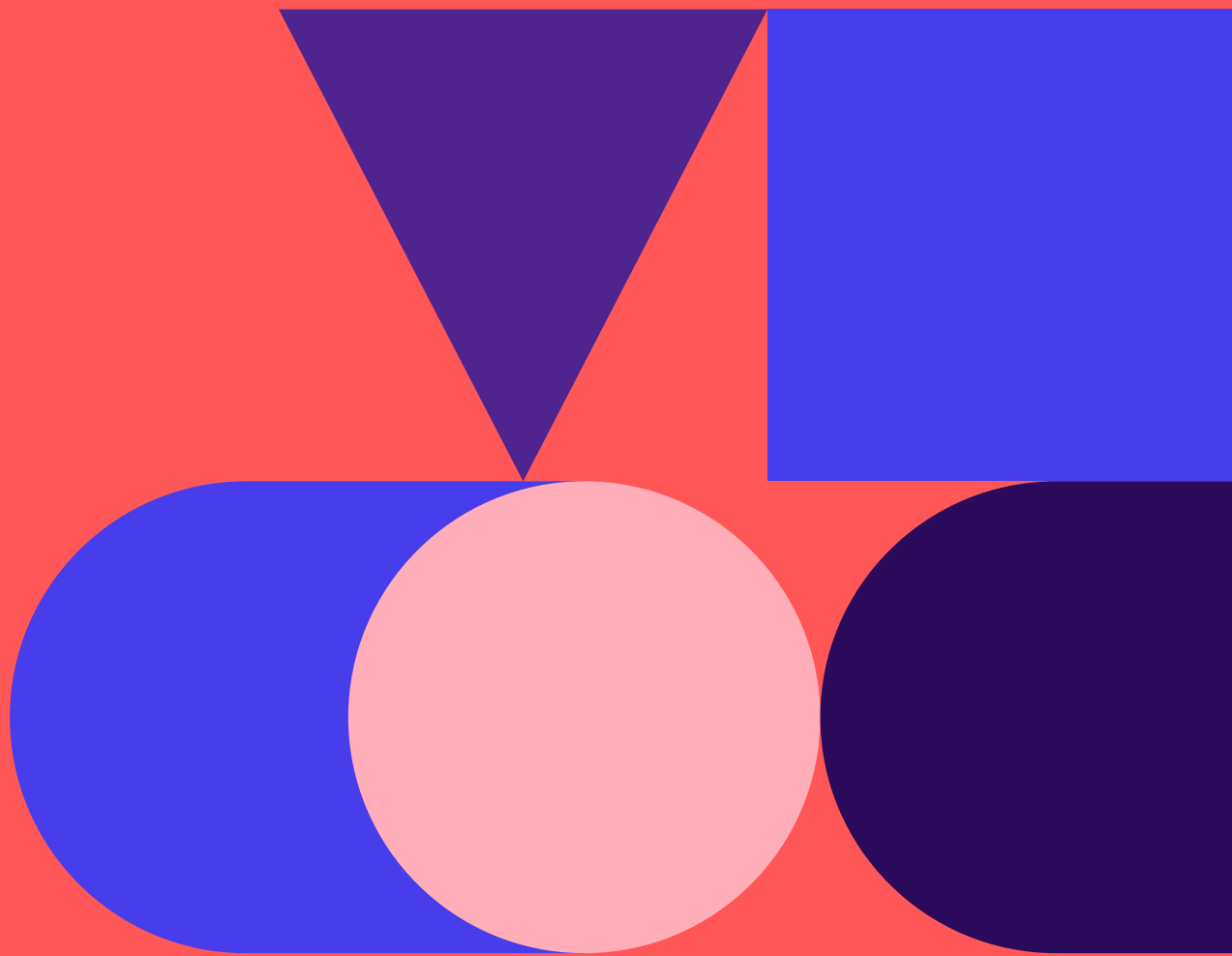


The 5 biggest mistakes when delivering your graduate brand





Making mistakes is important. They help us to learn, grow and approach things more effectively next time round. However, to gain the optimal value from our blunders, they must be identified and addressed, to ensure they are not repeated again and again.

Unfortunately, many brands do find themselves falling in the same bad habits in their efforts to attract, recruit and retain an evermore sophisticated audience of graduates. Today's grads can access and assess potential employers more closely than ever before, and are savvy enough to spot any warning signs before joining an organisation.

With this in mind, repeating mistakes with your graduate brand can be costly, preventing you from tapping into this fresh, hungry generation and losing high-potential hires to your competitors.

This brings us to the goal of this guide. Harnessing our years of experience working with recognisable global brands who have encountered the same challenges, we have pinpointed the five standout mistakes that employers make with their graduate brand – and provided our solutions for avoiding this mistake in your own organisation.

We hope that by reading these insights you are in a stronger position to maximise your resources and tap into the next wave of recruits in this increasingly competitive market.

Enjoy!

