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### Apple's strategic approach to the issues of employer and human resource branding

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#### Abstract

In this article, we present research on Apple's employer brand strategy. Theoretically, it provides concepts, important roles and effective research methods for employer brand. Regarding the Apple brand, offering effective recruitment strategies, they have a strong corporate culture, selecting and recruiting personnel through difficult

challenges, in addition to very high requirements in recruitment. When choosing employees, Apple has an extremely attractive and attractive welfare and benefits regime. Through the research results, the advantages and disadvantages are summarized and solutions are proposed to improve the Apple employer brand.

**Keywords:** Employer Branding, Apple

#### 1. Research problem

It is as trend of international integration in all aspects such as economy, society, culture has gradually changed the way of looking at issues in many different directions in which the workers' search for a suitable workplace has also changed compared to before. Every business wants to attract qualified workers. However, it is not an easy task to recruit qualified workers as desired. Finding talented, specialized and experienced employees in recruitment is always the top concern of enterprises in developing a qualified human resource for the company.

The reason is that the company may not have a reputation enough for talented people to find it, or the business that industry has not created a separate culture, attractive environment, career opportunities for workers. Paying attention to salary, bonus and welfare are not decisive factors determining the employee's choice of place to work. New trends have a lot of impact on Choosing a workplace and sticking to the job is a concern of employees today such as: development opportunities, corporate culture, brand values, leadership team, quality and challenges at work. In which, the selection is based on the home brand Recruitment is one of the criteria that employees are interested in today.

So how can businesses dominate in recruiting personnel as well as be known by many potential candidates and attract good candidates? The answer is that businesses need to build themselves a reputable and reliable employer brand. The authors have chosen the topic "Apple's employer branding strategy", in order to clarify the current situation and methods to improve Apple's employer brand strategy.

#### 2. Theoretical basis of employer brand

##### 2.1 Brand and its role

"Branding is the process that includes creating a name and image for your product in the minds of your customers, primarily through closely consistent advertising campaigns. Branding aims at a clear and distinct display in the market to attract attention as well as maintain relationships with customers" (Khoa, 2013).

Brand is the most valuable asset of a business, building a strong brand gives businesses a huge advantage, not only because it creates an image of the product and business but also has important meanings. in creating prestige for products, promoting the consumption of goods and being a sharp weapon in competition. Brand is built from business activities, credibility is built during cooperation with customers.

##### 2.2 Recruitment and the role of recruitment

Recruitment is the process of screening and selecting qualified people for a job in an organization, company, or voluntary program or community group. In small companies, direct leaders or human resources departments are often directly involved in the recruitment process. Meanwhile, large companies can outsource part or leave the entire recruitment process to human resources units. Recruitment takes place when there is a shortage of personnel or the company expands its business, the

demand for high-quality personnel and the demand for seasonal workers (Wikipedia, 2021).

Personnel recruitment is understood as the process of attracting employees who are willing and able to work in an enterprise from many different sources, stemming from the need to expand, supplement or replace human resources in the enterprise. Karma. Recruitment can also be understood as the process of finding and selecting well qualified candidates from inside or outside the organization to meet the job needs, in an efficient and timely manner.

The role of recruitment is to help supplement resources in line with requirements, help enterprises realize business goals most effectively, increase sustainable competitiveness, enable completion of planned plans and help save money, cost savings and effective use of budget resources. From the above roles, effective and planned recruitment activities will help businesses save costs, and at the same time, completing the planned plans will save effective budgets.

### 2.3 Employer brand concept

All businesses that want to survive and develop sustainably need a branding strategy. However, some managers only focus on building a brand for the product, but ignore the brand in recruiting personnel. Some other businesses have the policy that the brand in recruiting personnel (private brand) should be independent of the corporate brand (common brand). These are misconceptions, employer branding is an important component of corporate branding as it conveys information about the culture, goals and values of the business to attract talent to join the workforce".

The concept of employer brand was first introduced by Simon Barrow, president of People In Business and Tim Ambler, Senior Lecturer at the London School of Business, in the journal *Brand Management* in 1996. An employer brand is the set of professional, economic and psychological benefits that come with working for an enterprise. Research results also show that there is a similarity between the benefits that employer brands bring to employees and the benefits that consumers get from the product's brand, namely three benefits: after:

- Functional benefits: useful development and/or performance,
- Economic benefits: material or bonus,
- Psychological benefits: a sense of belonging, direction and purpose.

