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DIGITAL HR MARKETING AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR EMPLOYER BRAND FORMATION IN THE NEW SOCIO-ECONOMIC REALITY

In the modern knowledge economy, the traditional approach to human resource management is undergoing a significant paradigm shift. As Ukraine navigates new socio-economic realities, the focus of talent acquisition has evolved from a purely administrative function into a strategic, marketing-led discipline. The competition for human capital now requires organizations to transition from reactive recruiting to strategic talent forecasting.

The concept of the employer brand, first formulated in 1996 by Simon Barrow and Tim Ambler, applies the rigorous principles of consumer brand management to human resources. It is defined as a specific set of functional, economic, and psychological benefits associated with an employer. In a digital environment, a company must promote its working environment and values with the same precision used for its flagship products. The core of this branding process is the Employee Value Proposition (EVP). A clearly formulated EVP serves as the foundational blueprint for all digital communications and radiates from a psychological core. It encompasses:

- Economic Benefits: Salary, financial bonuses, and direct material compensation.
- Functional Benefits: Professional development programs, physical working conditions, and social guarantees.
- Psychological Benefits: Corporate culture, management style, shared values, and work-life balance.

The Digital HR Ecosystem. Modern employer branding is executed through an interconnected omni-channel digital ecosystem. This ecosystem consists of three primary nodes:

1. Awareness Nodes (Social Media): Platforms like LinkedIn, TikTok, and Instagram initiate emotional connections and showcase internal processes.
2. Consideration Nodes (Career Platforms): Resources such as Glassdoor provide transparent reputation validation through real employee reviews.
3. Conversion Nodes (Corporate Websites): These serve as the ultimate destination for deep culture immersion and the final application process.

To engage candidates effectively, organizations must employ a Content Strategy Matrix that shifts the candidate experience toward being more authentic, emotional, and interactive. This includes storytelling (video campaigns and podcasts), gamification (interactive candidate quests), and virtual exploration (interactive office tours). Furthermore, Employee Advocacy plays a critical role, as employee-generated content is often perceived as more reliable than official documentation.

A robust digital HR marketing strategy is inherently data-driven. Organizations now track the Candidate Journey Funnel, measuring every digital touchpoint from the first social impression to the final resume submission. Key metrics (telemetry) for evaluating brand effectiveness include:

- Engagement Rate: A benchmark of 5–8% measures true audience interest (likes, comments, and shares).
- Click-Through Rate (CTR): A target of 3–6% indicates the effectiveness of content in driving traffic to career platforms.
- Conversion Rate: A normal range of 5–10% reflects the percentage of visitors who actually submit a resume.

Optimizing these digital campaigns directly impacts the financial efficiency of the organization by reducing the Cost per Hire and accelerating the Time to Hire (e.g., reducing the cycle from 22 days to 14 days). The role of the HR professional has been transformed into that of a Digital Brand Architect. This role acts as a cross-functional nexus, orchestrating marketing communications, data analytics, and corporate culture to build a premium candidate experience. Ultimately, a robust digital employer brand is not just a recruitment tool - it is a dominant socio-economic driver of long-term organizational competitiveness in the modern era.

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