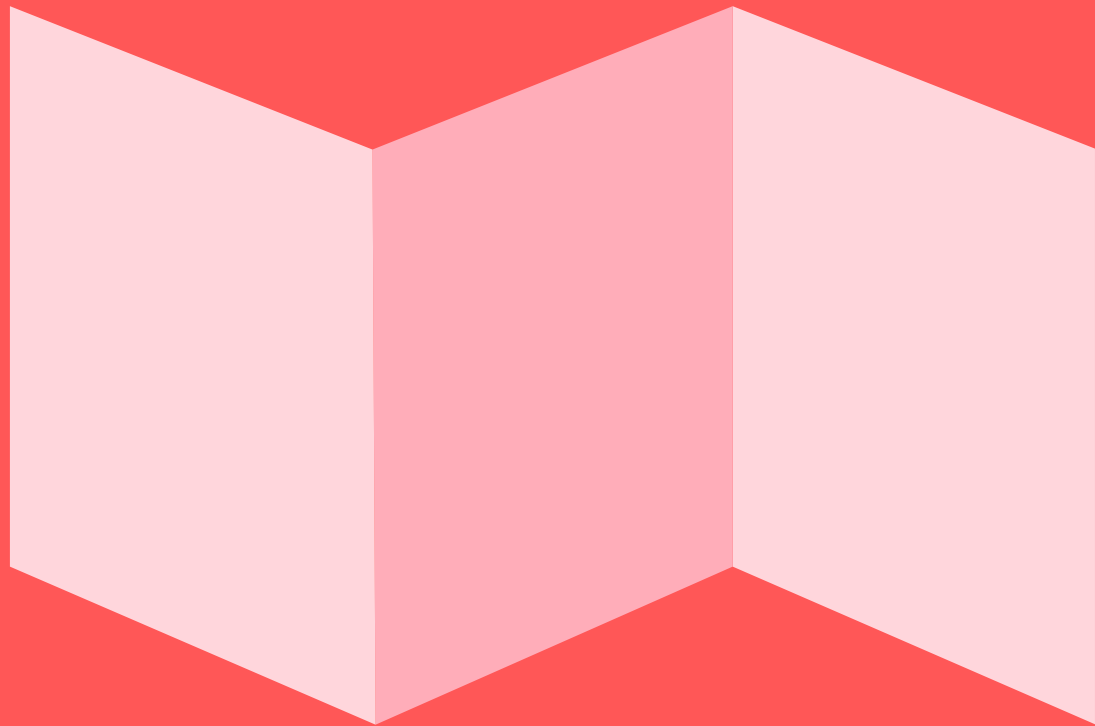


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Mistake #1

Not determining a distinct graduate brand strategy





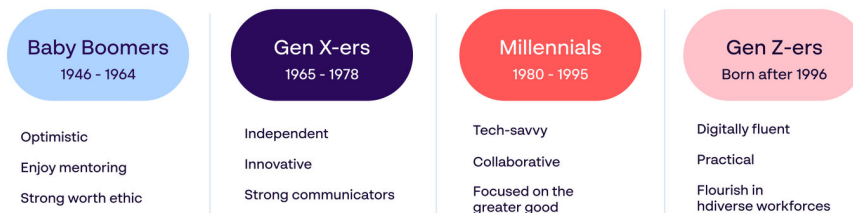
The problem

First and foremost, before you begin to create recruitment campaigns aimed at graduates, it is essential that you have developed a distinct strategy to target this group within your overarching employer brand strategy.

This will likely be markedly different from how you communicate with candidates who have extensive experience in the workplace. Gen Z is as digitally-driven as it gets – the first generation that won't recall a life before the Internet was widely available.

As such, the way they consume content and judge companies is far removed from previous generations, including Millennials. They are hypervisual, resilient and less entitled. They find it more difficult to distinguish between the digital and “real” world, and subsequently between work and home.

Best work traits



*Source: Hobbson Associates



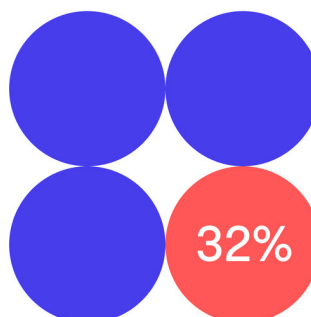
Due to these differences, your graduate brand strategy has to be tailored to this generation's needs and behaviours. Without conducting distinct research into this market, you risk falling into the trap of sticking to the same hiring cycles you have followed for years now. Times change, and so do candidates – placing adverts in newspapers isn't effective when 45% of people now browse for jobs on their mobile phone.

Of course, while there are a lot of common traits shared among the Gen Z audience, it is also important that you consider the specifics of your industry or the role you're hiring for in your recruitment strategy.

In addition, failing to devote time to a unique graduate brand strategy and EVP (Employee Value Proposition), you can create unintended barriers to your prospects of hiring enthusiastic grads. For instance, how often have you come across a graduate job description that asks for X years' experience in the role? This clearly hasn't been tailored for the market at hand.

Mistakes like this stem from a lack of research and planning. The way to engage and attract graduates is constantly evolving, and building a strategy around this audience is critical to meeting these changes and presenting them with an exciting, aspirational proposition.

Gen Z outnumbered millennials in 2019, constituting **32% of the world's population**



*Source: Bloomberg



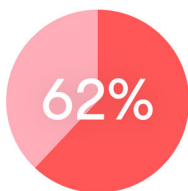
The solution

The top graduate recruiters work hard to develop a compelling brand strategy.

Research is commissioned, including focus groups, surveys and competitor benchmarking, to determine the most appropriate starting salaries for graduates, where and how to reach them in your industry, and what inspires and motivates them in an employer.

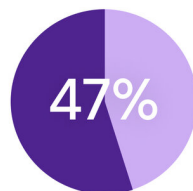
What do we know about Gen Z? While it's important to treat each prospective candidate as an individual, there are a few generalisations that you can use to inform your graduate brand strategy:

- Gen Z candidates carry a powerful, impressive work ethic, and want to know that the work that they'll do as part of your team is both rewarding and meaningful
- They demand a more custom, personalised candidate experience and demonstrate a deep interest in a brand's social responsibilities
- They appreciate an inclusive and diverse working environment
- They are always looking for ways to feed their craving for on-demand learning through training and CPD opportunities.
- They often elevate flexibility over stability in their priorities, with a greater emphasis on remote working and similar initiatives



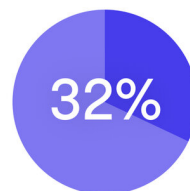
62% of Gen Z will take classes or learn new skills if it makes them better at their job

*Source: LinkedIn



Of the 57+ million people freelancing in 2017, 47% were under the age of 34

*Source: Upwork



32% of Gen Z individuals say they are the hardest-working generation ever

*Source: HRreview



Taking these and other characteristics into account as part of your strategizing will enable you to create campaigns tailored to today's graduates' specific demands and desires. It will inform the development of the look and feel of your brand, tone of voice and overarching identity that you are confident will connect with these candidates.

To help you achieve this, ask yourself the following questions:

- What type of graduates do you want to target (characteristics, interests, experiences)?
- Why should they choose your company over your competition?
- What company values do you believe will resonate strongest with graduates?
- What are your company's USPs that differentiate you in your industry?

