

Student Recruitment 2.0

How to take your campus strategy
online to engage the best students



Table of contents

03 Introduction

04 Why you need to supercharge your talent brand

09 Step 1: Understand what students want and craft your employee value proposition

12 Step 2: Create impactful talent brand content

20 Step 3: Reach the right students and amplify your message

27 Go mobile: It's not optional, it's expected

29 Take your online tactics offline

31 Final thoughts

33 How LinkedIn can help you

35 Questions?

Introduction

It's time to revolutionize student recruiting. Or, at the very least, bring it up to speed with the rest of the talent acquisition industry.

Most campus recruiting strategies are centered around on-campus events. While this can be effective at targeting a few schools, it is out of touch with the way students seek career opportunities today.

Students are mobile, social, and connected 24/7. When it comes to finding a job, they do their homework early. Most of them start researching possible career paths before they even get to college and by the time they apply for internships or jobs, they have a short list of companies they want to work for.

- They have seen and interacted with your talent brand for years and, by now, they know if you are what they are looking for.
- Their research has taken them beyond your careers website – they are finding out more about your employees and company culture across LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.
- In some cases, they actively engage with your current employees, identifying and connecting with alumni of their school.

The result? Students have likely formed an opinion of you as an employer long before you even set foot on campus for the bi-annual career fair.

The goal of this eBook is to walk you through how you can transform your student recruiting efforts and get your talent brand in front of them early and effectively, ultimately hiring the best student talent months before your competitors.



What is talent brand?

Your talent brand is the highly social, totally public version of your employer brand. It incorporates what your talent – past, present and potential – thinks, feels and shares about your company as a place to work.



Why you need to supercharge your talent brand

The student talent pool is huge

This school year, there will be 21 million students enrolled in colleges and universities across the United States. That's about 6 million more students than there were in 2000, and their number will steadily continue to grow by about half a million a year.¹

Do you have a plan for how to effectively reach such a large audience at scale?

That surely won't happen by only participating in career fairs at a few target schools. You have to think creatively if you want to attract the best students in the world, who are spending more and more time researching companies online.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics

² Class of 2014: The Next Generation of Top Talent

Where do recent graduates plan to search for a job?²

Networking, social media, and friend referrals are emerging as hot new ways for students to apply to jobs.

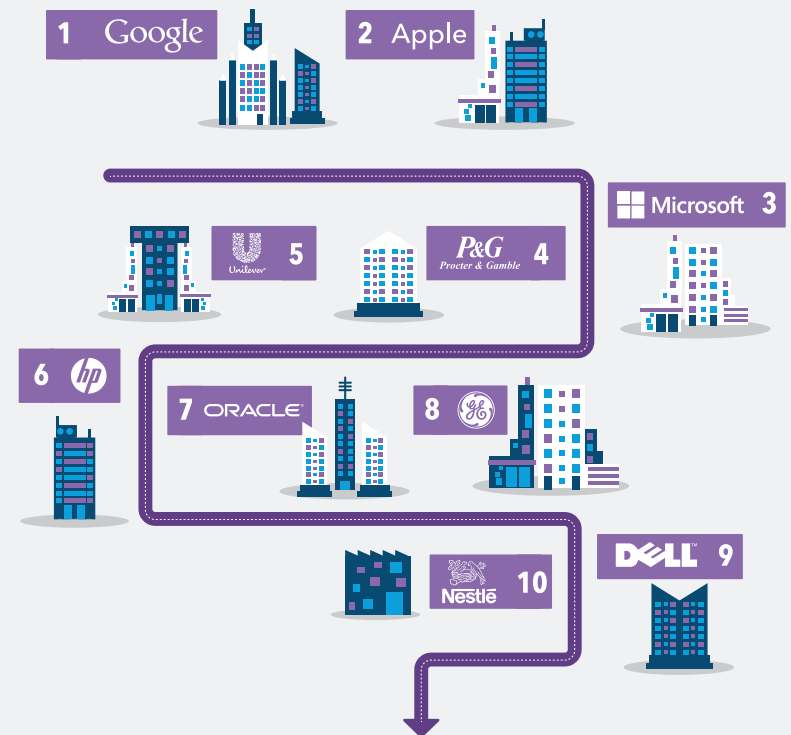


Strong talent brands attract students

We wanted to know which employers students sought out the most. To find out, we analyzed the interactions between 39M+ students and companies on LinkedIn. The result was *The Most InDemand Employers for Students* ranking you see on the right.

