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Building an Iconic Employer Brand With L'Oréal

The Beauty Giant Shares Its Top Tips and the HR Tools It Uses to Attract Talent



Seventy-five percent of job seekers consider a company's employer brand before applying for a role¹. Not only do candidates care what companies stand for, but seven out of ten college graduates say they derive a sense of identity from their jobs². Building a distinctive and strong employer brand is not a passing trend or a nice-to-have, it is an essential component of a proactive HR strategy and is rooted in marketing techniques.

Avature sat down with Ana Duque, Digital Content and Engagement Manager at L'Oréal, and Digital Project Manager, Cédric Paille, to discuss how to stand out with an ownable and positive employer brand image.

1. Create an Employer Brand for Talent Who Fit Your Culture

"We are part of a [senior marketing] team that's driving talent acquisition at L'Oréal with marketing initiatives," explains Paille. According to the beauty giant, authenticity, consistency and creativity are the key elements to building a credible and inspiring employer brand. This means identifying and motivating existing strengths and communicating them to relevant talent in an engaging way.

Root your employer brand in your company vision and purpose

"When we started looking into employer branding, we didn't start with a whiteboard and what we wanted the L'Oréal employer brand to be," says Paille. "We actually looked at what we had done, at our history, at our values. Look at your core and share that message. You're not going to be consistent or authentic if you are searching the last wave of trending topics."

Ninety-four percent of customers are more likely to remain loyal if a brand is transparent and employees are no exception³. "Even if it's super creative, you cannot build your employer brand based on lies," says Duque. Candidate relationship management efforts need to

reflect, not just work culture, but also company values, products and practices.

Employees as ambassadors

"We realized the importance of empowering our employees and telling them that they have the right to communicate about L'Oréal on social media," says Duque. "Basically, we're trying to educate them on how to become responsible social media creators, but not telling them what to say. That onus is on them."

Analytics is helping the team to measure and nurture live opportunities. "We have been using social listening to identify and track this content. To identify the key moments of the year when employees are willing to talk about L'Oréal and drive social media conversations. This is something we've been working on, that we're improving, it's something that's super interesting for us," she adds.



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Ana Duque

L’Oréal, Digital Content and Engagement Manager

Communicate the positives, learn from the negatives

What about negative employee feedback? “You will never be able to shield yourself from it,” argues Paille. “You can’t try to control [employees], they’re just going to do it anyway. You should try to encourage employees to do it in the right way.”

Duque recommends doing a [strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats] analysis. “Strengths become the message of your employer branding. Once you know who you are and what you lack, you can also work on improving yourself as an employer. It’s super important.” Nobody’s perfect and candidates don’t expect employers to be. It’s okay to have flaws or not quite be where you want to be, but it’s better to tackle these issues head-on than stifling employees or misleading potential candidates about company culture and life within your organization.

2. Craft a Meaningful End-to-End EX to Maximize Your Employer Brand Strategy

Seventy-eight percent of job candidates say the overall candidate experience they get is an indicator of how a company values its people⁴. It’s no longer just about customer experience (CX), employee experience (EX) is gaining momentum as people hold companies accountable for their actions at all levels and swap jobs more frequently. While this may feel overwhelming, HR technology is creating innovative opportunities at both the macro and micro levels.

Adopt technology to personalize the candidate experience on a massive scale

Technology enables large companies to create a positive and personal experience for all candidates. Over 950,000 candidates apply to L’Oréal every year in more than 60 countries. Without technology, it would be difficult to create a meaningful experience for them all.

Avature helps L’Oréal create a seamless experience across channels and throughout the EX process with personalization and automation. Duque says, “Consistency is not just about having a strong message, but also a consolidated presence. It’s about ensuring that what candidates see on your website, on your social media, once inside your company, is actually the same. That the message that they are being communicated at every step of the candidate journey is the same.”

“The best part about Avature is the flexibility of the tool. We have the possibility to create forms and to attach them to different records, to personalize applying for different jobs,” says Paille. In addition, dynamic GDPR-compliant workflows that automate the consent step while sending personalized emails, including job interests and engagement touchpoints, “are an advantage,” he adds. “We can discuss serious topics without creating distance.” The recruitment marketing and segmentation capabilities also mean that the

market leader can meet the nuanced demands of local markets, as well as maximizing personalization.

“L’Oréal is a very organic company so we’re building a big project with Avature today to bring micro-optimizations to recruiters to assess candidates quickly and effectively using AI technology, to automate processes like scheduling interviews to give recruiters more time for value-added tasks,” adds Paille. “It gives recruiters more time to spend face-to-face with candidates, to give personalized feedback, so we really believe in the tool. It is helping us reach candidates that we wouldn’t have seen before, to find them better and faster. It helps us be transparent and show we’re not as process-driven as some other companies in the tech or accounting worlds.”

