more.
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	Sharing our employees' stories has made significant changes in the way our content is perceived and how people engage with it. And the internal pride and loyalty has shown, they're incredibly honored to take part in the campaign, and to share their stories of why they have chosen Accor and why they've stayed and how do they see their future.
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	engagement rates and on our websites, we check everything, from visits to clicks.
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when we launched the campaign and the podcast episodes, we also measured the media coverage.
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	But there are certain things that are hard to measure, such as how does our campaigns translate in number of job applications
J	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	we run recruitment campaigns, and they have a very strong connection to application rates.

J	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	It was a mix of opinions from our experts in social media and PR team but also an external agency that advises us which would be the best channels to go for. Mostly based on other companies' successes and what lands well with certain audiences.
J	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	we will have to follow the trends on where the new generations are seeking information and implementing our own strategies there.
J	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	we just have to follow the trends and see how we can adapt rather than expect that the talent will come to us.

15.2.11 Interviewee Code: K

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: Talent Acquisition Manager at IHG Hotels

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: MS Teams

Time and date: 27.11.2023 (duration ≈ 19 minutes)

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

K	N° 1	Background Information	Professional Role	Talent Acquisition Manager for IHG Hotels and Resorts in the UK
K	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	I definitely agree with the definition
K	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	employer branding is how we pitch ourselves to the audience and for hospitality specifically, how do we get people excited about our company and who we are.
K	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	needs to be a very clear definition that we go out with on what we can offer our own values and culture
K	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	It is about enticing candidates to choose us over a competitor and it's how we put ourselves out there in the market.
K	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	Yes. It's very difficult.

K	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	the pandemic so obviously hospitality got hit very hard by that and we're still very much in a recovery mode still two years after.
K	N° 3	Strategies for Employer Branding	Industry Level of Talent Attraction	A lot of people left the industry for better work-life balance, better pay, and then didn't come back, leaving a huge gap of skills within the industry.
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think it's a combination of a lot of different things
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think digital branding is really going to attract the new generations who are going to be our future workers.
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	In four years', time 60% of our industry is going to be Gen Z and I think it's a generation who wants an easy way to apply first and are very tech savvy.
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	we really need to invest in that tech and digital side to attract those potential future candidates.
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	I think it's using different arrays of strategies.
K	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	we have 19 different brands within IHG itself and each one of those different brands has its own EVP, and their own brand image, its own colors, slogans, values.
K	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	Here in the UK, we're currently trialing a few different applications methods by giving personalized recommendations to applicants instead of them having to go to job boards and search what they want.
K	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	We have invested a huge chunk of that budget within a few different companies who will really implement things like programmatic targeting through social media.
K	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	One of the companies is called "Placed app" and it's a swipe app. And it puts our brand right in front of the candidate depending on their values, search history.

K	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	we've got one called Placed app which is the swipe app. We also heavily invest in social media platforms. Obviously, we have LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. We are also in a job app focused on hospitality called Caterer Job search. And we run specific recruitment campaigns with them every three months and that's the more programmatic targeting side of things.
K	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	from the trials we conducted Caterer is showing us the best return on investment, not only from a financial perspective but also from a diversity and inclusion outlook. By using it, our clicks and rates going into our websites and our careers pages increased and the number of onboarding interviews as well.
K	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	Then regarding social media, would be LinkedIn, followed by our careers page.
K	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges of Employer Branding Implementation	I think the first one for me is the recruiter's capability. Making sure that your recruitment team is trained correctly, that they understand the platforms that they're using to get the best ROI. We did have to go through quite a lot of time-consuming training for the team when we started rolling out new systems. Another one is budget because we know that these platforms are expensive, even though they might give us what they are looking for. So budgets are a hurdle, and recruiter capability as well.
K	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes. As I said, it's tapping into a resource that we haven't traditionally used. If we look at hospitality pre-pandemic, our hotels were reliant just on standard job boards and applications through our IHG careers page. When we started rolling out the different digital platforms, encountered a pool of talent that we never encountered before. And when we pull our reports and statistics, it's having an impact on the number of successful candidates we are having.
K	N° 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	Yes