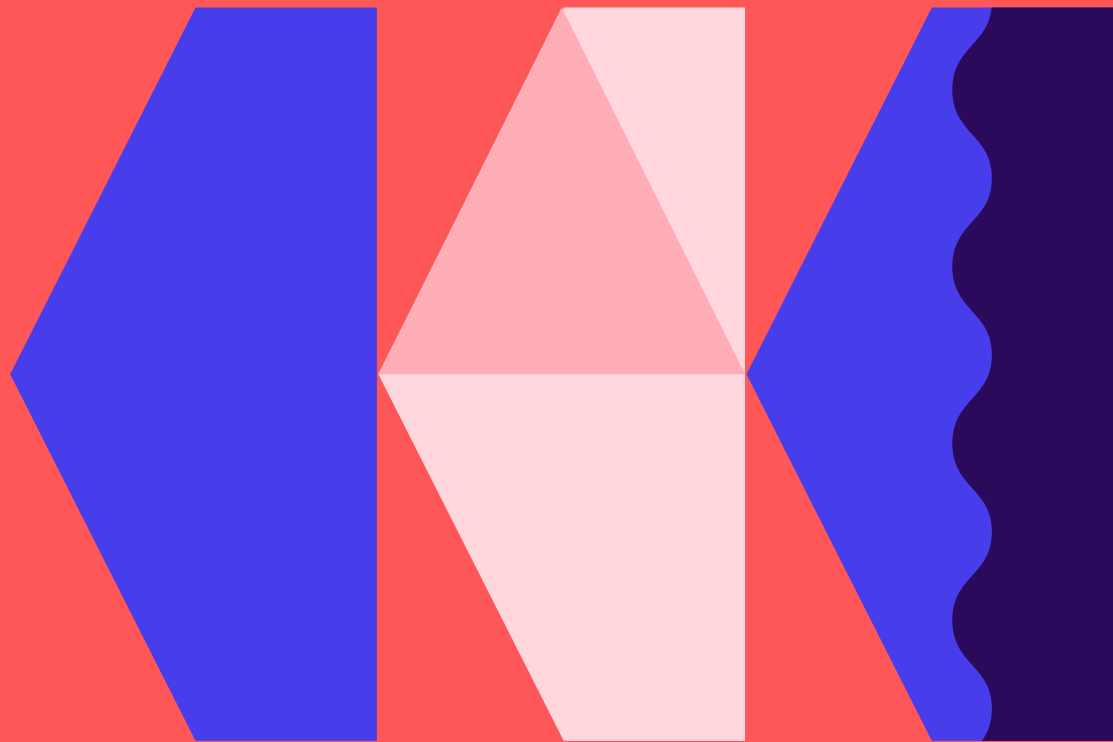
On top of this, you may also incorporate distinct KPIs and metrics to measure the success of your graduate brand. Rather than lump it in the same tracking that you do for your wider employer brand, you may have specific goals for the percentage of graduate interviews and hires across a year, or measuring the length of time they stay with you past the recruitment phase.

Once your strategy is created, document it clearly and make it accessible to those who need it. While it should never be set in stone and evolve as you evaluate its success and response, it is critical that there is a digital or physical account of it. This helps to ensure that it's safeguarded against misuse, miscommunication or haphazard application.

Read more on attracting and retaining multiple generations to the workplace

Mistake #2

Failing to maximise all available marketing channels





The problem

In today's landscape, job-seeking graduates are encouraged to view themselves as their own brand, and develop this with the aim of attracting the attention of employers.

When 70% of employers use social media to screen candidates during the hiring process, graduates are more aware than ever about having a clean image on networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and especially LinkedIn. On top of this, graduates may also create personal websites, online CVs and create further content with a bid to push their brand as hard and as far as possible.

Conversely, companies have to match this dedication by promoting their proposition, benefits and identity across multiple channels. It's a critical balance – both the employer and graduate looking to meet and impress each other in various places. And as part of your strategy, you should have outlined the most effective channels to connect with your graduate audience.

However, this creates an evident problem – with so many social networks, forums and job sites where you can reach graduates, how do you create the abundance of content required to hit these while staying within time and budget limitations?

Fewer than a fifth of the UK's leading graduate employers **increased their graduate recruitment budgets for 2019-2020**



*Source: High Fliers

This is the ongoing struggle that many brands face. They know they need to adapt and evolve to engage with the best graduates out there. But if their budgets do not grow in accordance with this growth in marketing channels, they are missing out on maximising the reach and effectiveness of their graduate brand.

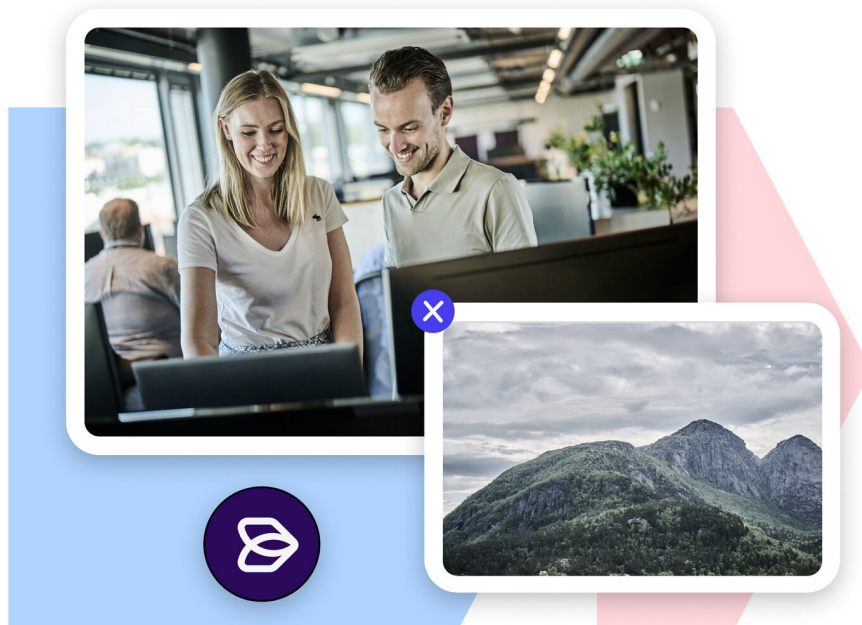


The solution

That is, of course, if they don't have access to systems or processes that save time and money. If both can be saved in how you perform everyday tasks, such as the creation of digital and print marketing, then more can be devoted to expanding the reach of your graduate brand content.

