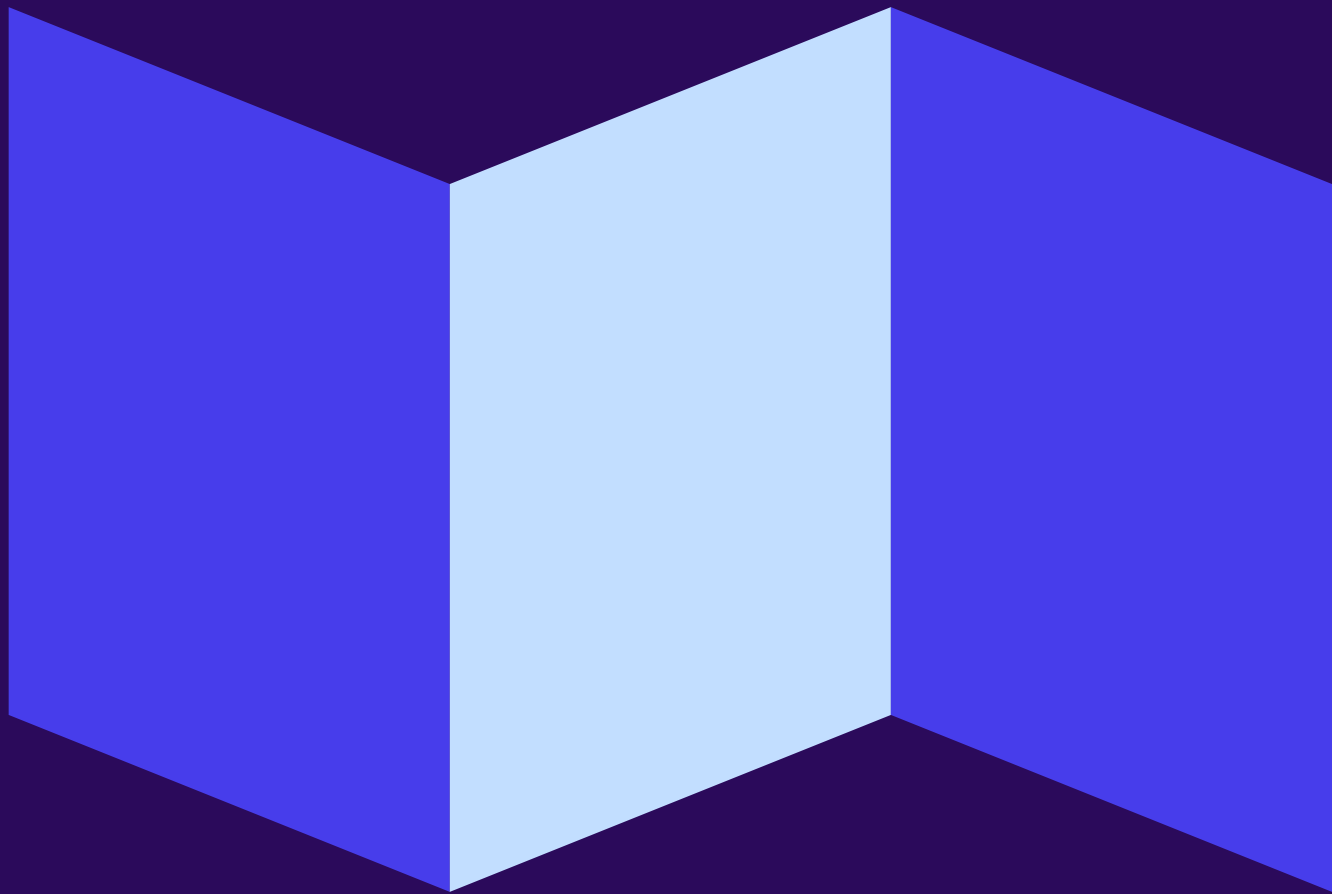# The essential guide to activating your employer brand

Your employer brand plays a pivotal part in the sustained growth and evolution of your worldwide workforce.

From attracting and inspiring potential recruits about the possibilities of working for your organisation, to building unbreakable bonds between your current employees and your company, it's safe to say that employer branding is critical in steering the present and future of your business.

With this in mind, we have constructed this ultimate guide to activating your employer brand. Our aim is to highlight the essential steps that organisations should take to reap the greatest possible benefits for their workforce, while minimising the chunk taken out of your available time and budget.

