



Winning top tech talent

About Booking.com

Founded in 1996 in the Netherlands, Booking.com has grown to become the world's leading accommodation website.

Booking.com's goal is to provide business and leisure travelers with the most accessible and cost-effective way of discovering and booking the broadest selection of accommodations, in every corner of the world. With guaranteed best prices for any type of property and no reservation fees, more than 900,000 guest nights are reserved every day through their website and mobile apps.

Today, Booking.com employs over 10,000 employees, with 5,500 new hires having joined in the past three years alone, in 170+ offices across more than 60 countries.

How Booking.com is standing up to Silicon Valley

Amsterdam-based Booking.com went from start-up to stardom in the blink of a virtual eye. Today, the world's #1 accommodation site has a nearly insatiable appetite for technology talent. But how do they manage to compete in a talent market dominated by Big Tech players half a world away?

The influence of Silicon Valley on the global high-tech industry is far reaching. Companies around the world face the constant challenge of attracting candidates away from the temptation of California's giants.

"We compete against all the Big Tech players." explained head of global recruiting Jennifer Boulanger. "Most of the candidates we interview have interviews at these companies, too."

To succeed in this highly competitive environment, Booking.com is leveraging three key factors: cultural fit, employer branding and data-driven recruitment.

Finding the right fit

“Booking.com is basically people and servers,” said CIO Brendan Bank. “Servers are easy to buy. However, talent is really complex. So we spend a lot of time making sure that people fit our culture.”

The tech culture at Booking.com is based on three core competencies, which they look for in every candidate.

Craft:

Does a candidate get the job done? Or does he embrace it with all the care, skill and attention to detail of a craftsman?

Communication:

Does the candidate interact with others clearly and effectively?

Commercial awareness:

Does the candidate understand how the business works and how his own work contributes to commercial success?

To increase the chances of finding tech candidates who match their culture, Booking.com uses their own engineers to help recruit new engineers. Their best tech people spend about 10% of their time on recruitment.

Booking.com’s Tech department also in-sourced the recruitment function from HR. Tech recruiters now sit side-by-side with engineers and developers to make sure they are fully aligned on business needs.

The employer-brand magnet

Employer branding is helping Booking.com become an employer of choice. It’s what allows them to attract candidates who match their wider company culture and sell them on joining the team.

“We offer a ‘peak behind the browser’, if you will,” explained employer branding lead Andreea Dicu. “This means sharing stories about who we are, what we do, and what we value in order to give job seekers a preview of what it’s like to work here.”

Booking.com follows a four-step employer branding strategy:

STEP 1: Walk the walk.

Build a master communication strategy that is consistent and authentic.

STEP 2: Choose your point of amplification.

Identify the varying audiences and content requirements of different social media and career channels.

STEP 3: Your people are your brand.

No one knows better what it’s like to work for your company. Let their voices and personalities tell your story.

STEP 4: Evaluate frequently.

Know where to invest your time, effort and money by collecting data, analyzing progress and adjusting course, as necessary.

Spreading the story with LinkedIn

Through a network of 10,800 current employees plus 170,000+ followers, Booking.com’s talent brand reaches 2.2 million connections on LinkedIn, making it a key channel to share their employer brand.

They target information by audience with fifteen separate Career Pages. Visitors are automatically directed to the right page based on their job profile and location. Whether you are an Engineer in Mumbai or an Accountant in New York, you will find the most relevant and engaging information for you.

Data drives performance

Booking.com is a data-driven company. It is a core value that reaches every corner of the business. The specific KPIs they have defined for recruitment are based on their own internally developed S.C.A.L.E. model:

S

Sourcing mix.

A healthy mix of channels helps ensure quality and diversity in hiring. Booking.com regularly uses referrals, social media, job posts, headhunters and more.

C

Conversion ratios.

Knowing accurately how many CVs it takes to get an interviewee, for example, or how many interviewees it takes to get a hire, allows 'backward planning' to ensure hiring needs can be covered.

A

Achieving targets.

Recruiters at Booking.com have both individual and team goals, so everyone plays an individual and group role in hitting numbers for the business.

L

Length of recruitment process.

Booking.com looks carefully at the length of their entire process, which can take longer than other employers due to their heavy reliance on international relocation.

E

Experience.

Surveying both candidates and hiring managers yields useful insights that help Booking.com personalize the candidate experience.

Putting LinkedIn's data to work

In addition to identifying specific candidates, Booking.com uses LinkedIn to find and analyze data on hiring potential in different regions of the world. Knowing the size and skill sets of the talent pool in a particular location is critical to their advance planning.

"We recruit globally," explained Bank. "LinkedIn provides us tools and systems to see that the talent pool in an area is X, so we need talent acquisition strategy Y, and we can adjust that strategy accordingly."

To learn more about how you can get the most out of LinkedIn, please [contact us](#).



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