As you look at these 10 companies, your first reaction might be: “It figures. These are huge brands with a lot of resources and hot products.” However, what makes these companies successful at recruiting students is their multi-channel approach. They don’t only go on campus once a year, they are on social channels 24/7, building out their talent brands.

The Most InDemand Employers for Students



Social media lets you equalize the playing field

While your company may not be as well-known as Google or Unilever, you have an equal opportunity to be noticed.

Social media has leveled the playing field by taking away the outrageous price tag that comes with reaching a high-priority audience.

Now regardless of your company size, you can communicate with your social media followers and get your talent brand message to students who matter. This is just the way to grab students' attention.

How to promote your talent brand with students:

- 01 Find out what students are interested in when it comes to picking a job.
- 02 Describe how your company delivers that value for them.
- 03 Find the most effective social media channels to spread your message.

Cut through the noise

As you plan your talent brand messaging on social media, remember that students are exposed to a lot of information. In order to be heard, make sure that your message is tailored to their interests.

Every day...



500M

tweets are posted



1.8B

photos are uploaded
and shared



400M

Snapchats are sent



20M

hours of YouTube
videos are viewed



5000

marketing messages
are seen by the
average person



Step 1

Understand what students want and craft your
employee value proposition

What students care about when considering a job

Before you craft your employee value proposition (EVP) and talent brand messaging, you should know what is important to students when it comes to their first job.

We asked students in North America to rank the importance of certain job attributes. It turns out that while a balanced lifestyle and compensation are important, they also highly prioritize culture fit, career path, and sense of pride with the company they choose. Think about how these attributes map to your company's culture, then incorporate what's appropriate into your student-specific EVP.

What students value the most:

- 1 Work/life balance
- 2 Excellent compensation & benefits
- 3 Culture that fits my personality
- 4 Strong career path
- 5 A place where I'd be proud to work

What students value the least:

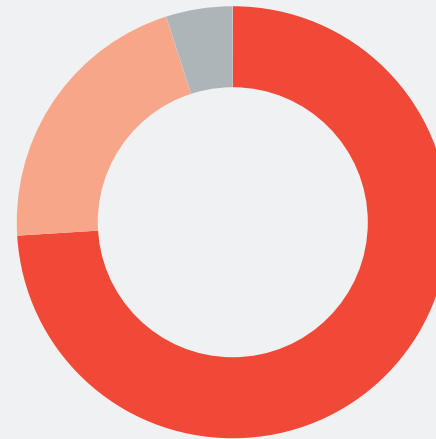
- 1 Internal transfer opportunities
- 2 A company with a long-term strategic vision
- 3 Flexible work arrangements
- 4 Values employee contributions
- 5 Having a good relationship with your superiors

Students consume a lot of professional content on social media

Our data shows that 74% of students on LinkedIn research people and companies, and 21% actively search for jobs. This means that what your company and your employees post online could have a huge influence on future recruits.

It's also interesting to examine what kind of information students prefer to consume once they land on these company pages and people's profiles. According to our research, students spend the most time reading business leadership and entrepreneurship articles.

What do students do on LinkedIn?



74% Research people and companies

21% Actively search for jobs

5% Other



Step 2

Create impactful talent brand content

Start believing in content marketing

Since students consume a good deal of professional content on social media, you should start thinking about creating some. It's time to get really familiar with content marketing.

Content marketing for recruiters means spreading your talent brand message through original or curated content, while delivering actual value to your readers. And “delivering value” is the key concept here. Remember that as you share information about your company online, it should always answer the questions “What’s in it for the students? How is this information useful for them and not just promoting us?”