We hope this enables you to take your employer brand to the next level, and put you in the perfect position in recruiting and retaining the best available talent globally.
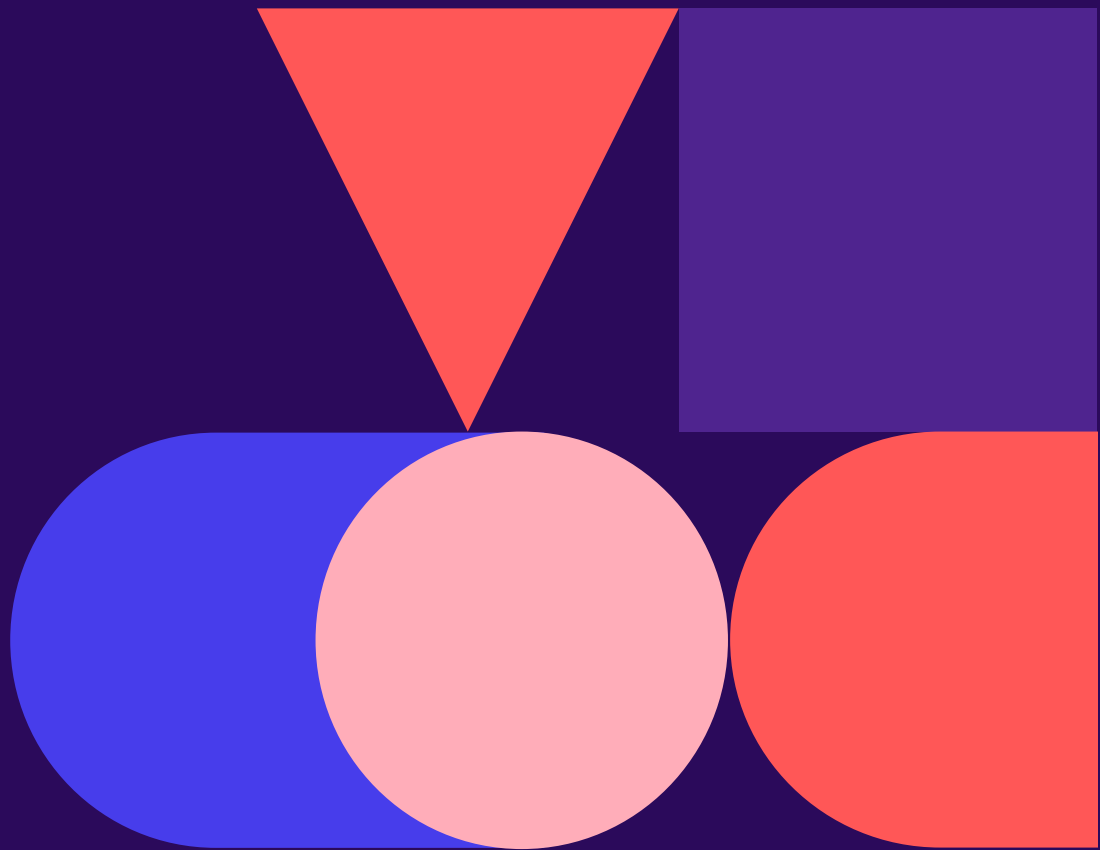
Enjoy!

Contents

Part 1

Take a look around...

At the heart of any successful employer brand is a motivated, engaged and broadly happy workforce. With that in mind, before investing any time or money into agencies, research projects and EVP development, it's important to get a measure of your current workforce's satisfaction levels.

This information provides the benchmark for the effectiveness of your existing employer brand efforts, and a platform that you can build on with future initiatives. But, how exactly do you get this initial impression?

Survey your employees

First, explore techniques to survey your team members about their current satisfaction levels. Depending on the size and scale of your organisation, you might choose to approach this differently.

Smaller to mid-sized businesses might be in a position to gauge employee happiness through one-on-one discussions or internal meetings. This has the benefit of securing direct feedback from people, and in turn reassure them that their company cares about their wellbeing.

Meanwhile larger, global companies might not have the scope to conduct these, so could send a collective email survey for staff to complete, potentially including some form of incentive to gain the maximum response. While there's an added risk of no responses, some employees may feel more confident to provide candid feedback if it is given anonymously.

> Only 15% of worldwide employees are engaged in their workplace.
>
> Gallup

Examine your recruitment and retainment figures

While numbers can't tell the whole story about staff satisfaction, they can tell a lot. For instance, examine your staff turnover rate year-to-year. According to Monster, the average for this in the UK is approximately 15%. If your rate exceeds this, it's a potential indicator that employee satisfaction is low and your employer brand efforts are not proving effective.

Similarly, in relation to your recruitment initiatives, analyse the following:

- The average number of applicants for each job position you've advertised in recent months/years

- Daily/weekly impressions your job vacancies receive on your website. The average length of time new hires remain as part of your company

Figures such as these can highlight issues affecting your ability to recruit, your onboarding process, or problems in your capacity to retain staff for the long-term.

Audit external perceptions of your brand

As well as examining the thoughts and feelings of your employees, a thorough audit of your current brand perception according to your external audiences helps you understand if your messaging and reputation is projecting the values and attractiveness you aim for.

There are several ways you can approach this:

- Examine employee review sites like Glassdoor, and if the reviews on here could be positively/negatively impacting your brand image

- Utilising social media listening tools allows you to track mentions of your organisation over social media, gaining deeper insight into how people view your brand

- Google Alerts, similar to social media listening, can clarify your reputation based on where your brand is mentioned on search engine results

Cast a critical eye over your company culture

Take a step back and examine your company culture. Is your workplace a thriving, bustling centre of activity and communication among co-workers? Or is it reserved and uninspiring?

It is important to assess this as objectively as possible, as company culture is an influential factor in employees' happiness levels:

57% of employees value company culture over salary for their job satisfaction

77% of job seekers will research an organisatio's company culture before making their decision to apply

Employees happy with their company culture are **12% more productive** than those who aren't

63% consider company culture a big part of their reason for staying with a company

Now there's no such thing as a "wrong" company culture – some prefer being part of a quieter, more strait-laced environment. But if upon analysing your workplace culture you see a noticeable lack of buy-in from your team, then that could be a sign your employer brand needs work.

If you don't like what you discover, don't take it as a sign of failure – it's far better to be critical now in your judgement and use it as a springboard for positive steps forward than deny any issues.

Company culture and COVID-19

The shifting work landscape following the outbreak of COVID-19, with over 46% of employed adults working remotely in April 2020, makes this assessment of company culture even more important.

As many brands can no longer solely rely on in-office events and perks to support the strength of their culture, part of activating their employer brand will be adapting their approach to build a united culture without a shared working space – something that's difficult, but not impossible.

You can learn more about how this can be achieved here.