So, an effective way to free up vital budgets and resources to this strand of your employer brand is to introduce technology that removes the burden of repetitive tasks from your talented employees. While this represents an initial investment, the efficiency you achieve beyond this point will more than make up for this cost.

Papirfly's brand management platform is a powerful example of this. The key to freeing up time, budget and resources is using pre-set templates that are intuitive, intelligent and easy-to-use to support the creation of your assets.



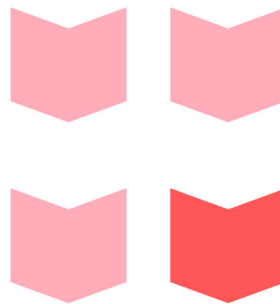


This allows you to seamlessly take asset creation in-house, rather than devote resources to external agencies or specialist design teams. While great design and concepts will continue to fuel the development of these templates, as soon as they are established in your BAM platform, they can be applied to future materials in a matter of minutes.

The beauty of software like this is that these predefined templates are incredibly intelligent, allowing you to produce assets for all potential digital and physical channels. But at the same time it's so straightforward to use that anyone can pick it up, regardless of design experience, and produce high-quality, perfectly branded content.

Through this, your graduate brand can hit every channel you've identified in your strategy, while not eating into budget and resources as they otherwise would. You can be everywhere – something that will give you a definitive competitive edge.

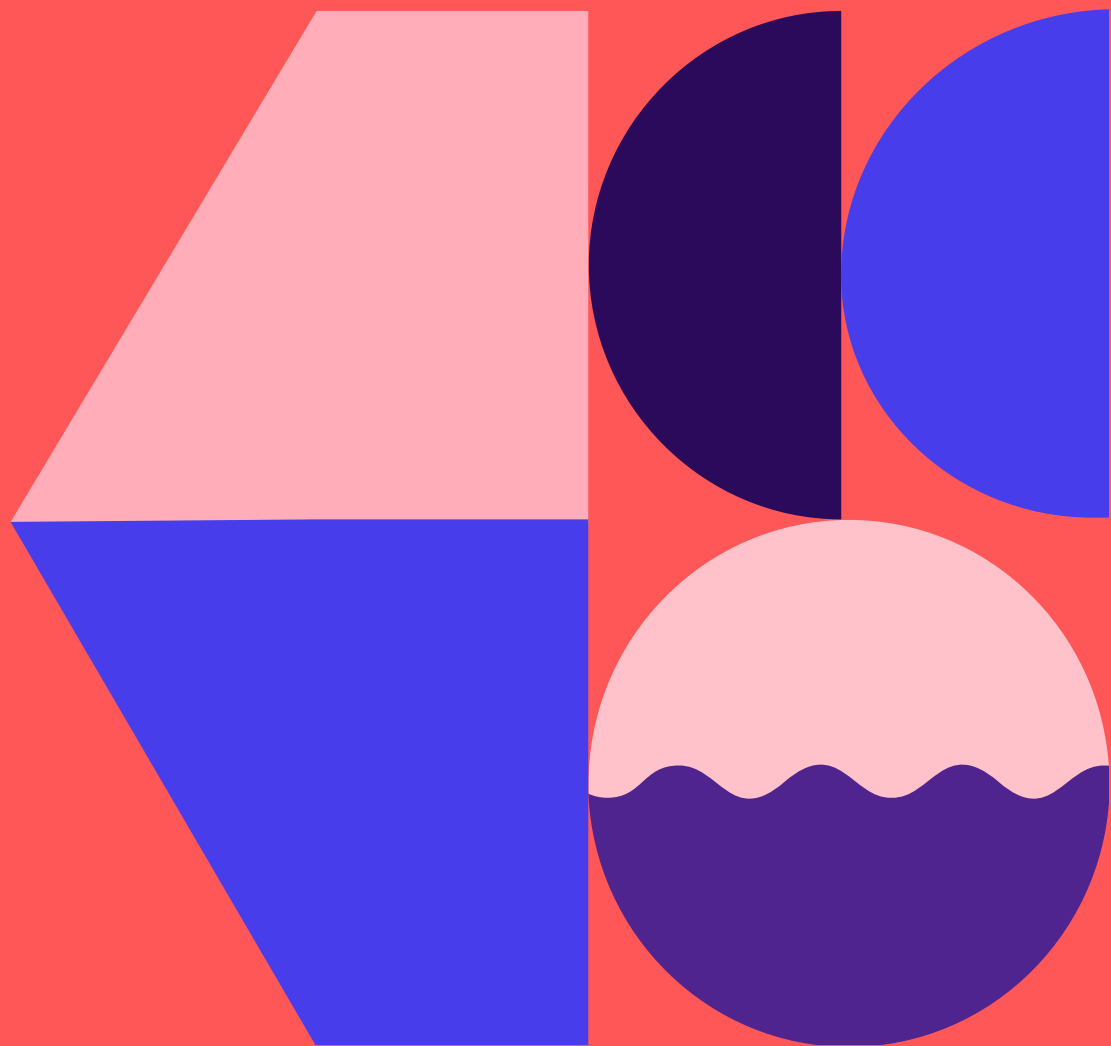
Graduate recruitment at the UK's leading employers is expected to **rise 3.3 % in 2020** - 12 out of 15 key industries and sectors plan to **recruit more graduates**



*Source: High Fliers

Mistake #3

Inconsistent branding





The problem

A graduate brand showcases a company's personality, its values and, most importantly, its promise. This outlines what potential recruits should expect from your organisation, and will play a huge role in setting you apart from a crowded field of competitors.

As such, any inconsistency in your graduate brand can instantly hurt the strength of this promise, and diminish the trust and confidence candidates feel towards your company. It needs significant, consistent exposure in order to win these prized feelings, built off the foundation of your well-planned strategy.



On average, it takes **5-7 impressions** for people to recognise your brand

*Source: SmallBizGenius

However, a key mistake many brands have made in the past is to dramatically alter their employer brand content, whether it is in the pursuit of creativity and innovation, or to tailor them to a specific event or audience.