As you start thinking about how to engage students, here are a few popular content tactics and formats you can use:

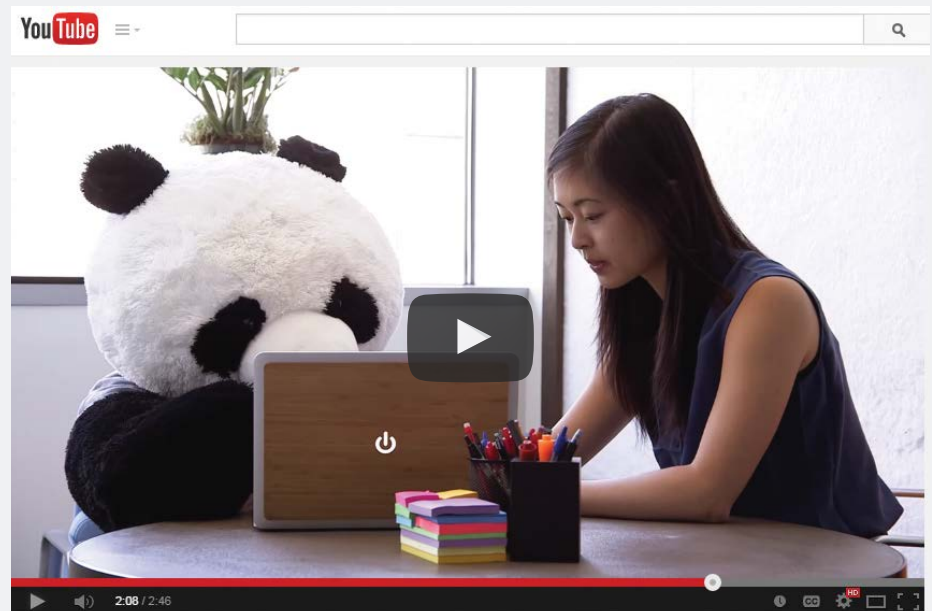
- Video testimonials** that convey the authentic student voice.
- Quotes** that talk about the upsides of working at your company.
- Blog posts** with details about the students' experiences with you.
- Thought leadership and advice** from your executives.
- Photos** celebrating your interns and their contributions.
- A student-specific online community** where they can ask questions.

Video testimonials that convey the authentic student voice

An authentic voice from a relatable source is incredibly powerful in sharing your brand story, your culture, and the day-to-day life at your company. A great way to do that is to create a video testimonial, showing interns and recently-graduated hires talking about what it's like to work at your company.

Dropbox highlights its engineering internship program

The San Francisco startup created a powerful video where its top engineers talk about the importance of interns. Students themselves feature prominently, sharing the impact and meaningful experiences they have had. [Watch the video.](#)



Unilever created engaging status updates by using images with quotes from their interns.

Quotes that talk about the upsides of working at your company

Sometimes you don't have the time and resources to film a full-blown video testimonial. Instead, get a few written quotes from your interns and newly-graduated hires, and splash them against an eye-catching background. This will still give you the authentic voice of the student but save you production expenses.



Blog posts detailing students' internship experiences

If you want to give students an in-depth look into your company, ask one of your interns to write a 500-word blog post about her experience. This will provide more color and detail to the readers and will give them useful tips for how to approach you.

Salesforce.com encouraged its interns to blog about how they found internships with the company. [Read full post.](#)

My Summer With The Service Cloud

Aug 22 2012 | By [Marissa Kraines](#) | in [Careers](#) , [Service Cloud](#)

Comments 3

Tweet 53

Share 46

Submit

When I started my MBA internship search, I knew exactly where I wanted to be (San Francisco), what I wanted to do (Product Marketing), and which company I wanted to work for ([salesforce.com](#)). It was "just" a matter of making this happen. Of course by this I mean that it was a stressful and high-stakes process during which I couldn't afford to fail.