K	N° 10	Result of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	When it comes down to the retention pace, I don't really agree.
K	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	When we started rolling employer branding strategies, we saw an increase of about a 30% of applications.
K	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	when we look at the hiring report so, from those applications how many were successful, there's quite a high percentage when compared to traditional job boards.
K	N° 11	Result of Employer Branding	Quantifiable Results and KPI's	I have a monthly catch up with each one of the account managers of the platforms we are working with. We run through their statistics of time to hire, number of applications, successful candidates, even up to stages of interview as well, so we can track the whole process from start to end. Then I would share the results with the hotels and our team, and that's how we're able to make the decisions on continuing or not with those contracts.
K	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	it's all about trial and error with any sort of platform or supplier that you choose to go with
K	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	We do a three-month supplier trial with every platform. After those three months, we expect the results to be there. If they're positive, then we would continue our contract with that supplier or that platform
K	N° 12	Result of Employer Branding	Platform Choice for Employer Branding	the platforms we use now, I already have seen other hotels using. So, I think it's looking at which other hotels are at the same level as us and checking what they are doing
K	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	digital platforms are such a new sort of concept for hotels because we're very traditional in how we recreate and think. It's sort of a mindset shift for the whole industry.
K	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	one of the hottest topics now, is the introduction of AI into the recruitment process.
K	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	We haven't really caught up in hospitality yet, but I think it's something that we can't escape from

K	N° 13	Result of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	there will be an extent that we use AI, but at the end of the day, a candidate who applies for hospitality, is applying to the role because it wants personal connections with guests and other people.
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15.2.12 Interviewee Code: L

Interviewee: Anonymous

Position and company: University Professor with Publications on Employer Branding

Interviewer: Beatriz Neves de Abreu

Place of interview: Questionnaire sent for reply.

Time and date: 26.11.2023

Transcript (relevant selected quotes)

L	N° 2	Strategies for Employer Branding	Understanding of Employer Branding Definition	The essence of DEB in my perception would be any use of the internet to communicate a company's EB to present a positive (but realistic) image of how the company acts in the market as employer for current employees and potentially interested employees.
L	N° 4	Strategies for Employer Branding	Strategies for Talent Attraction	Digital EB is perhaps not a solution for the problem but is becoming a necessity to have to be able to compete in the labor market for talent (the right staff) at all. So, in current times and the future it is no longer the question: 'what do we get when working on (D)EB?' but more 'what will it cost us if we do not work on (D)EB?'.
L	N° 5	Strategies for Employer Branding	Implementation of Employer Branding Strategies	If one wants to see effective examples, they are located outside the hospitality industry. I would suggest looking at companies such as IKEA, Volvo, and Adidas. If, however one looks at an example from the hospitality industry such as Hilton a completely different (traditional) picture of (just) offering jobs comes about.
L	N° 6 & 7	Strategies for Employer Branding	Platforms for Successful Employer Branding	In current times YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Facebook cannot be neglected.

L	N° 8	Strategies for Employer Branding	Challenges for Employer Branding Implementation	The main challenge for hotel companies is complex because first they need to be able to implement a working environment that is beneficial for the employees, then they need to effectively communicate this sense to their current and potential future employees. The problem is that most hotel companies are used to overpromoting their own product quality which then influences their “overrating” themselves as employer. Another, major challenge that the hotel industry (and many other industries) face is how they deal with employees who leave the organization. In the hotel industry in many cases companies do not care a lot about the people who leave.
L	N° 9	Strategies for Employer Branding	Indirect Employer Branding Impact	Yes, DEB has an influence on attraction of talent but the actual real HR in a company influences engagement. If there is no delivery on the DEB promise it backfires in the face of the company and employees will be disappointed.
L	N° 10	Results of Employer Branding	Direct Employer Branding Impact	I do believe however that in the current competition for talent a company cannot do without DEB anymore if it wants to secure enough talent. So, it is a matter of DEB + proper HRM.
L	N° 13	Results of Employer Branding	Emerging Future Trends in Human Resources	As explained above I think it is no longer a matter of choosing to either implement DEB or not. I have to be done for particularly the bigger companies if they want to participate in the “war on talent”. Then full engagement on all the generally accepted platforms is required, of course based on the employees a company is looking for.