According to Sullivan (2004), employer brand is "an image that shows the organization as a great place to work". Agreeing with this view, McLeod and Waldman (2013), employer brand is a concept that refers to the perception of current and future employees of an organization as a great place to work.

The UK Institute for Human Resources and Development (CIPD) defines Employer Branding as a set of attributes and qualities – often intangible – that make an organization special, promising Schedule a specific work experience and attract people who want to grow and perform at their best within that culture.

Coupled with the concept of employer branding is the concept of employer branding. If "employer brand" is seen as the result of all brand-related activities, "employer branding" can be described as process to achieve this result (Petkovic, 2009; Christiaans, 2013).

Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) defines that the application of branding principles to the field of human resource

management is called employer branding. This is because HR techniques increasingly resemble traditional marketing techniques and also promotional activities related to corporate identity (Olins, 1996; Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) also defines that "employer branding is the process of building a unique, recognizable employer identity". At the same time, the two men also confirmed that there are two main types of assets created from employer branding:

- Brand associations: help candidates shape the employer image and the attractiveness of the organization as an employer.
- Brand loyalty: comes from the current employees of the business, contributing to increased productivity, increasing their engagement. According to Steve Gilliver (2009), employer branding is about defining an organization's position in the recruitment market and setting it apart. Employer branding gives everyone in the organization a position and answers the question of who they are. It promotes the recruitment process of the organization and the interaction between people in the organization.

Thus, it can be said that employer brand is the result of the process of building a brand, brand image, brand awareness combined with the concepts of human resource management on recruitment to create image of the organization as a great place to work in the eyes of current employees, potential candidates and other stakeholders

### 2.4 The importance of employer branding

According to a survey by Novo Group in 2015, 50% of candidates will turn down a job if the company brand is not strong enough. Conversely, an employer with a good brand in the market will attract twice as many candidates as a rival company. Besides, according to the survey results of LinkedIn in 2012, 83% said that employer brand has a significant influence on the ability of enterprises to recruit talent, recruitment costs will also be reduced by 50%. for a good employer brand. In addition, a good employer brand also helps businesses retain their key employees, reflected in a 28% reduction in employee turnover.

A strong brand in recruitment brings many important benefits to businesses, 05 reasons why businesses must build their own employer brand Frederiksen (2017):

- Firstly, when it comes to recruitment, the recruitment of enterprises will have great positive impacts. A strong employer brand will increase both the quantity and quality of resumes. With a larger and better number of applications, businesses will have many options to choose the best and most suitable candidates in a short time. These benefits are extremely useful when businesses are looking for candidates with high requirements for professional skills and experience.
- The second is about talent retention, retaining good employees is an ongoing challenge for professional services firms. If a business has tried to implement its own recruitment branding, this is the time for the business to "repay". Businesses often have to use a temporary strategy that is to spend a larger amount of money to retain talent. However, money is not always an issue. A strong employer brand can be a powerful motivator for employees to stay with a business. Many studies have shown that more employees are willing to

stay with a business because of a great place to work (brand) than because of a higher salary.

- The third is employee satisfaction, employees always want to feel better at their workplace every day. Accepting a job at a place with a poor reputation is often not a wise move. Most people want to work in an environment with a reputation, having the support of those around them. When employees feel satisfied with their current position, they will be ready to stick around and make significant contributions to the business.
- The fourth is about culture, one of the important considerations for candidates is whether they fit the company's culture or not. Businesses that build a good employer brand are more likely to attract talent that fits their organizational culture. This helps increase the interaction of employees with each other, increasing their satisfaction with the business.
- Finally, when it comes to financial performance, there are two ways a strong employer brand can help improve a business's finances. The first is to reduce costs. With a strong employer brand, recruitment costs will be lower due to shorter recruitment time, especially for positions requiring high qualifications. The reason is that with a strong employer brand, it will attract a large number of high-quality candidates in a quick time. These cost reductions will increase profitability. A second, possibly much larger financial impact is that attracting top talent and keeping them engaged over time will also help a business improve in revenue growth.