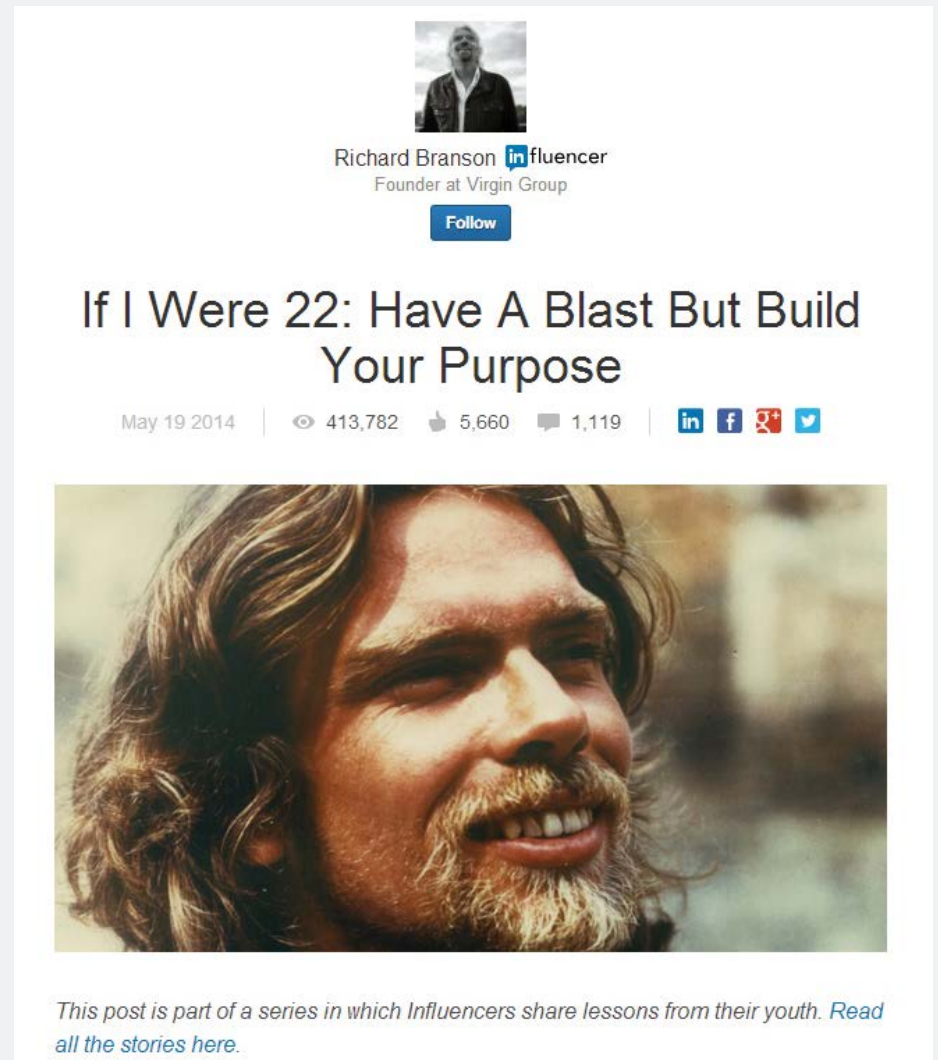
To give you some background about me -- I am an MBA student at the [University of Texas, McCombs School of Business](#). I am a Bay Area native and after graduating from UCLA I lived in Los Angeles for four years, working in the music industry. This is not the typical profile of somebody applying for a tech product marketing internship, but it made the application process that more interesting.

When I began my internship quest there was one major drawback -- tech companies didn't start interviewing until much later than finance and consulting firms. It was a torturous few months where I was watching my classmates get internship offers, and all I could do was devise my plan to getting an internship. So here is how it went:

Thought leadership and advice from your executives

The next generation of talent is hungry for expertise and insights from today's leaders. They crave advice from thought-leaders on how to be successful, entrepreneurial, and how to lead. Leverage your high-profile executives to share expertise and capture the students' attention. This will not only inspire them, but also make them feel that they will find great role models in your company.

Virgin's Richard Branson participates in the LinkedIn Influencer program and his advice is an inspiration to a lot of young professionals. [Read full post.](#)