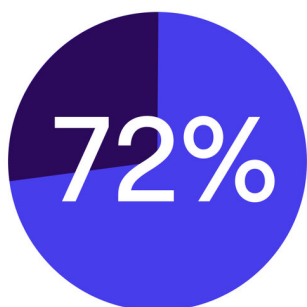
While it is encouraged to adapt your graduate brand content for local markets, which may have specific cultural nuances that you want to hone in on, they should never stray too far from your fundamental brand identity – or cause confusion through mixed messages.



Inconsistent branding dilutes your overall proposition, making it harder for potential candidates to recall and recognise you in future. Furthermore it gives an impression that your company may be disorganised or chaotic, two qualities that most graduates would not like to encounter in their first job.

What causes these inconsistencies? There are a number of potential factors:

- Departments and locations working in silos, independent of each other – this approach can lead to individual groups misusing your brand or making errors in the content they produce, which over time will cloud what your brand stands for
- In a similar vein, an overreliance on external agencies, who are not as closely tied to your brand, can cause them to misinterpret your brand in what they produce
- As noted in the previous section, the sheer abundance of channels can make it easy for inconsistencies to creep in across these – having one look on your website and another at a campus presentation can immediately create a disconnect among candidates



72 % of recruiters say employer branding is a huge factor in their ability to hire

*Source: LinkedIn



The solution

Simply put, a consistent graduate brand is something you should always aim toward. It directly impacts on the performance of your recruitment efforts, and your reputation as a brand and employer.

How do you achieve this? As noted in Mistake #1, make sure that everyone contributing to your graduate brand has access to your strategy and the guidelines formed from it. Adhering to these and ensuring these are understood among your team is vital to nobody straying from this in future.

On top of this, introducing solutions like Papirfly's brand management platform empower you to clamp down on brand consistency like never before. The intelligent templates used in our platform enable admins to lockdown certain components and features for each design, making it impossible for users to stray from this when creating any materials.

This can be altered from user-to-user and location-to-location – if you have distinct campaigns for a specific country, these can be accounted for to guarantee that everything produced is culturally appropriate and relevant. This gives your teams the freedom to create high-quality content, while in no danger of compromising your brand principles.

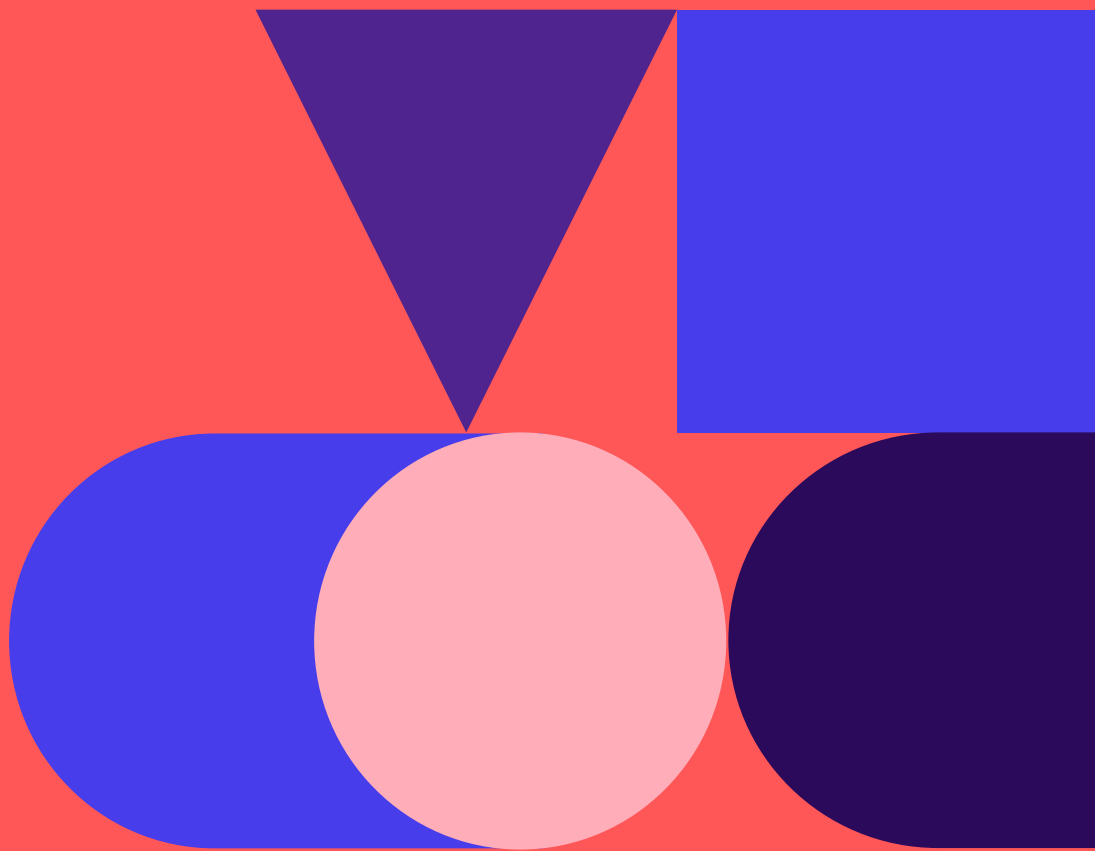
Alongside these safeguards across your creation suite, BAM includes numerous other features to give you complete governance over your graduate brand:

- A distinct Educate section, where you can house your brand guidelines and other strategic elements so they are always accessible and understood by your team
- A birds-eye view of all work being produced by your teams globally, allowing any discrepancies to be quickly spotted and addressed
- Approval workflows, ensuring that all content is efficiently seen by the appropriate people before they go live
- A built-in DAM (Digital Asset Management) system, allowing you to store and share approved content to your teams worldwide, guaranteeing that work never needs to be duplicated and only confirmed assets reach your audience

Having a powerful system like Papirfly's brand management platform by your side makes marketing more effective and responsive, and makes sure you never compromise on the brand strategy you've worked hard to assemble.

Mistake #4

Not leveraging your recruitment budget

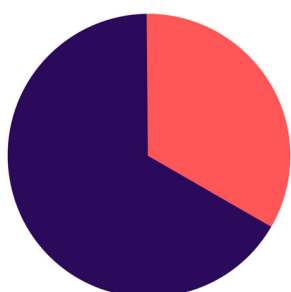




The problem

The increased drive towards recruiting graduates has been consistent across most industries for the past decade-plus – since the 2009 global recession, graduate vacancies in the UK have risen 39%.