Part 2

papirfly®
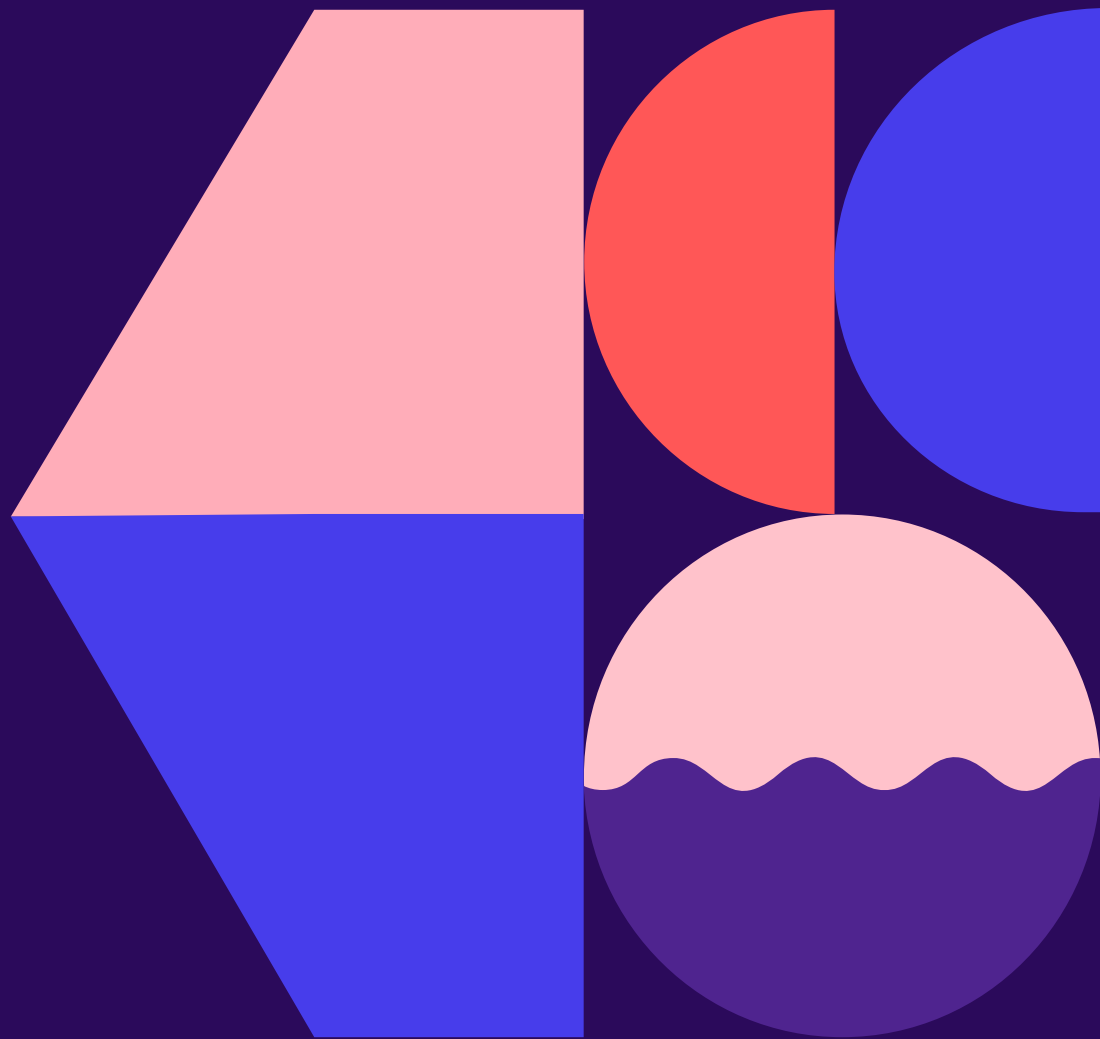
Lock down your EVP

After applying Part 1 you should have a clearer sense of where your employer branding is right now and what is in need of improvement. This may revolve around the document right at the heart of your efforts – your Employee Value Proposition (EVP).

Your EVP is a two-way promise between your company and your employees – in return for the hard work and capabilities they bring to your business, this outlines the rewards and benefits they will receive in return.

This is a crucial component of activating any employer brand. The promises in the EVP not only go a long way to attract prospective recruits with the advantages you can offer; it also supports the long-term engagement, growth and happiness of your workforce.
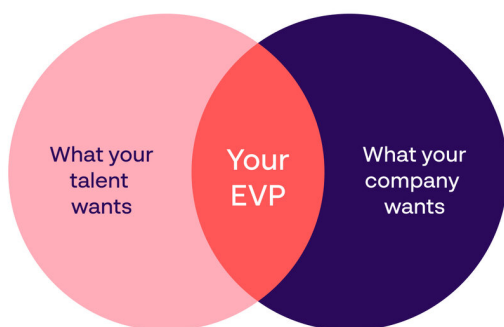
A quarter of UK employees have left their company due to issues hof trust

*Source: Bupa
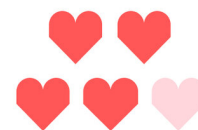
83% of job seekers will likely research company reviews and ratings when deciding where to apply for a job

*Source: Glassdoor

So, when developing or adjusting your EVP, you need to prioritise the following:

- What is important to your employees?

- What aligns with your employer brand values?

- What is achievable for your organisation?

What your talent wants | Your EVP | What your company wants

*Source: Workology

But, it's not enough to talk the talk – your EVP has to walk the walk too. If it fails to deliver on the promises presented, this can be viewed as a break of trust for your employees. This may not only cost you their services over time, but hurt your reputation internally and, through social media and review sites like Glassdoor, externally.

1. What is important to your employees?

The list of potential perks and benefits that an employee might expect from their company is extensive, and could include:

- Professional development opportunities

- Workplace culture initiatives

- Healthcare and other insurance benefits

- Flexitime

- High quality of work

- Bonuses

- Favourable office location

- Perks such as free fruit, gym memberships and social outings

- Company values

- Strong work-life balance

Finding the right blend of these and further advantages will be key to exciting and engaging your team members and, as a result, inspire them to become active advocates for your employer brand to attract new recruits.