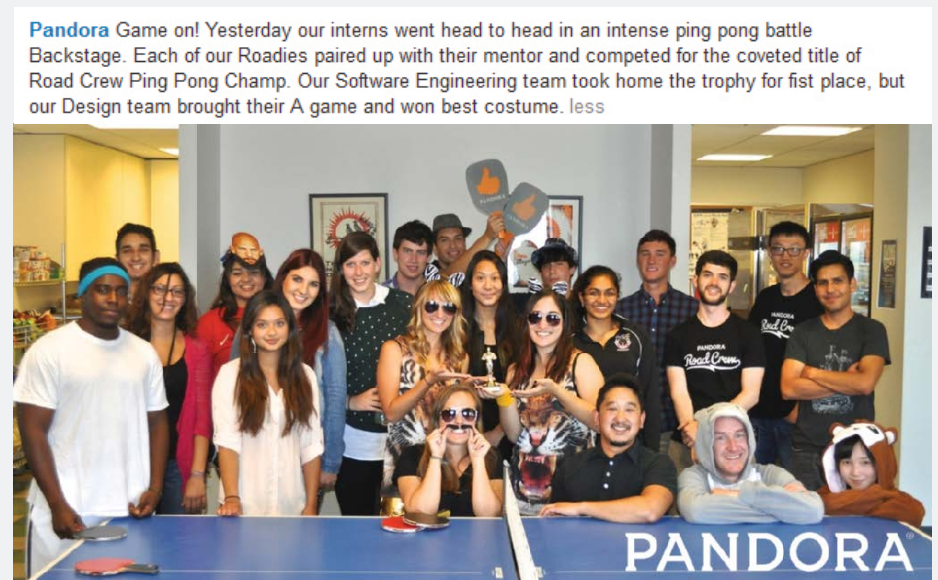
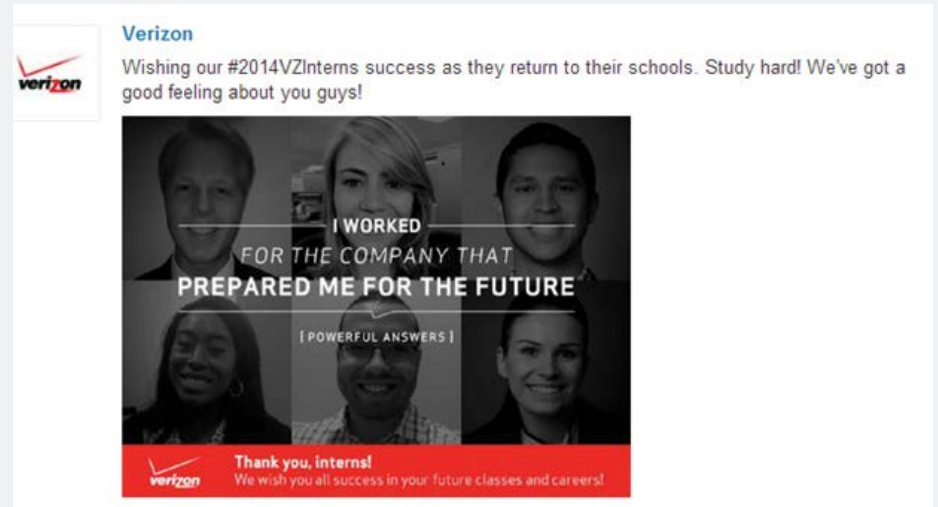


The image is a screenshot of a LinkedIn post. At the top, there is a profile picture of Richard Branson, followed by his name 'Richard Branson' and the title 'influencer' with a small 'in' logo. Below that, it says 'Founder at Virgin Group' and a blue 'Follow' button. The main text of the post is 'If I Were 22: Have A Blast But Build Your Purpose'. Below the text, there are engagement metrics: 'May 19 2014', '413,782' views, '5,660' likes, and '1,119' comments. There are also social media sharing icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+, and Twitter. Below the engagement metrics is a large, close-up photograph of a young Richard Branson with long, wavy hair and a beard, smiling. At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a caption: 'This post is part of a series in which Influencers share lessons from their youth. [Read all the stories here.](#)'

Photos celebrating your interns and their contributions

For students, being proud of the company they work for is a priority. As an employer, you should show them that you are proud of them too. Post photos of your intern teams “in action” -- be it at their desks, working on a team project, or just enjoying a fun activity.

Verizon and Pandora took to LinkedIn to celebrate their intern classes.



A student-specific online community for networking

Having an open, two-way dialogue with students can be invaluable for your talent brand strategy. Consider creating forums where they can engage with your current employees, recruiters, and executives. This can be a great way for students to feel a real-time, human connection with your company, and feel empowered to ask the questions that matter to them.

LinkedIn Groups

Intel launched its Student Group (don't you love the slogan -- "talk nerdy to me") to engage its student audience, answer their questions and ultimately cultivate strong relationships with talent they hope to hire. From questions about how can a candidate stand out from the pack, to company news and upcoming events, the group serves as a real-time communication channel and networking forum.