However, growth in budgets has not always reflected this heightened ambition to bring graduates into the fold.



36%

of employers note attracting for specific graduate vacancies as a **big challenge**

*Source: High Fliers

The process of building and distributing your graduate brand is meticulous, intense and expensive. As noted in Mistake #2, as the spread of channels and networks that employers have to turn their attention to grows ever-wider, employers are having to spread these budgets even further to cover this.

In our experience, it's easy for companies to become so entrenched in this process, as well as working with any dedicated graduate recruitment agencies, that they miss opportunities to overhaul and improve the way they allocate their budget.

Graduate agencies can provide invaluable support in the development of your strategy and nailing down the look and feel of your graduate brand.

But it can be a costly mistake to rely on them too heavily, particularly in areas where little expertise, skill or strategic thinking is required. Devoting too much budget into these can dilute the effectiveness of your delivery.

So, the problem for employers is not just that budgets are being spread thinner with every passing year – it is dedicating the available budget where it is most necessary to enable you to execute your strategy to its fullest.



The solution

When you're under pressure to do what you can with a limited budget, have fewer resources than your larger competitors, or want to be more reactive with your branding, having systems in place that allows you to produce content more efficiently is crucial.

Budgets have their limitations, but if you can empower your employees to easily produce assets en masse – while using agency-designed templates – you can achieve a level playing field with teams that hold significantly larger budgets.

Because Papirfly's brand management platform is a single SaaS licence, it means that no matter how many assets teams produce, this is all covered within the software cost. Technically there is no limit to how many marketing assets each team can create each year.

By enabling companies to develop professional, "on-brand" advertising in a fraction of the time and cost, this allows teams to distribute their budgets more effectively and strategically, and not become so caught-up in struggles associated with manually creating content from scratch time and again, or becoming reliant on agencies to deliver the work on your behalf.

There's no waiting days or weeks for graduate brochures, presentations, adverts, webpages, emails and more to be developed by a specialist agency or internal team. These can all be delivered by your own team, regardless of their skill level, with no drop in the quality of output.

This means you can devote only the necessary budget to the agency to help you construct the initial creative concept. This frees up a lot of additional resources that you can apply to innovations that were never possible under your previous configuration.



34%

Employers achieve a 34% greater candidate application rate with **videos on their job postings**



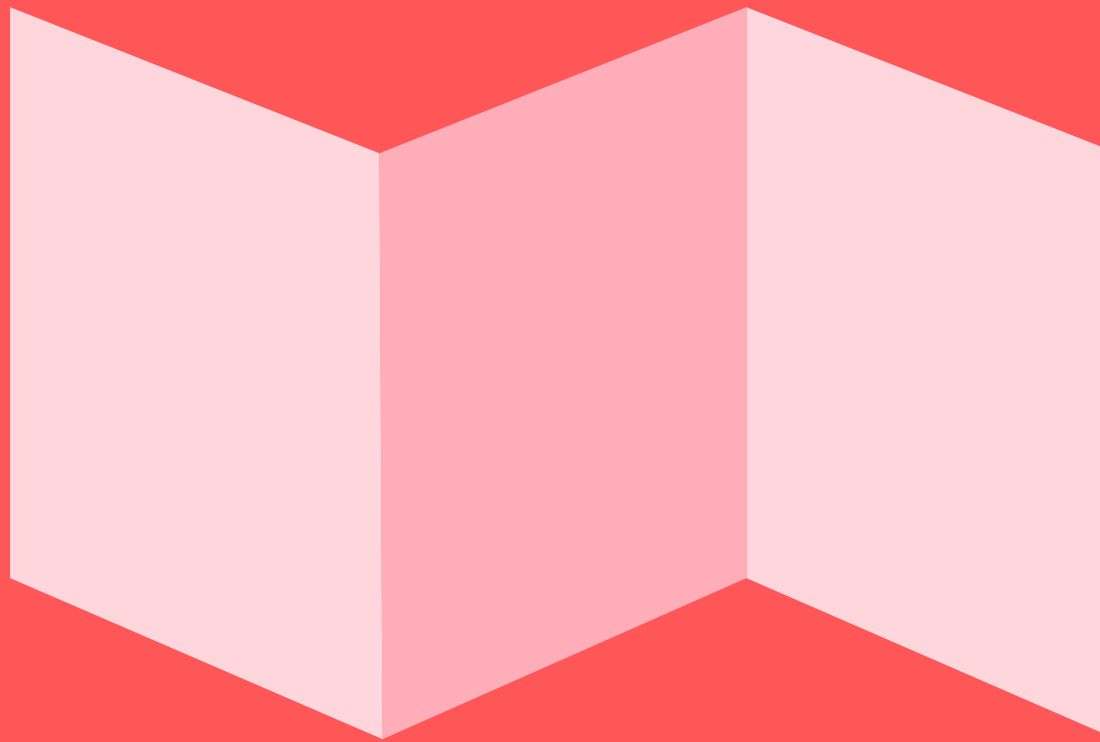
*Source: Interact

For example, with the power of online video growing stronger every day, if you haven't had the capacity to dive into this technology and reap the benefits of it across your graduate brand, then this is something BAM gives you the freedom to explore. More than that – with a dedicated video creation suite, it makes producing videos easier and faster than you could previously have imagined.

Fundamentally, BAM will greatly cut down your production times and costs, freeing up budget that you can then redirect into maximising your advertising reach and engaging your audience on your most popular channels.

Mistake #5

Presenting a poor onboarding experience





The problem

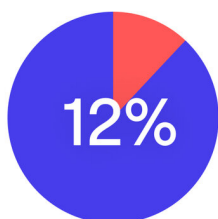
The final mistake we cover in this document relates to the first impression that a graduate gains of your organisation.

Imagine this – you've succeeded at attracting a hungry, motivated graduate to your team, and they have passed their interview with flying colours.

The hard work ends there, right?

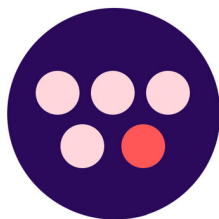
Wrong.