2. What aligns with your employer brand values?

While it might be tempting to select a broad range of fun and exciting perks from the list above, the most successful EVPs are aligned with the values of their brand.

To build your EVP around your overarching employer brand, consider the following:

- **Define your mission** – Establish what sets you apart as a company, and what role your brand plays in making the world a better place.

- **Outline your vision** – Highlight a common long-term view that outlines exactly where your company is going, making them want to stick around for the journey.

- **Pinpoint your values** – Pick out your 3-7 core values that underlie the nature of your brand, acting as guiding principles for your employees to fit into your workplace.

By bringing your EVP in-line with your overarching brand values, it means that your employees will fully understand what your company stands for at all times – if these values mean something to them as well, it will help forge stronger bonds between them and your brand.

3. What is achievable for your organisation?

Finally, once you have brainstormed all the benefits you can include into your EVP that embody who you are as a brand, take a step back and decide which of these are realistic in the context of your resources and working patterns.

Remember – a broken promise hurts a lot more than a promise that was never made in the first place. Be practical in which perks are the highest priority to include in your EVP, which will vary from company to company, and ensure these are delivered consistently.

Ultimately, as long as your EVP communicates why someone should work for you in a clear and concise way – you've nailed it. It can be a few bullet points or a comprehensive booklet – if it resonates with your employees and potential recruits and can be met within your means, you'll have a healthy, beating heart to activate your employer brand with.

Part 3

papirfly®
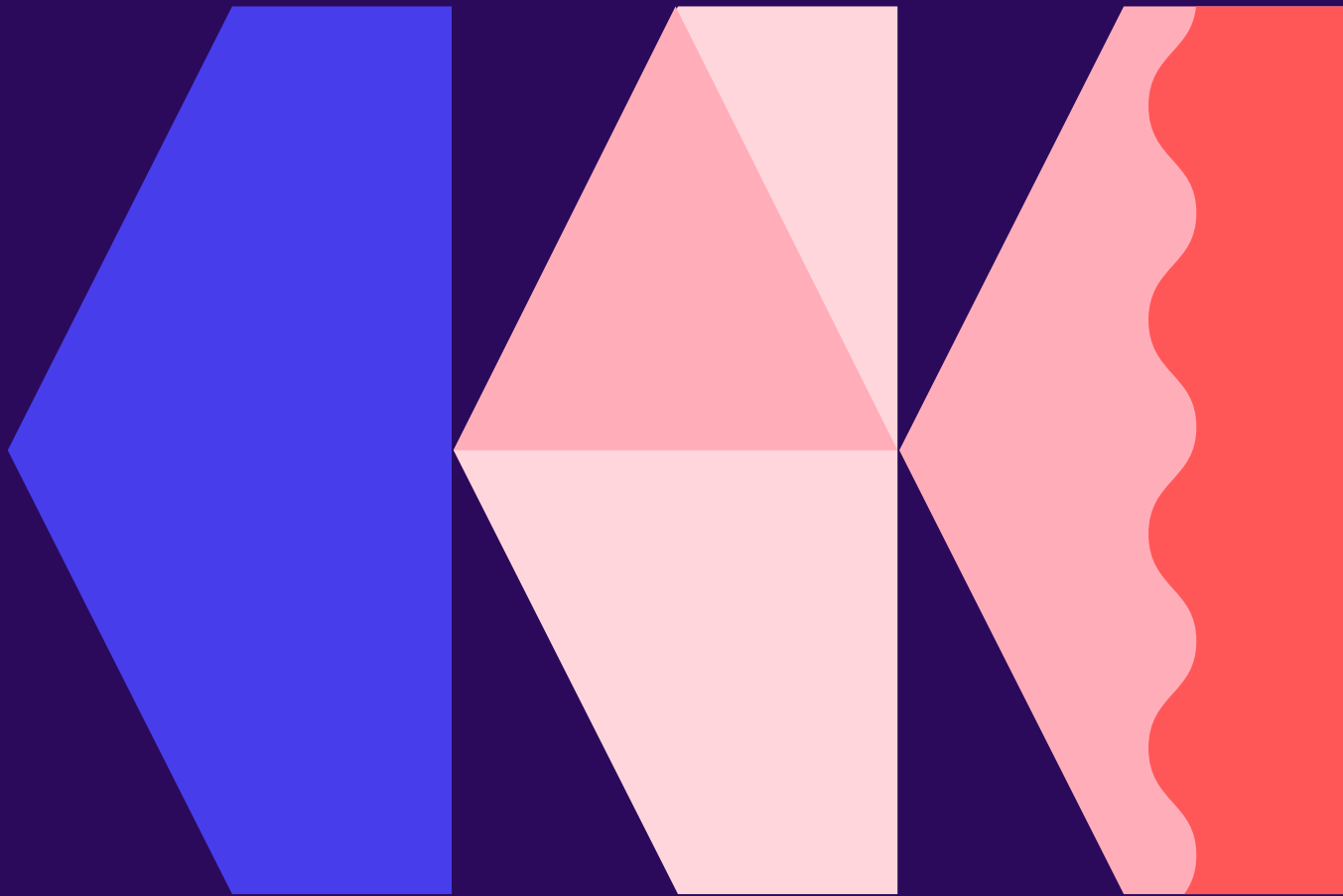
Cement your employer brand strategy

EVP established – now let's consider what else needs to be considered in your employer brand strategy.

Like any aspect of marketing, strategy is the foundation for success. Without a clear, well-thought-out plan behind your actions, you can quickly find yourself doing things for the sake of doing them. This will keep your team busy, but it won't actually accomplish anything – it certainly won't activate your employer brand and help it work at its most effective.

