

# *Communication in Attracting Employees within Corporations. Case Study: - Analysis of the Way of Communication of 10 Multinationals with Subsidiaries in Romania*

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**Abstract:** *Attracting the right employees for a particular position is becoming more and more challenging for employers. The research aims to obtain a series of recommendations for the benefit of employers who fail to communicate well enough to find candidates for available positions. For shaping this guide, existing research and specialized studies were consulted and the way in which ten employers communicate their available positions, of which eight are considered preferred employers in Romania in 2020, were analysed. The most important and unexpected results obtained from the analysis were discussed in an interview with a communications director.*

**Keywords:** *communication, employee, employer brand, employer, recruitment.*

## **1. Introduction**

In Romania, in the last two years, in addition to the crisis generated by the SARS-CoV-2 virus or the increase in inflation, the business environment has faced a crisis caused by a lack of labour. To overcome such a period of crisis, a company needs employees who meet the requirements of the job. But what do employers do to get the attention of suitable candidates? How do they communicate their available jobs? Can inefficient communication of the company be a factor in supporting this labor crisis?

The Charter Institute of Personnel and Development explains that all organizations have an "employer brand", whether or not they are aware of it. The employer brand is how organizations differentiate themselves in the labour market, allowing them to recruit and retain the right people as their employees (source: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/recruitment/brand-factsheet#graft>, last accessed on March 24, 2021).

A strong employer brand helps companies compete to hire the most competent employees. Simon Barrow and Richard Mosley (2005) argue that employer branding is a long-term strategy that helps manage the knowledge and perceptions of current and potential employees who are in a relationship with a particular company.

The employer brand is the one that outlines the public image of an organization, which will be perceived by candidates as an attractive place to work, its objectives being to attract the right candidates, to retain these employees, and to highlight the benefits that the employer offers its employees. Birca Alic (2013: 78) explains that "in the opinion of potential employees, the attractiveness of the organization depends on four main elements: the employer's brand, the reward offered, the duties and responsibilities offered and the professional future of the person".

## **2. Research methods**

The methods used for this research are content analysis and individual interview. Gunter (2000) defined content analysis as "a method of

studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantifiable way, for the purpose of measuring variables". Interviews are among the most familiar strategies for collecting qualitative data.

Through the content analysis, an x-ray was performed of the way in which 10 multinationals based in Romania communicate. For a more complete picture, the way in which 10 employers communicate on 3 different communication channels was analysed.

**Channel 1:** own websites of the 10 companies;

The KPIs included in the research are: "Careers" Section, Section dedicated to specialists, Graduate section, Student section, Language used, Visual elements, HR Department Contact Details, Type of text, Marks of interactivity, Degree of detail of the post, Detail the profile and Benefits.

**Channel 2:** analyzing accounts on social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn) for a period of six months (1 December 2020 – 31 May 2021).

**Channel 3:** accounts on job pages, especially on the "Hipo" platform.

To find out the employer reputation of the ten multinationals analysed, the UndeLucrăm.ro page was analysed. This is the largest online community dedicated to employees in Romania. On this site, jobs, employee reviews about companies, information about salaries, and details about how to conduct job interviews can be found.

The KPIs included in the research are Opportunities for advancement, Salary package, Time at the office vs. free time, Management, Procedures and values, Overall assessment, and Total rating.

Since universities provide the labour market with candidates, the number of partnerships between the 10 companies concerned and the 47 state universities in Romania was taken into account.

Carrying out extensive communication campaigns of the employer brand requires a wealth of resources and knowledge. Through an online