Think about non-hires too

With so many interested candidates, the unfortunate reality is that the majority are rejected. Overall, more than 98 percent of L’Oréal applicants are unsuccessful. This puts both their employer and consumer brands at risk. “If we only focused on hires, we would be creating a bad experience for nearly everyone. So we have different initiatives to reject candidates,” explains Paille. “We try to leverage some of the CRM capabilities of our ATS tool. Just because a candidate is not the right candidate today doesn’t mean he won’t be for a position tomorrow”.

Keen to go one step further, L’Oréal partnered with its brand, Kiehl’s, in Australia to send vouchers to rejected candidates. Its aim was to say “we appreciate you taking the time to come and meet us. Thank you’. Here’s a little token of our appreciation,” says Paille. This type of initiative not only helps the beauty company protect its employer and consumer brands, but actually boost perceptions and desirability.

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Cédric Paille

L’Oréal, Digital Project Manager



3. Implement Proactive CRM Software That Allows You to Adapt to Stay Ahead

There is a growing pressure on recruiters to also be marketers. However, nearly half (49 percent) of employers feel that they don’t have the necessary tools to effectively enhance their employer brand⁵. To keep up with today’s fast-paced, candidate-driven market, companies need an agile platform that stays up-to-date

and can adapt to changing trends and an organization's evolving employer brand as it grows.

A CRM that empowers you to achieve your goals

L'Oréal is mainly leveraging AI, automation and analytics to propel its employer brand forward.

"We're currently working on a broader CRM strategy with our tool. We are using information like where [candidates] are from and what they're interested in to drive personalized communication rather than a generic email. We're working on bringing this to the global level. We want to make sure our employer brand is attached to this strategy and on a massive scale to push our employer brand using CRM," says Paille.

"These are interesting times for L'Oréal," says Duque. "We are becoming a beauty tech company and want to attract a whole new set of profiles and skills. There are positive challenges and opportunities."



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Leverage analytics to optimize your employer brand

L'Oréal works with Avature, Google Analytics and other third parties to measure opportunities and success.

"Our ambition is to leverage Avature data in the future to better understand candidates and how we recruit. It's simplifying things for us. It's very impressive to see how our community has grown, to see our recruiters caring about data and wanting to know how they can get further with it. The needle is moving fast. I think it's going to drive a lot of the project we have with Avature and we're excited about that," says Paille.

Data and analytics are key to understanding and optimizing performance and showing concrete results. However, they can seem overwhelming, resulting in

poor or inconsistent adoption. Avature dashboards help users visualize this information and are easy to use at both the individual recruiter and broader business level.

Conclusion: Redefining Engagement to Build Your Employer Brand

Building your employer brand is an essential part of a proactive CRM strategy and key to attracting the right personas to your talent pipelines. Once identified and crafted, it should be the base of every aspect of the candidate experience, from the career site layout to email and text messaging content, as well as face-to-face engagement at events and during the recruitment process.

EX is not a siloed experience, it feeds into your company's ecosystem. Not only can it boost a company's perceptions and image, but it also produces concrete business results. Time to hire is up to twice as fast⁶. It also tends to attract higher caliber candidates and reduces turnover by up to nearly a third (28 percent)⁷. In contrast, a negative reputation costs companies at least 10 percent more per hire, according to Harvard Business Review⁸.

For L'Oréal, their proactive strategy has helped to cement it as one of Europe's most attractive employers for candidates. "The ultimate engagement that we want to achieve is for candidates to apply to L'Oréal, but it is not only that," says Duque. "We want candidates to go one step further in every interaction that they have with the company."



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¹The Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics for Hiring Managers, HR Professionals and Recruiters: Small to Mid-Sized Business Edition (LinkedIn)

²In the US, 55% of of Workers Get Sense of Identity From Their Jobs (Gallup)

³Let's Be Honest: Brand Transparency and Consumer Trust (Fabrik)

⁴The 28 Employer Branding Statistics Your Company Must Know (Everyone Social)

⁵The 28 Employer Branding Statistics Your Company Must Know (Everyone Social)

⁶The Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics for Hiring Managers, HR Professionals and Recruiters: Small to Mid-Sized Business Edition (LinkedIn)

⁷12 Recruiting Statistics That Will Change the Way You Hire (Officevibe)

⁸A Bad Reputation Costs A Company At Least 10% More Per Hire (Harvard Business Review)