84%

84% of jobseekers consider the **reputation** of a company important to their decision on joining

52%

52% of candidates spend time researching an organisation's website and social channels to learn more about their **culture** before applying

A negative reputation can cost companies a further **10% per hire**

28% ↓

Investing in employer branding strategies can result in a **28% reduction** in employee turnover

Your employer brand strategy should be viewed as a documented, universal approach to translating your organisation's values, approaches and personality to your audience. Your EVP is a core component of that, but there is more to consider...

Ask current employees why they chose your brand

As part of your internal checks discussed in Part 1, poll your employees about their reasons for joining your organisation. Every person working for you made the choice to do so, and on a daily basis they continue to evaluate it and choose whether they should stay or go.

By approaching this correctly, this presents a valuable back of knowledge that can feed into your employer brand strategy. Tapping into the thoughts and motivations of those who work for you day in and day out can provide clarity over many key aspects of your employer brand:

- What does your team believe your brand stands for?

- What makes your brand unique in their eyes?

- What about your brand story stood out to your employees?

- What features of the workplace makes them want to stay?

- What do they tell their friends and family about their job?

Gathering employee views straight from the source, be it through one-to-one meetings or online polls, with help give your brand greater authenticity.

Build your ideal employee persona

To properly activate your employer brand strategy, it's crucial to identify the employee that you're targeting. What values do they hold close to their heart? What are their career objectives and ambitions? What interests do they hold outside of work?

Without pinpointing the answers to these and other questions, you are in no position to effectively develop an employer branding strategy that targets a person with the personality, aspirations and skills to enable them to seamlessly join your team.

Furthermore, clarifying your ideal candidate makes it likely that they will find the transition into your organisation and growing within it far more satisfying and fulfilling.

So, as part of your strategizing, construct a checklist of questions and optimal answers to create as clear a picture as possible of who you want as part of your team:

- What are their main personality traits?

- What causes do they care about?

- What motivates them day-to-day?

- Where do they research for information?

- What roles and responsibilities do they want?

- Who influences their decisions?

Nail down your employer-based USPs

86% of HR professionals believe that recruitment is now on equal footing with marketing, with both applying similar practices to attract their various audiences. Therefore, determining the USPs that set your organisation apart for potential employees over an industry equivalent is critical in making your employer brand a go-to for candidates the world over.

What issues do you stand for that others don't? What aspects of your work culture can you promote that others aren't? Where does your brand excel and stand out against what your competitors can produce? The answers to these questions will define the unique characteristics your company has, boosting your attractiveness to recruits.

Identify the best marketing channels

Once you have a clear sense of your ideal candidate's profile, you should be in a stronger position to pursue that target on the marketing channels that they regularly frequent.

By carefully determining the right channels for your audience, you can invest your budgets more strategically and sensibly, so you can maximise the impact of your employer brand marketing. When combined with a time and cost-saving tool like Papirfly's brand management platform, this can really help you stretch budgets to their fullest.

This can also enable you to reinvest more resources into remarketing to passive candidates, rather than continually casting your rod out further without knowing if any fish are waiting to bite. Again, it is all about using what you know about your ideal candidates and where they are to drive the maximum ROI from your campaigns.

To figure this out, try asking your employees how they first encountered your brand. Research into popular platforms and forums for people working in your industry. Look into some of the suggestions we've highlighted below. Using the right platforms to frequently translate the inclusivity, vision and development of your employees will drive a clear connection between your brand and your audience.

Methods and channels of promoting employer brand

Social networks	Career site	Current employees	Lectures and workshops
Inbound recruiting	Job advertising	Candidate relationship managment	Application process

Review and set your brand guidelines in stone

Your company will probably already have overarching brand guidelines – but have these been effectively aligned to your employer brand?

In order to activate your employer brand strategy, you need assets that set your employer brand apart, and resources available that complement your campaigns.

This could mean anything from country-specific guidelines, culturally appropriate imagery, colour palettes, logo variations, audience breakdowns by country, dos and don'ts for different territories and anything in between.

Assess and evolve your strategy over time

Finally, once you have your employer branding strategy in place, it is important that you are regularly assessing, fine-tuning and adapting it as your business and your industry landscape evolves.

It is rare that anything this important is nailed first time around, so it is critical that you over time analyse the results of your efforts and see where improvements can be made.

Examine the success of your employer branding initiatives against your pre-defined KPIs, which may include:

- Time-to-hire

- Cost-per-hire

- Number of applicants to each vacancy

- Improved brand reputation

- Frequency of employer brand marketing

Part 4

papirfly®
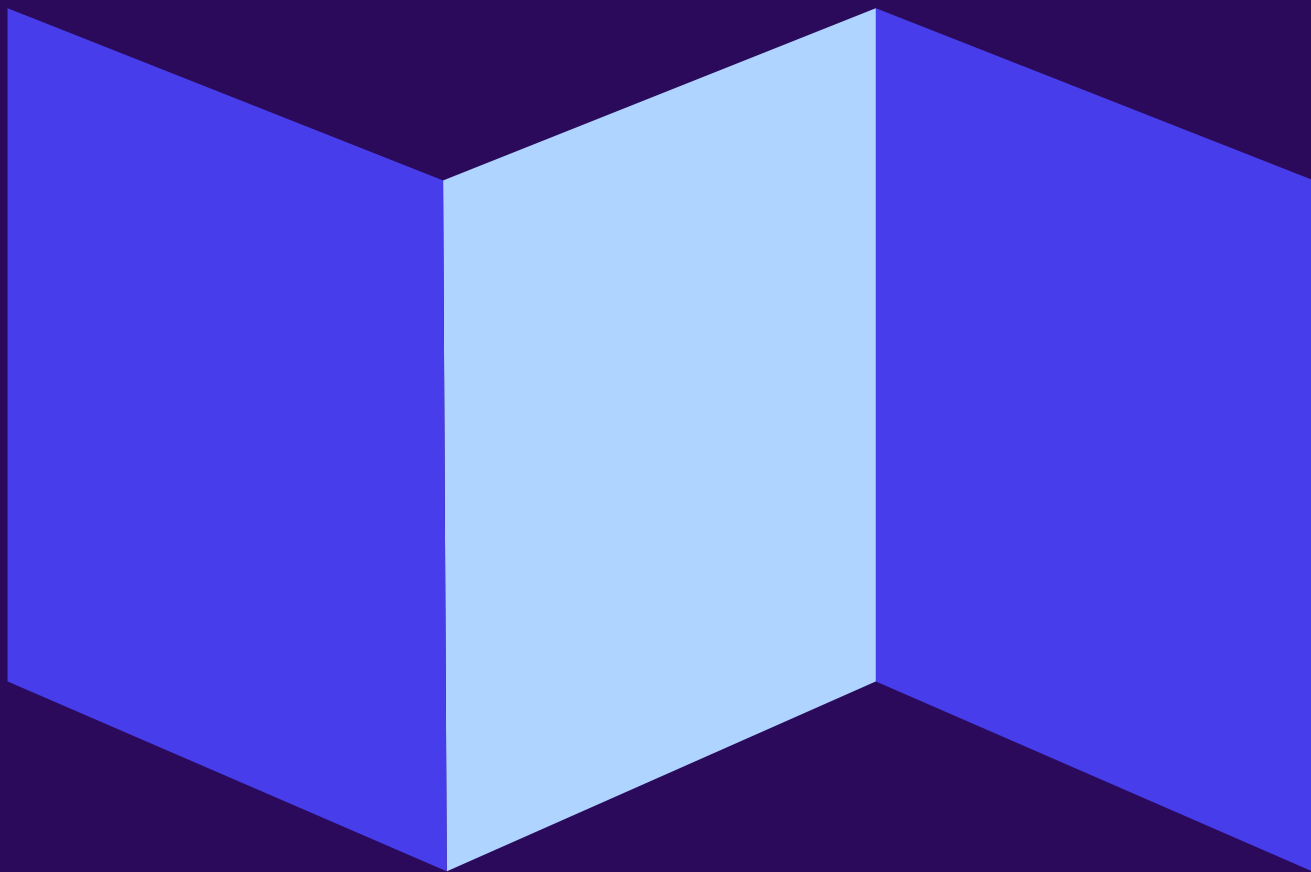
Invest in the right tools

Once you've nailed down your strategy, it's time to think about how this will be executed. This means more than the personnel who will oversee its delivery, but the tools and systems you introduce to efficiently activate your brand.

Identifying the right technology for your needs takes a fair amount of research. Look for credible solutions that are widely adopted and with a proven track record behind them. Ask for ROI data, customer testimonials and more to increase your reassurance in their solutions.

However, it's important to be brave with your search. Sticking with the status quo may feel comfortable and you may want to turn away from the short-term investment – but long-term the right tools and systems could more than pay back this investment with greater speed, reliability and ease-of-use.

Why is investing in technology important?

- Finding smarter, swifter tools can make fundamental difference to the way you develop and promote your employer brand, delivering a greater ROI for your campaigns

- Faster, easier to use technology will upscale business performance and empower more in your team to play an active role in activating your employer brand

- Reduce reliance on agencies by investing in technology and systems that enable you to take employer brand marketing in-house – this greater agility can help you secure a critical competitive edge

- Removing manual process and replacing them with automated, tech-driven solutions increase productivity, cut down costs, reduce risk of human error and makes life easier and less monotonous for employees

So which technologies should you focus on to boost your ability to activate your employer brand?

Creation

First and foremost, seek out technology to support the production of your employer branding assets. This should align with the channels that you've identified in forming your strategy, but in general the more types of assets that you can seamlessly create, the more versatile your campaigns can be.

For instance, Papirfly's all-encompassing brand management platform, incorporates smart templates for a wide range of asset types:

- Social media posts

- Online videos

- Email marketing

- Posters

- Brochures

- Digital signage

So whether you are looking to produce branded motivational posters for across your offices, or share impassioned employee stories and experiences on Instagram, multifaceted creation tools like this can make activating your employer brand much more straightforward.

Video is the way to go

- Companies using video draw in 41% more web traffic (Smallbiztrends)
- Viewers retain 95% of a message in a video compared to 10% in text (Pop Video)
- Employers that add video to job postings gather 34% greater applications (Interact)

Collaboration

Collaborating and sharing work with colleagues across the globe help organisations benefit from incredible cost and time efficiencies:

- No more duplicated effort

- No hours waiting for proofreading

- No starting from scratch every time

Investing in a central hub where all resources, assets and guidelines can be stored, shared and accessed by teams worldwide allows companies to actively work together to save time and effort. Efficiency is the lifeblood of successful projects and teams – so introducing collaboration tools like a DAM should be a top priority when activating your employer brand.

This approach also provides a birds-eye perspective of all activity impacting your employer brand, as well as the option to update guidelines in real-time in a single space, so everyone in the business can be immediately aware of any adjustments.

Avoid working in silos

A lack of collaboration in teams can often lead to departments working in silos. This means work is duplicated, duties are missed, and no central control over operations. The result? Wasted resources and an employer brand not activated to its fullest.

To beat the silo mentality, collaboration tools create a supportive, united environment, allowing for the expression of local nuances and considerations in your work while never straying from the unified global employer brand.

Brand consistency

In our experience, we find that the biggest area of weakness post-launching an employer brand is governing the brand, making sure it is being applied consistently and activated as intended. Did you know employee turnover can be reduced by up to 28% by having a strong, consistent global employer brand?