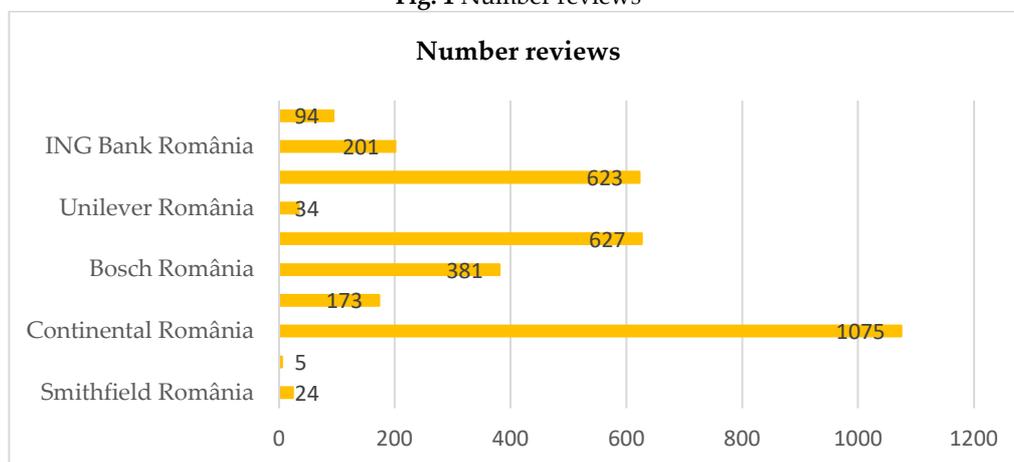
documentation, the purpose was to find out whether the ten companies use employer brand communication services or recruitment.

The most important and unexpected results that were obtained were discussed in an interview with a communications director.

### 3. Results

The research began by analysing the data on the UndeLucrăm site.

Fig. 1 Number reviews



The 1st place in the top of the number of evaluations is taken by Continental (1,075 evaluations), the employer that ranked the 1<sup>st</sup> in the top of favourite employers made by Hipo. Analyzing the employees' degree of satisfaction for the salary received, it was noticed that the Continental employer ranks only the 4th out of the ten companies that were analysed. Therefore, it can be concluded that it is not the salary package, but the complete benefits package that counts in the evaluation of the employees. Continental was voted as the one who has a more difficult selection process than the rest of the employers. Two conclusions can be drawn here: either the desire to work for a favourite employer attracted to interviews people who are not sufficiently prepared or the employer is a very selective one.

The employer that has or has had the largest number of partnerships with Romanian universities is Continental (19 partnerships).

Analysing the presence of the companies on social media platforms, it was observed that only 2 of the 10 multinational subsidiaries have their own account on the LinkedIn platform, 4 have a space allocated within the parent company's account, and 4 are not present at all on the platform. The platform is specially designed for creating professional relationships and identifying suitable candidates. This result was also noticed through the individual interview. Cristina Bodea, Director of Communication & Sustainability Smithfield Romania, believes there are two well-founded reasons why not all multinationals have a LinkedIn account: firstly, the corporate communication policy may not allow the management of such an account locally, and secondly, the predominant specificity of the activities carried out in the areas of production requires other channels of communication of available stations.

Analysing the accounts on the social platforms of the ten companies, 17 topics touched on in the posts on social media channels were identified:

- the most approached topics were “CSR actions” and “presentation of products or services offered by the company”. 8 out of 10 companies had such posts.
- 7 of the 10 companies posted materials on the “employment announcements” and “presentation of spaces / work environment” topics.
- 6 of the 10 companies are promoted with the help of a public person, and present statements from the current employees.
- 5 of the 10 employers organise competitions, promote their values, vision, and mission, and offer their followers various useful information and advice.
- 4 out of 10 employers communicate the awards / distinctions received and the benefits enjoyed by the employees.

- 3 of the analysed employers present their work technologies.
- only 2 out of 10 employers promote and implement inclusion and diversity programs (Kaufland and Unilever) and only one employer communicates its presence at job fairs (Hella).

As it was highlighted in the theoretical part of this paper, the amount of information communicated varies from one channel to another. Social channels are not the most favourable environment for long posts of dozens of lines of text. Websites allow you to post larger amounts of information. Considering this aspect, how many of the 10 companies refer to their own websites in the posts on social channels was another topic that was taken into account:

- 6 of the companies make frequent references to the website;
- 3 of the employers rarely make references to the website;
- only one company chose not to refer to the website during the analysed period (Coca-Cola).

Decrypting the way in which they visually present the information from the Careers section on their own web pages, it could be pinpointed that all 10 companies use graphics elements specifically dedicated to the section.

- 8 employers present images with their own employees;
- 5 employers present images with key products, services or operations;
- 5 employers choose to present images with people, but purchased images, not their own;
- 4 employers created and posted videos presenting their employees;

This result was also analysed through the individual interview. Cristina Bodea, Director of Communication & Sustainability Smithfield Romania, believes that "If recruiters want to reach a young audience, which is part of the category of digital natives, then it is appropriate that the messages communicated in a job advertisement be presented in the form of a clip":

- 2 chose to make presentation videos especially dedicated to students or interns (Continental and Bosch).