In short, for the external environment, employer brand helps businesses attract employees and create positive associations to enhance corporate image. For the internal environment, employer brand creates value by increasing employee satisfaction and commitment, forming a unified and strong corporate culture (Backhaus & Tiko, 2004). Thus, it is time for HR professionals to catch up with the trend, find a more effective recruitment method to have the opportunity to find and attract the best talent.

### 3. Research methods

Research methods are considered as practical theories of the research paper, and determine the success of the research. The application of a research method means the application of a method to conduct the discovery of the research object. Each topic will have different specific research methods, but these methods will always be closely related to the content of the research problem.

#### ▪ *Qualitative research method*

Qualitative research method is a type of research often used to probe, find out opinions and views to find insight into issues. In addition, this method can also be used to detect future customer trends.

The methods of data collection of qualitative research are quite diverse and often do not have a specific structure like quantitative research. Some of these methods include focus groups, individual interviews, and observations. The sample of this method is usually smaller and more carefully selected. In addition, it is associated with relying on documents and research sources of qualitative methods so that we can point out the role of employee care activities, the results of employee care to create brand. Apple's employer brand.

Qualitative research requires creativity and flexibility. Researchers cannot just rely on raw survey data to write reports, or draw conclusions. A variety of analytical methods and techniques need to be used to decode these data, such as:

- Content theory (CT)
- Grounded theory (GT)
- Thematic analysis (TA)
- Discourse analysis (DA)

Through the qualitative research method, Apple has approached the audience in the most natural way, to ensure that the behaviors, opinions and views given by employees will be the most objective and accurate. Based on the literature and research sources of the qualitative method, we can highlight the role of employee care activities and the results of employee care that create Apple's employer brand.

#### ▪ *Quantitative research method*

Quantitative research method is the collection and analysis of information on the basis of data obtained from the market. The purpose of quantitative research is to draw market conclusions through the use of statistical methods to process data and figures. Quantitative research is suitable for research on attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of surveyed people. Quantitative results from a sample group will be generalized to a larger sample population.

Methods for collecting quantitative data are often more structured than qualitative data collection and include various forms of surveys such as online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys, web surveys, and online surveys. mail or email.

Quantitative research is often associated with relying on theories and inferences to quantify, measure research factors, examine the correlation between variables in the form of measures and statistics. Use statistical techniques to summarize data, describe patterns, relationships, and connect variables together, resulting in reports with useful, easy-to-view information to help make key decisions more precise. There are two types:

- Descriptive statistics
- Inferential statistics

#### ▪ *Methods of using primary data*

Primary data are new data collected for the first time for this study. The information to be collected includes: information about the customer's use of the product, their expectations with the product, their evaluation of the product's attributes and accompanying services.

As the questionnaires obtained through the online survey process are built based on the set of questions given that have the greatest impact on the research problem, which can save costs, information quickly and precisely to help Apple get the share and experience to perfect its employer brand better.

#### ▪ *Comparative method*

To find the most accurate documents on the research problem as well as reliable sources of information from the Internet. There is also a comparison of the results of employee care and recruitment activities at Apple with other domestic enterprises to see how well the company has done well and not well in employee care. How to compare with the rest of the business to make a plan to improve the bad things in the future, thereby bringing satisfaction and trust to

the employees who want to apply for the company and also bring position, reputation and long-term and sustainable development for the business.

#### ▪ **Methods of analysis and summarization of experience**

The study reviews the results of past practical activities to draw useful conclusions for practice and for science. In the article, we have researched and shown the results achieved in the care of Apple employees and evaluated the positive activities that need to be actively applied and promoted and the activities that are lacking to add and remove the ones. Poor performance affects the care for employees. From there, it helps to make Apple recruitment brand strategies more successful and develop further.

In the topic, a number of tools were used to support research methods to help make statistics and analyze some data and data in order to obtain accurate results and save time and costs. for the research process.

In summary, the combined use of research methods in the topic contributes a great deal to the success of the study, helping us to find strategies about employer brand in the most objective way.

## **4. Research results**

### **4.1 Assessing the current status of employer brand status of**

#### ▪ **Advantage**

- Apple is very thorough and the interview is extremely intense, tearful and stressful for candidates who are in the application stage with competition with a large number of other candidates along with having to spend a lot of time. Up to 6 hours professional interview. Apple always designs challenges, tests that are extremely difficult and challenging than the actual capacity, expertise needed in the job, the position that Apple recruits.