After so much time and investment has gone into optimising the strategy and forming the foundations of your employer brand, the difficulties that brands often face in controlling it can immediately weaken its impact. Inconsistencies can hurt reputation and credibility, and make it difficult for both existing and prospective employees to understand what your brand stands for.

By harnessing technology to clamp down on consistency, you remove the potential pitfalls and maximise the presence of your employer brand across all markets. This makes your overall brand more robust and effective at attracting attention and engaging your audiences.

Translating to local markets

A huge challenge facing top global businesses is communicating their central brand identity to employees and prospective recruits worldwide. Crossing boundaries means new cultures, new languages, new customs.

When it comes to protecting and maximising your global employer brand, it is a case of think globally, act locally. The right technology will enable you to quickly adapt your "primary" employer brand messaging to flawlessly fit into a completely distinct culture, and empower your teams across the globe to produce their own assets.
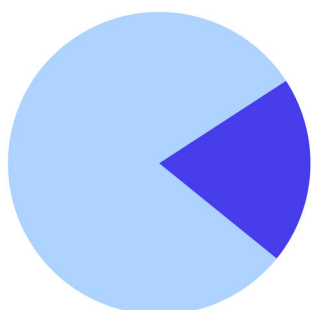
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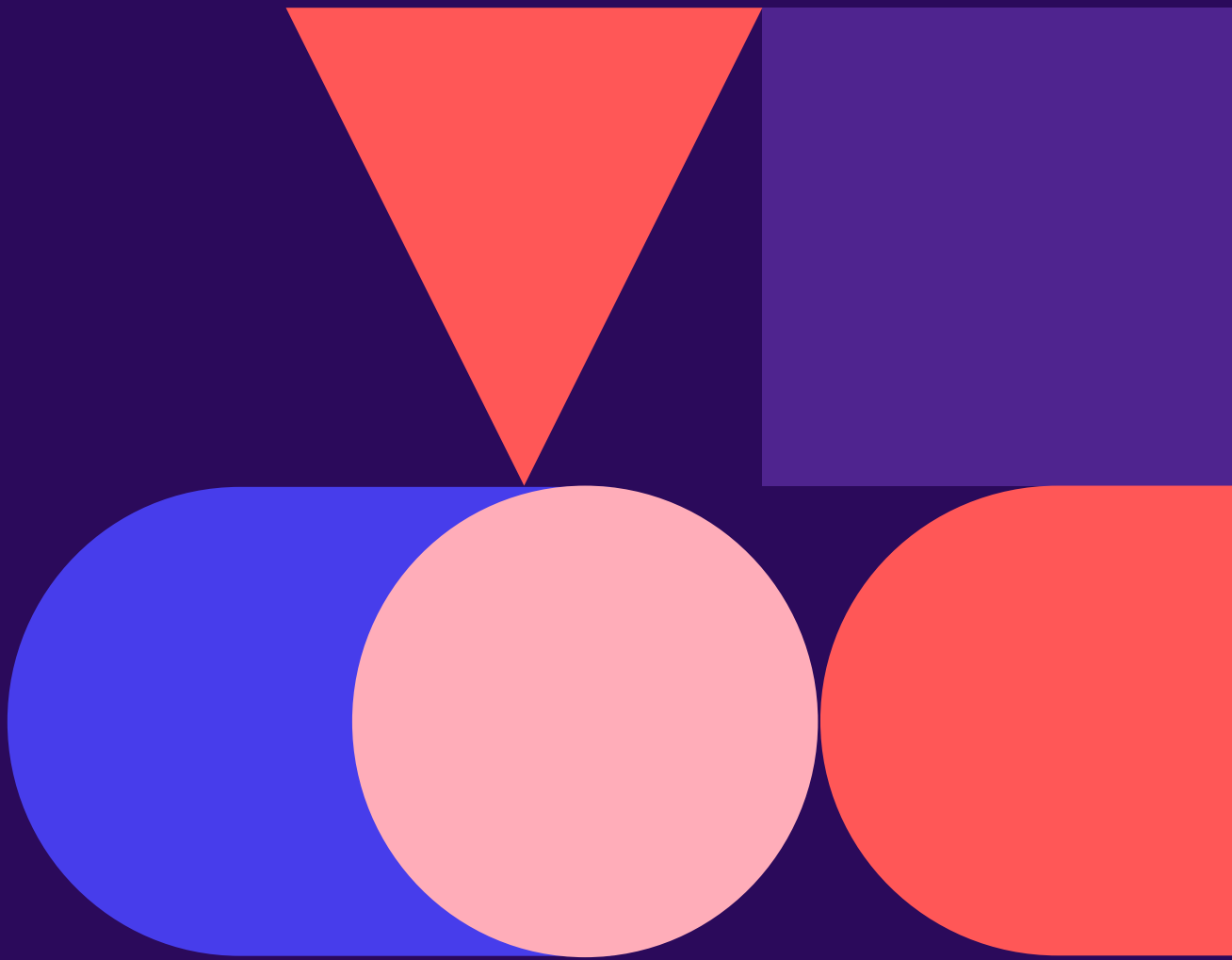
Prioritise employee empowerment

The key to truly activating your employer brand is being in possession of an empowered, motivated and positive workforce.

Teams that feel empowered are more confident, more assured in their position. This leads to greater satisfaction, higher productivity and boost retention levels.

Employees who feel in control of their careers are 20% more likely to stay in that role

*Source: TINYPulse

Plus, it is one of the qualities that turn employees into active brand advocates. The more empowered they feel as part of an organisation, the more likely they are to promote them across their personal platforms, growing your reputation among prospective candidates.

Of course, wanting an empowered team doesn't automatically give you one – it is a continuous process of helping your employees feel at home in their role and enabling them to play an active role in your company's development.