The degree of detail of job postings can be defining in a candidate's decision to apply or look for another job:

- all 10 employers communicate in the ads placed on their website what the profile of the candidate sought is (characteristics and skills);
- 9 of them mention from the title very clearly what position they are communicating about;
- 8 employers provide a description of the department to which the new employee will belong;
- 7 employers present the obligations from the job description;
- 5 employers develop the benefits of the job.

This result was also described through the individual interview. Cristina Bodea, Director of Communication & Sustainability Smithfield Romania believes that the Human Resources Departments of multinational companies have complex benefit policies that provide many variables on which these benefits are granted. Benefits may vary depending on work experience, experience in the company, position occupied, working overtime if we are talking about the production area. An online platform is not the best environment to communicate such procedures. It is therefore recommended to mention an email address or a recruiter's phone number, and those interested can access these channels to find out the specific information they want:

- 4 employers offer a brief presentation of the possible career development;
- only one in 10 employers has a position in the hierarchy or the number of subordinates (Kaufland), but this may also be since most of the analysed ads did not represent management positions;
- only one employer posted ads with ambiguous wording;
- 4 of the 10 companies did not mention the recruiters' contact details in the Careers section on their own websites.

This result was also examined through the individual interview. Cristina Bodea, Director of Communication & Sustainability Smithfield

Romania considers that "If we are talking about a company with a high reputation, with a strong employer brand, I believe that a candidate interested enough in a certain position should find the motivation and tools necessary to achieve its goal. I do not consider this to be a problem. However, when it comes to a company that does not have a high reputation or a strong employer brand to which candidates aspire, the absence of specific contact coordinates is an impediment and does not encourage candidates to advance in the selection process".

Explaining how the recruitment process is to be conducted and the functionality of the site to allow a CV to be uploaded are methods that can significantly increase the number of candidates for an available position:

- out of the 10 companies, only one does not allow the upload of a CV right before the website (Smithfield Romania);
- 5 out of 10 companies provide details on the selection process.

## **Conclusion**

Both from the literature and after the analysis of the results obtained through the research method, the adaptation was identified as the key to the success of the communication of available positions within a corporation. Adapting messages to the target audience (ideal candidates for a particular job), to the channels chosen for communicating messages, but also to the trends at the time and using the same ad type published on all available channels, but changing the position title, will not attract the search candidates.

Detailed analysis of the candidates concerned will give answers to questions such as: What key messages should be communicated? On what platforms? In what language? With what tone? How detailed? The mix of channels and messages must be the ones that the ideal candidate accesses and understands.

If the content analysis revealed that not all 10 employers communicate all types of messages identified as suitable in a job advertisement, and that they do not use all the channels mentioned in

the theoretical part, the individual interview has provided clues related to the reasons that can be undertaken.

The ease of the process by which a candidate can learn all the information s/he needs to apply for a job is also an essential aspect for attracting employees, especially for employers who do not enjoy a high level of fame yet. Candidates must have recruiter contact details (email, telephone), as well as addresses for websites and social media.

The fact that the Continental employer has the largest number of partnerships with universities may be one of the reasons it is evaluated in so many lines and positive evaluations. Assessments can also come in large numbers from students who had their first contact with the labour market within this company, directly from the faculty benches.

The process by which recruiters learn how to communicate to attract the suitable candidates is a continuous one and, in order to be successful, it must be based on several principles, including that of feedback. Like the learning process between the student and the teachers, where the teacher needs the student's feedback to know how to proceed next (Popescu Mitroi, Mazilescu, Dragomir, Dinu, Vrgovici, 2012) as well as in the recruitment process, recruiters need feedback from the candidates, both from the accepted and from the rejected ones.

All the 17 topics mentioned in the third chapter must be addressed by an employer on social networks if the aim is for future employees to have a clear opinion on responsibilities, benefits, environment, and work technologies.

Another important aspect is the unity of the messages communicated. In addition to the fact that subsidiaries of multinationals must communicate in alignment with the spatial context, they must also follow the directions drawn by the parent company.

The clear outline of the employer's identity, the clear outline of the employee profile needed to achieve the company's goals and the choice of the right mix of channels and messages communicated are thus the elements identified as essential in the successful process of

communicating the available positions in order to attract the searched employees.

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