The recruitment of Apple company has created a brand, a brand about the challenge and part of the difficulty of wanting to be part of the working apparatus of the world's leading noble Apple brand. Through the recruitment story, Apple has also created its own brand and substance, creating the top desire and desire for any worker, becoming the largest recruitment brand in the world.

- Apple's employee benefits, salary, and treatment regime are always the most important and primary things that make job candidates yearn to be a part of Apple's working machine to enjoy great things. This great deal: The product discounts are extremely attractive and preferential for official employees and even the relatives of these employees, in addition, Apple also cares about other factors: Health, entertainment and both the maternity regime of its employees so that they work with extremely high productivity. Salaries for employees are always at the top of the top technology companies in the world.

From there, we see that Apple also created a brand of recruitment in terms of benefits, benefits, remuneration, and importantly, understanding and concern in all aspects of life with employees working for them. me. What employees always want and wish their company to do has policies for employees like Apple.

#### ▪ **Disadvantages**

The only downside to Apple when it comes to branding its employer is what employers create standards for candidates call the element "Love the product made by Apple": There's nothing wrong with liking the brand that I'm working at, but it's unreasonable and somewhat prejudiced because candidates who don't use Iphone but use Android products will be immediately eliminated. first in the interview.

#### ▪ **Solution**

Just remove the element "Only apply for employees using Iphone" then Apple's employee application process will be perfect, and no other candidate, another bright pearl of talent will be missed.

## **4.2. Methods to enhance employer brand**

### **4.2.1 Effective recruitment strategy**

When we talk about Apple, we immediately think of the top phones and laptops. However, not only that, Apple is also one of the largest employer brands in the world. For a long time, Apple has become the number 1 destination for any worker who wants to make a name for himself. Here are the core factors for the successful recruitment of senior Apple personnel.

#### **1. Appreciate talented people right from the recruitment interview stage**

Apple presents its views on human resource management and recruitment according to the following clear criteria:

- Achievements: When recruiting, Apple focuses on the achievements that its job interview candidates have achieved in previous positions, instead of just looking at a perfect CV. If you want to apply for an Apple position, show the recruiting team the projects or products you've completed.
- Love products made by Apple: A person who loves and has had a truly memorable experience with Apple products will certainly know and be able to pass the job interview, want to stick with Apple in the long run. It can even be said that Apple will eliminate candidates who are using Nokia or Samsung phones every day right from the recruitment interview round. With Apple, the candidate will be completely unsuitable if not someone who understands and uses its products.
- Recruiting good people: Apple's recruitment interview round took place quite fiercely and extremely fiercely. In addition to having to compete directly with other candidates, you will have to go through a long time of up to 6 hours for professional interviews with 12 people arranged in the recruitment and administrative staff. Screening candidates for recruitment is extremely important, and currently companies that have been providing human resources are also facing problems at this stage every day, but it is Apple's human resource management style that has almost completely solved that recruitment problem.

## **2. Strong cultural foundation**

The corporate culture shown from Apple's recruiting stage is the key to attracting candidates, and this is also a recruiting lesson for managers. Dedication, respect, and extreme fairness are at the top of Apple's priorities in the workplace. There will be no situation where managers holding positions



in Apple will push responsibilities to each other. The human resources specialists there also always obey and enthusiastically support their superiors. At the same time, superiors always try to manage human resources well and protect the interests of their employees.

Undoubtedly, the products of the "half-eaten apple" brand are always at the forefront in the hearts of customers, this is partly due to the corporate culture of solidarity among employees that has made this brand go far in the tech industry. This also helps those who have been and are working in the profession immediately realize the lesson of recruiting personnel: Only when your business has a good cultural foundation will it be possible to retain really talented candidates to stick with the business.

### 3. Selecting and recruiting personnel through challenges

Usually, when recruiting personnel, the interviewer from the company's human resources department will ask questions and challenges designed to match the capacity and position of the employee. However, with Apple, if you intend to join a technology corporation in the shape of a "half-eaten apple", you should pay attention to this recruiting lesson because they will present more difficult challenges than you. your actual capacity and requirements to complete well.