The onboarding process is critical to nurturing a powerful connection between your new hire and your brand.



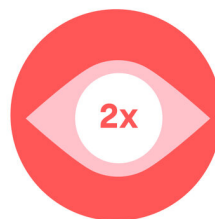
Only 12% of employers believe they do a great job onboarding new employees

*Source: Gallup



1 in 5 new hires are unlikely to recommend their employer to a friend following their onboarding experience

*Source: Digitate



Negative onboarding experiences make new hires 2x more likely to look for other opportunities

*Source: Digitate

Sadly, this onboarding stage is where many brands fall short of expectations. Due to their likely limited experience of working environments, getting graduates up to speed in your workplace will potentially be a far different process than it would for more experienced candidates.



As such, your onboarding process should take a long-term view. Not just to help them settle into this new environment, but also to give them reasons to commit to your organisation for the long-term. A top career goal for Gen Z employees is to feel stable and secure in the workplace – demonstrating you can provide this is vital in your onboarding phase.

Failure to satisfy the needs of new hires during onboarding can have a range of repercussions. It will not only make that individuals experience more unpleasant, hurting their opinion of you as a brand and employer and increasing the likelihood that their stay will be a short one; it could hurt your reputation externally if they share this negative experience online.

Employees that are onboarded well are far likelier to hit the ground running in your business, and forge a stronger bond with your brand.

The COVID-19 problem

On top of this, it is also important to consider how COVID-19 has changed the way graduates and other employees are onboarded. With an increase in remote workers globally, being able to access company guidelines and literature digitally is more important than ever, as is transparency from senior management down the chain.

In addition, it could be valuable to consider introducing “work buddies” or mentors that communicate regularly with new hires over video calls to make sure their transition is managed and as comfortable as possible. While today’s graduates are digitally-savvy, that personal touch helps them feel more connected to your team in these challenging times.



The solution

To enhance the onboarding experience for your graduate hires, consider introducing some of the following ideas:

Establish company mentors and “work buddies”

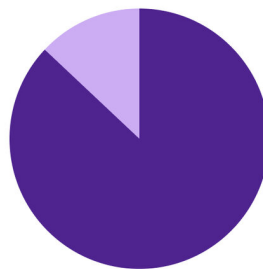
Starting in a new role can be daunting for the most experienced employees – it can often be even more so for graduates. Providing them with a mentor or buddy to help ease this transition and answer any questions they may have about your workplace will allow them to settle in far sooner and start contributing to your business.

They may not be comfortable asking the supposedly “dumb” questions to their line manager or CEO. Having an experienced, caring colleague work closely with them through these early stages could prove an invaluable support.

As well as this, it builds a community feel within your organisation, providing your graduate hires with reassurance and familiarity from the outset.

87%

of organisations believe a buddy system greatly speeds up new hire proficiency



*Source: Enboarder



Make sure they have all they need from day one

No new employee wants to arrive on their first day flustered about what they are going to be working on. To enable your graduate hires to feel comfortable from the get-go, it is important that you prepare everything they will need to immediately start getting settled in their role.

This can include:

- Setting up their workstation, or providing any necessary devices and software
- Printing off all the paperwork they will need to fill out to join your team
- Organising all login details and entry cards they may need to access areas
- Presenting them with a schedule or calendar, so they know what to expect for the foreseeable future

Invest in introductory videos

Millennials and Gen Z workers are more accustomed to video content than any generation that preceded them, with 62% daily YouTube users.

This makes video a smart investment for your onboarding process. This could efficiently and effectively translate to fresh hires your company history, values and missions, as well as any tips and tricks for navigating their new environment, from who to turn to if they have questions to where's a great place to go out for lunch nearby.

Having an accessible, repeatable video that explains all these key details means you won't have to repeat yourself with every new starter and it ensures the messaging is consistent. Graduates to take notes at their own pace, and you're freed up to focus on other responsibilities.

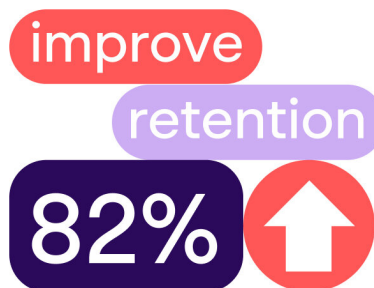


Introduce them to relevant training programs

Finally, demonstrate that you are invested in their development and making them feel assured in their role by setting them up with training programs and courses related to their future work.