The screenshot displays the Intel Student Lounge LinkedIn group page. At the top, the Intel logo is on the left, the group name "Intel Student Lounge" is in the center, and "15,811 members" and a "Join" button are on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with "Discussions", "Promotions", "Jobs", "Members", and "Search". The main banner features the slogan "talk nerdy to me" in a blue, lowercase font, surrounded by various scientific and technical icons like a beaker, a graph, and a molecular structure. Below the banner is a search bar and a "Join the group to receive daily or weekly activity updates." button. The main content area shows a post by Denise Anders, Diversity Staffing Program Manager at Intel Corporation, titled "Washington Monthly's list of 'The 14 Best National Universities'". The post includes a link to the article and a brief description. The right sidebar contains "Top Contributors in this Group" (Daniel M.), "Your group contribution level", and "Latest Activity" with comments from Kevin Glicks and Amanda Davenport.



Step 3

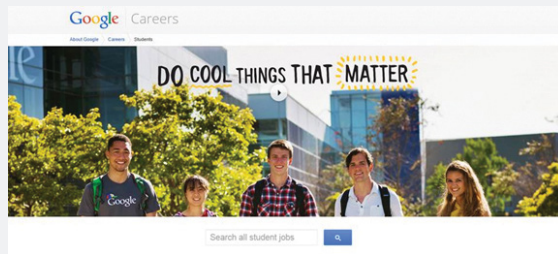
Reach the right students and amplify your message

Tying everything together: the multichannel approach

Now that you've thought of what you want to say, it's time to figure out where to say it. A good talent brand strategy involves using a variety of social media channels where you can serve slightly different messages. For example, LinkedIn is great for professional content, while Facebook is prime for sharing team outing pictures.

Here is a great example of how Google uses different channels to spread its message to students. While all the channels have a uniform look, they all share different information.

1. The company website



2. LinkedIn



3. Facebook



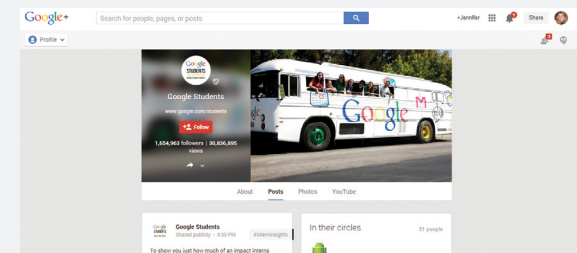
4. Twitter



5. YouTube



6. Google+



Rules of engagement on social media

When you start posting your content across social channels, there are a few rules to keep in mind that will help you increase engagement with your content and attract the right audience.

01 Communicate throughout the year

On-campus recruitment may be seasonal, but building a talent brand is a year-round opportunity. Communicate frequently to establish a strong connection with the students.

02 Target your efforts

Think about what your ideal candidates look like (schools, fields of study, interests) and target them with relevant messages.

03 Keep it personal

The fastest way to lose students' attention is to sound stuffy and impersonal. Use a conversational and approachable tone.

04 Talk about the 'fun stuff'

Don't just pay lip service to the concept of work-life balance. Share images of volunteering opportunities, group activities, healthy snacks, and more.

05 Be relevant and add value

Don't be the annoying social media page that only shares self-centered content. Ask questions, post thought leadership articles, career advice, and share student networking opportunities.

Amplify your reach

If you want to reach a wider audience than your current social media following, consider sponsoring your social media updates or running ads that promote following your Company Page. This way you can reach new prospects and start an otherwise unlikely conversation.

Sponsored Updates

Philips uses Sponsored Updates on LinkedIn to target students from specific schools.



Follow Us ads

Unilever posts ads that invite people to follow their Company Page.



Invest in brand ambassadors

Aside from social media channels and ads, there is another very powerful way to amplify your reach – through brand ambassadors. The best part is that they don't need to be employees – recruit student advocates as well.



“Employees outrank all other spokespeople, including the CEO, on topics related to a company’s culture, behaviors and environment, particularly when it comes to innovation and integrity.”

2014 Edelman Trust Barometer report

The different types of brand ambassadors



01 Employees who embody the company culture

Find employees who are very passionate about the values and culture of your company and get them to help you spread and amplify the message. This could mean asking them to evangelize your company in alumni groups and events, or when they meet with students in person.



02 Recent hires who want to share their newly-formed impressions

After interns, recently-employed grads are the closest thing you have to students on staff. They are the perfect spokespeople to share what it's like starting out at your company. Bring them to campus whenever possible and empower them to post information about their job and career path.



03 Interns who have returned back to campus

Interns spread the word about your company all over campus, for better or worse. Make sure they have good things to say and keep in contact with them regularly. They're your permanent on-campus brand advocates and can help you recruit fresh talent.