It is because of such "wacky" tests that Apple's personnel level and human resource management quality are always revealed and enhanced, constantly improving. At the same time, Apple's candidates also understand that they are one of the key factors to build the Apple technology "empire".

When "joining" at Apple, candidates who want to pass the recruitment round will be challenged to combine both soft skills and professional skills. Some questions this brand can ask to challenge the situational skills of job interview candidates such as "With an 8-year-old child, how would you explain the concept of a modem or a router?", "If you have 2 eggs in your hand, how can you determine where the top floor of the building is, provided the eggs are not broken? when released?" If you can smoothly use your interviewing skills to pass Apple's recruitment round and be lucky enough to get hired at Apple with tough questions such as: Well then, congratulations, you're really in the top of the world's top quality human resources!

However, growing enterprises and HR departments in Vietnam have not yet applied this recruitment lesson and interviewing skill. This is a way of selecting candidates who are considered to be quite qualified and it also improves the efficiency of teamwork.

#### 4.2.2 Welfare regime and benefits

- **Product discounts:** When you have good interviewing skills and have officially become an official Apple employee under any position, you will also enjoy up to 25% discount on iPod products, iPad, iPhone or even Macbook. For software products, when working at Apple, you will enjoy a discount of up to 50%. The best thing about it is that the employees' relatives who pass the recruitment round are also entitled to that special preferential price, unlimited. In addition, this technology company will give you an extra \$250 voucher when you go to buy an iPad or \$ 500 when you buy a computer.
- **Maternity regime:** Female employees who have passed the recruitment round and officially work at Apple will be entitled to 4 weeks of maternity leave and

16 weeks of prenatal leave according to the regulations of the HR department. For husbands whose wives are pregnant, Apple will facilitate up to 6 weeks of paid leave. Even if there are any female employees in the company who want to freeze their eggs to focus on serving for work, Apple is willing to pay 100% of the entire cost of the freezing service.

- **Relax often:** This popular "trillion-dollar" business will always organize entertainment parties for employees. That is also a lesson in recruiting personnel that is always true for every company: Create a dynamic environment, imbued with a culture of "work hard, play hard". Apple is willing to pay, invite big entertainment names to the concert for employees such as Miley Cyrus, One Republic, Demi Lovato. Not to mention the drinks served for this special night will be complete. totally free.
- **Sponsor a gym:** Working in an office environment is always full of high pressure, but Apple always encourages its employees to focus on physical activity, physical balance and psychological factors after a series of sitting periods. This is also a great feature and gets the absolute score that other technology giants such as Facebook and Google often use to manage human resources and treat employees who pass their recruitment round. Specifically, every month, the Apple brand will automatically give each employee an amount of 300 USD to use the gym/yoga service.

### 5. Conclusions and recommendations

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The world-famous brand from the US, Apple is a prominent large technology corporation in the field of IT, most recently in products, entertainment and consumption. Therefore, the fact that Apple is growing as fast and strong as it is today largely because they have an extremely talented staff. For a large corporation like Apple, they have a strong and professional culture, and Apple has a welfare regime and benefits for their employees, including their family members, so this is a key attraction. many HR candidates. Therefore, Apple always has extremely strict and scientific recruitment strategies for human resources. Apple has a view of human resource management and recruitment according to very clear criteria along with "evil" challenges to screen out qualified candidates to build a quality human resources team. high quantity. In addition to such highly demanding recruitment strategies, there are always things that are unreasonable and somewhat prejudiced by candidate.

#### 5.2 Recommendation

Apple should continue to develop more new professions and ways of applying, no less dramatic, pressure and difficulty to recruit worthy candidates and real talents, build a good brand. brand in recruitment with its own substance to create value in Apple's recruitment, creating an image in the recruitment of the world's leading technology giant Apple with the point of view "Apply for Apple regardless of any situation. Any job is noble and the person who gets the job is amazing and talented and talented."

Along with that is to keep the way to create a brand in recruitment as before with "wow" tests and difficult and pressured interviews for candidates. And along with that is the level of compensation, benefits, salary, understanding

the needs of employees and meeting it above expectations. And most importantly, immediately overcome the disadvantage of "Apply only for employees using Iphone". Then Apple's employee application process will be perfect, and a candidate, a bright gem will not be missed.

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