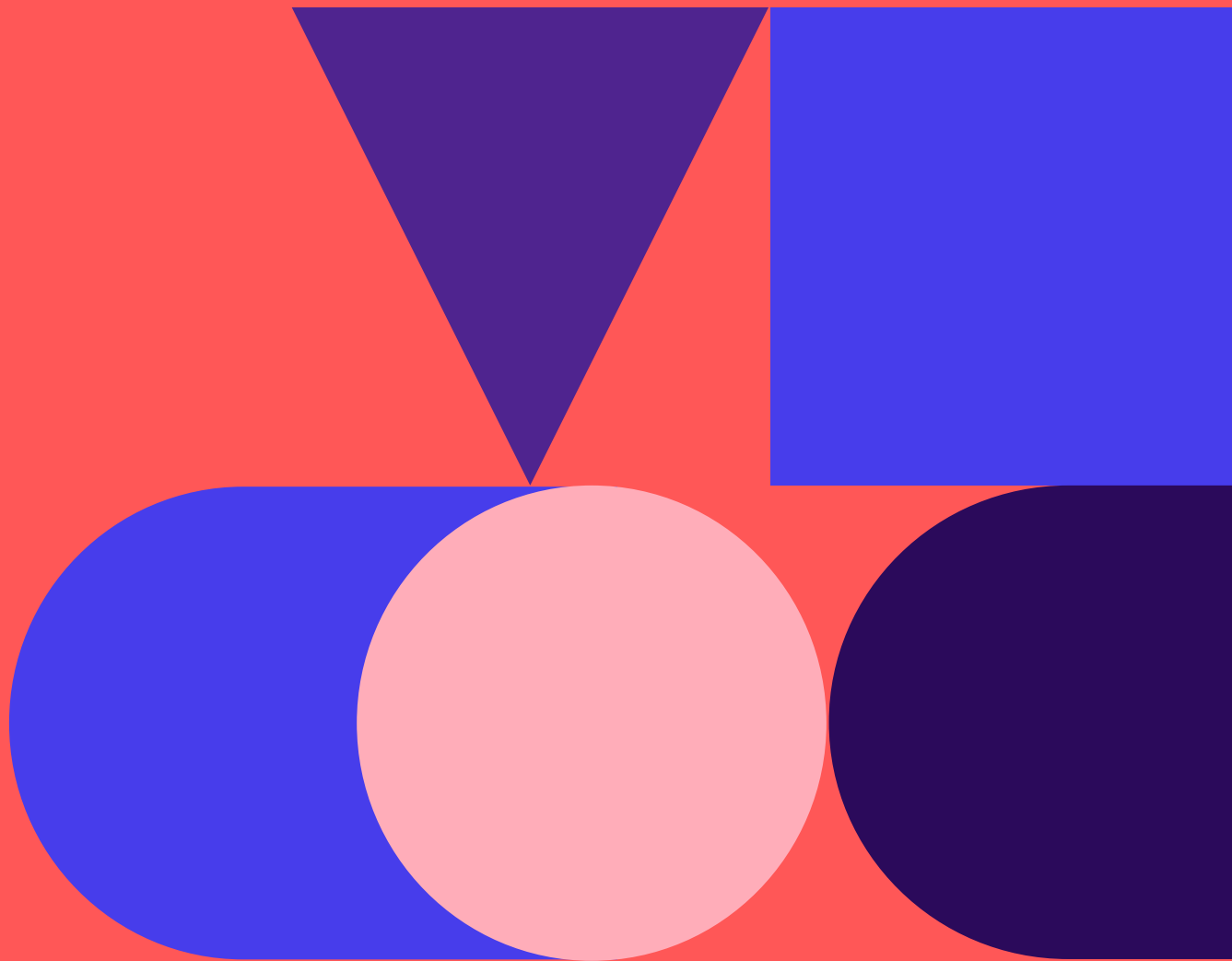
By using these to give new hires clear direction immediately in what they can expect to do for your team, they will feel more empowered to deliver quickly for your organisation. Particularly for Gen Z workers, who value training opportunities immensely, this initiative can be incredibly helpful in building a positive relationship between them and your organisation.

A great onboarding experience can improve employee retention by 82%



*Source: Brandon Hall Group

Unleash your brand with Papirfly









How does Papirfly empower your people?

We believe every enterprise should be able to provide tools to teams, so that the brand can be delivered to customers exactly as it was intended to be experienced.




At Papirfly, for over 20 years we've been driving innovation in brand management software to support brands in delivering consistent, multichannel experiences for their customers.

We empower people to unleash their brand.

How teams work today:

-  Customers are experiencing inconsistent and diluted branding across touchpoints
-  Stressed teams aren't getting the marketing materials they need or quickly enough
-  Too much already-limited budget is being spent duplicating work and on multiple tech solutions
-  Assets are not centralised or trackable resulting in loss of data to analyse budget spend

We know what brands need:

-  Global brand governance now and for the future with guaranteed consistency at every touchpoint
-  Faster go-to-market, creating assets in-house with the flexibility for on-brand, hyper-local messaging
-  Increased ROI, saving money on every asset produced, creating space for teams to focus on strategy

We give you the tools to:

- Do more for less
- Produce all assets in house
- Create with no previous design skills
- Achieve 100% brand consistency
- Reach all markets, in any language
- See a complete bird's-eye view of your branding and marketing efforts

Discover our all-in-one brand management platform



Trusted by the world's most recognisable brands

 **1M+**
regular Papirfly users

 **600+**
brands using Papirfly worldwide



Build your on-brand culture with Papirfly

Our brand management platform enables complete brand adoption, and the creation of unlimited on-brand assets with our suite of enterprise-grade products-building brand equity and long-term customer loyalty.

Point

Educate & Control

Support global teams to understand your brand, through clear guidelines, official assets, core values, and more from online access point. Go local with unique hubs with local languages and nuances.

Place

Manage & Share

Centralise all assets with a dedicated DAM solution, categorising content for global and local usage in onsecure place for all approved material. Ensure every location has assets that serve their unique audience nuances.

Produce

Create & Activate

Guarantee 100% brand consistency with design templates aligned to brand guidelines and produce infinite studio-quality digital, print and video assets. Empower everyone to personalise to their audience using localised images, video and text options.

Plan

Plan & Collaborate

Achieve your bird's-eye view of all campaigns and activities, displaying status, budgets, contacts, and official design templates for use. Ensure every location utilises workflows that drives campaign responsivity.

Prove

Measure & Optimise

Analyse marketing activity via your dashboard, delivering reports and data across your business. Ensure local sites get feedback on best-performing content across the business, and give them data to let them know when their efforts are driving brand strategy success.

Plus

Integrations

Papirfly works seamlessly with your agency tech stack – removing hacks and workarounds, improving productivity and organisational efficiency across the business.

FORRESTER®



212% ROI



80% reduced effort in asset creation



Enhanced content quality and improved business outcomes

"It's become super crucial for us with more than 50,000 users at the brand portal, both internal employees and external agencies. We are working with a huge number of downloads of all of the assets."

Interviewee from pharmaceutical

Source: A commissioned TEI study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Papirfly



Global brands trust Papirfly



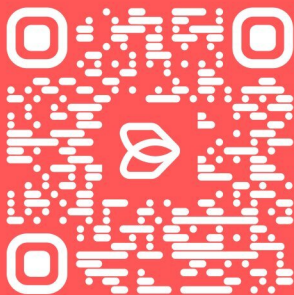
"Life without Papirfly would be stressful. It would be slow, time consuming, and costly. Papirfly has enabled us to have a system in place where we can create assets that we need very quickly. We can go to market much faster, we can react to our business and our clients a lot quicker, and it is also extremely cost effective."

Jo Bedford
Global Recruitment Branding Manager, IBM



Empower your people. Unleash your brand.

Discover our game-changing brand management platform.



At papirfly.com you can

- Book a demo
- Explore brand management resources
- Hear success stories from empowered customers

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