Intern brand ambassador program example

LinkedIn kicked off its brand ambassador program in 2013. The goal of the program is to have interns go back to campus and evangelize the company as a great place to work.

Each year's incoming intern class is encouraged to apply and only about 10 get selected to be brand ambassadors (with future plans to aggressively grow that number and expand internationally).

The brand ambassador duties are to recruit, increase brand awareness, boost product adoption:

- Attend LinkedIn recruiting events on campus.
- Draw attention to job openings in trainings and events.
- Develop relationships with professors to build a pipeline of possible candidates.
- Elevate the company employer brand on campus.
- Hold workshops to grow active student membership on LinkedIn.

Sample flyer for an event organized by a brand ambassador

Leveraging LinkedIn

Building a profile and networking on LinkedIn

Date: Tuesday, April 29
Time: 2 - 4:30 pm
Location: Huntsman Hall Forum
RSVP in BruinView



Learn from the expert
LinkedIn INbassador Russell Daniels will help you stand out and network effectively on LinkedIn.
www.linkedin.com/in/rdan1234

Become 40x more visible
Did you know, LinkedIn members with complete profiles are **40x** more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn?

Start today
Begin improving your profile today with tips on university.linkedin.com



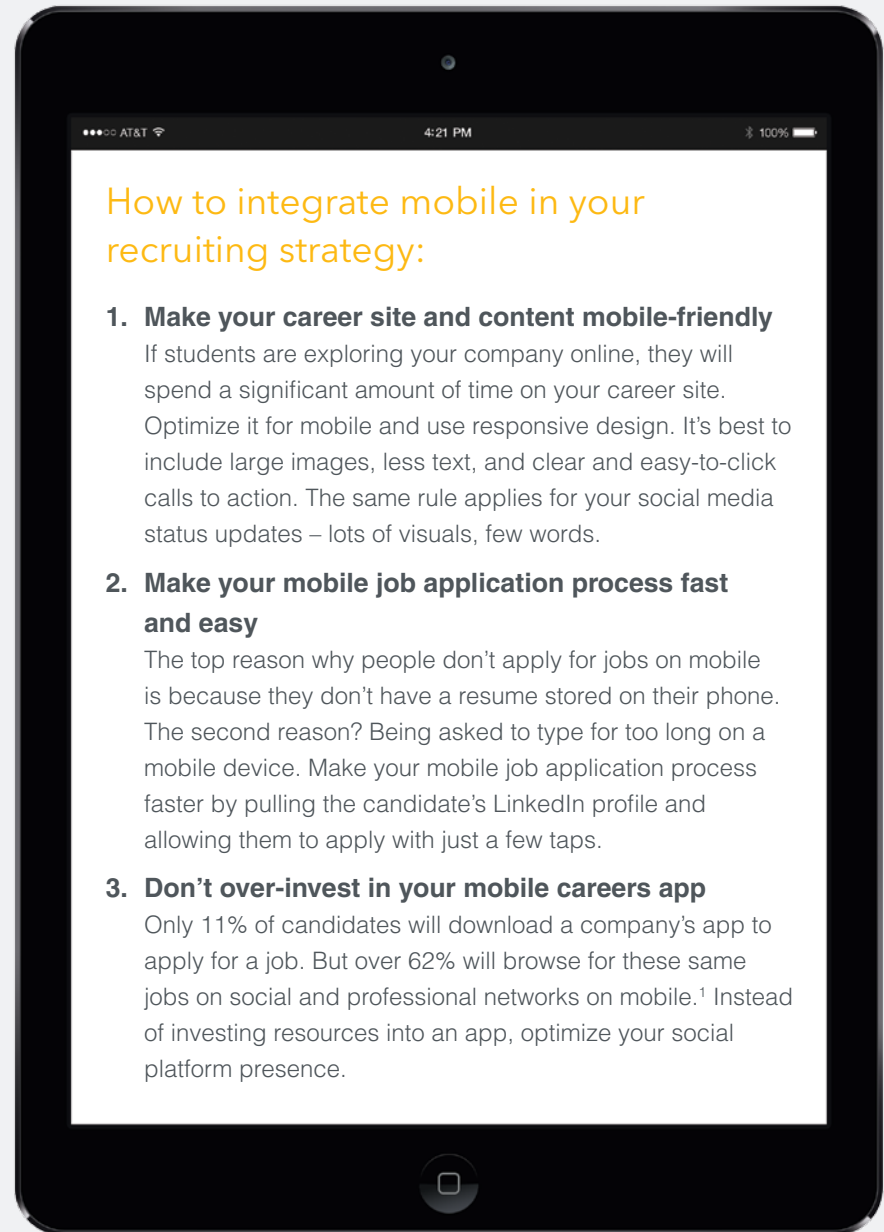
Go mobile

It's not optional, it's expected

Consider mobile recruiting the norm

When you think about engaging with students online, remember that they are mobile natives. They expect information anywhere, anytime, right in the palm of their hand. For example, students are 15% more likely to view LinkedIn on mobile than professionals.

¹ LinkedIn Mobile Recruiting Playbook, November 2013





Take your online tactics offline

Digital tactics can be applied in-person

If you go on campus to meet students face-to-face, they will expect to see the same branding, messaging, and innovation they experience online. By deploying a consistent strategy, you'll ensure students are so excited about your brand and career opportunities that your booth is their first stop at the career fair – or even better – they engage with you long before the event even starts.

Here are a few tips to take your online strategy offline:

01

Flex your online muscles by marketing to students on social media long before your campus events. Raise awareness of your talent brand and extend that same message at your booth and on your event collateral.

02

Ensure every recruiter or employee at the event is well-versed in your student EVP and your social media strategy. This way, students will walk away with a unified and clear message about your culture, and will know where to go to explore for more.

03

Showcase your innovation and tech savvy by leveraging mobile and cutting edge technologies for your fairs and info sessions. Not only will students be more likely to engage with you, but you'll also have a digital record of the prospects you meet.

04

Brand ambassadors don't need to only live online. Have them speak at your events and engage with students 1:1 at info sessions. Ensure they are equipped to tell the right story about your organization's talent brand and student-specific opportunities.



Final thoughts

Final thoughts

We hope that if you take away one thing from this eBook, it is that the era of visiting the same schools, collecting piles of resumes, and grading them like research papers is over. Students today are digital natives and they expect you to speak their language – the language of mobile, social, and staying connected 24/7.

This means that you have to:

Retool your approach

Investing in your talent brand and making it visible and pervasive online is your best bet to reaching students at scale. Whether you are a small company or a well-known corporation, your talent brand is what differentiates you from the others.

Start talking to students earlier

Some students think about their future employment when they pick out colleges, and almost all of them have a strong sense of what career they want before they graduate. Start targeting these students as early as possible, otherwise your competitors will snap them up.

Be authentic

Tired recruiting and marketing clichés won't work with students. Be approachable, convey a sense of purpose, and use your employees as brand ambassadors. This will help students get a true feel for what it's like to work at your company.

A revolution is bubbling up within student recruiting and these are just a few steps that will help you be part of it. There is so much more to come and we can't wait to see what new and brilliant tactics recruiters will dream up next.



How LinkedIn can help you

How LinkedIn can help you



Reach students

Sponsored Updates

Go beyond your page followers and share content with our 39M+ student audience. Your reach can be as targeted or as broad as you'd like.

Targeted Ads

Identify and target your ideal student audience with tailored messages. Introduce them to your talent brand and generate awareness of your events and job openings.



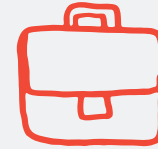
Engage students

Company & Careers Pages

Tell the story of your talent brand with images, videos, and testimonials. Regular updates keep followers informed of internships, entry-level programs and career opportunities.

Groups

Start a two-way dialogue and build a lively community so students can engage with your employees, executives, jobs, and events.



Hire students

Recruiter

Exclusive premium access to LinkedIn provides the most powerful filters available, direct contact through InMail, shared folders to coordinate team efforts, and much more.

Student Jobs

Post free entry-level positions and reach millions of students and recent graduates. Automatically target the most relevant candidates for your entry-level positions and internships.

Questions?

Contact us at
student-recruiting@linkedin.com

Founded in 2003, LinkedIn connects the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. With over 313 million members worldwide, including executives from every Fortune 500 company, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network.

LinkedIn Talent Solutions offers a full range of recruiting solutions to help organizations of all sizes find, engage and attract the best talent. We are committed to giving our members the best possible hiring experience.

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