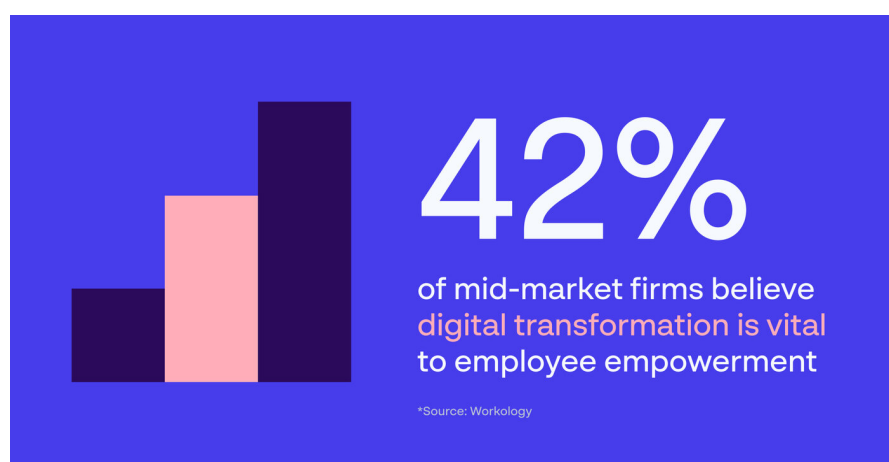Here's three ways you can work to reach that level:

Incorporate easy-to-use technologies

Following on from the previous part, the right technology can make an enormous difference to the influence an employee can have on their organisation and their own career.

For instance, Papirfly's brand management platform empowers people to create their own on-brand employer brand marketing – no specialist involvement, no design experience necessary, and all in a short span of time.

Imagine that, internal teams empowered to produce their own print and digital marketing, to exactly the same standard as a specialist agency. Not only does this improve the efficiency of your operations, but it encourages employees in their own capabilities. It inspires them to be creative and actively involved in promoting your brand.

42%

of mid-market firms believe digital transformation is vital to employee empowerment

*Source: Workology

Invest in employee development

As well as picking up helpful technology, a huge part of employee empowerment is investing in your team's growth.

Investing into an employee's development is good for business whichever way you look at it. The employee feels they are valued and progressing their career. Your organisation benefits from a new skill. Your overall organisation feels stronger, smarter and more reassured in its ability to meet the latest demands of your industry.

There are several ways you can approach this:

- Provide a training allowance for online courses, books and other materials

- Introduce regular CPD sessions, either individually or for whole teams

- Encourage self-development hours once or twice a month, which allows people to explore subjects they feel will help them with their career

- Give them responsibility over the onboarding and training of new recruits,

Simply put, if you invest in your employees, they're far more likely to invest in you. While it does come with costs, you are increasing your team's capabilities (which they'll appreciate) and projecting to people across your organisation and further afield that you're an employer that wants to see staff progress. That turns you from a place where people look for a **job**, to a place where people find a **career**.
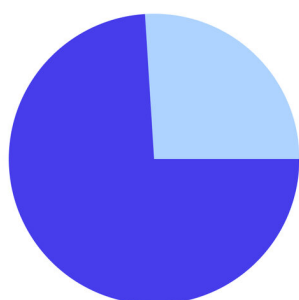
74%
of employees don't believe
they are reaching their
full potential

*Source: The Learing Wave

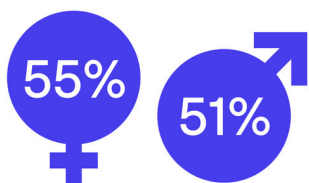## Make sure people always understand their role

Could your employees list down all of their roles and responsibilities and hand them to you? And if they could, would what they write down reflect what you'd expect someone with their title to fulfil?

As people progress in their jobs, it is common for them to take on increasingly more responsibilities, to the point where these can become blurred or disjointed. Consequently, a lack of clarity over their role in the company can cause employees to feel overwhelmed or not managed correctly, and in turn cause a drop in engagement.

53%

of employees experience
high role clarity

55% **51%**

Employees with high role clarity report high levels

of effectiveness **86%**

intention to stay **84%**

of productivity **83%**

of satisfaction with leadership **75%**

○ Effectory

Due to this, an important aspect of employee empowerment is your team having complete clarity and transparency over what their role pertains and, as this evolves over time, this is discussed with them to help them understand what is changing and why.

For new hires, providing a definitive job description from day one, with duties and details on who they report to, will avoid confusion and give them the confidence and clarity to deliver from the outset. This boosts efficiency and productivity, and makes team members more likely to stay if their expectations for their job role are consistently met.

Of course, empowering employees also incorporates a certain amount of freedom and independence to enable them to naturally develop in your team. So don't make your job description an ironclad list of tasks – instead treat it as a clear framework of goals, priorities and boundaries, within which they can independently find their best way to work.

61%

of employees say their new job role
differs from the expectations set out
during their interview

*Source: The Learing Wave

How empowerment activates your employer brand

Empowered employees are engaged employees – engaged with their jobs, engaged with their co-workers, engaged with their brand.

There are few more powerful elements of an employer brand than testimony from your existing team. If they are happy, involved and fulfilled due to these and further steps to empowerment, they will likely play an active role in celebrating your company on their own channels.

By making a deliberate effort to empower your employees, you create employees that are more confident. Autonomous. Responsible. Well-rounded. Satisfied.

And in turn, they will share this satisfaction through their personal networks and provide more great EB content to use on your company channels. This leads to a better atmosphere internally and a greater chance to attract more talented individuals to your organisation.

✔ Employees Get

→ Autonomy

→ Ownership

→ Responsibility

→ Job satisfaction

→ Authority

→ Progression

✔ Employers Get

→ An action-taker

→ Accountability

→ Less burden

→ Positive reviews

→ Less approve

→ A developed employee

Unleash your brand with Papirfly
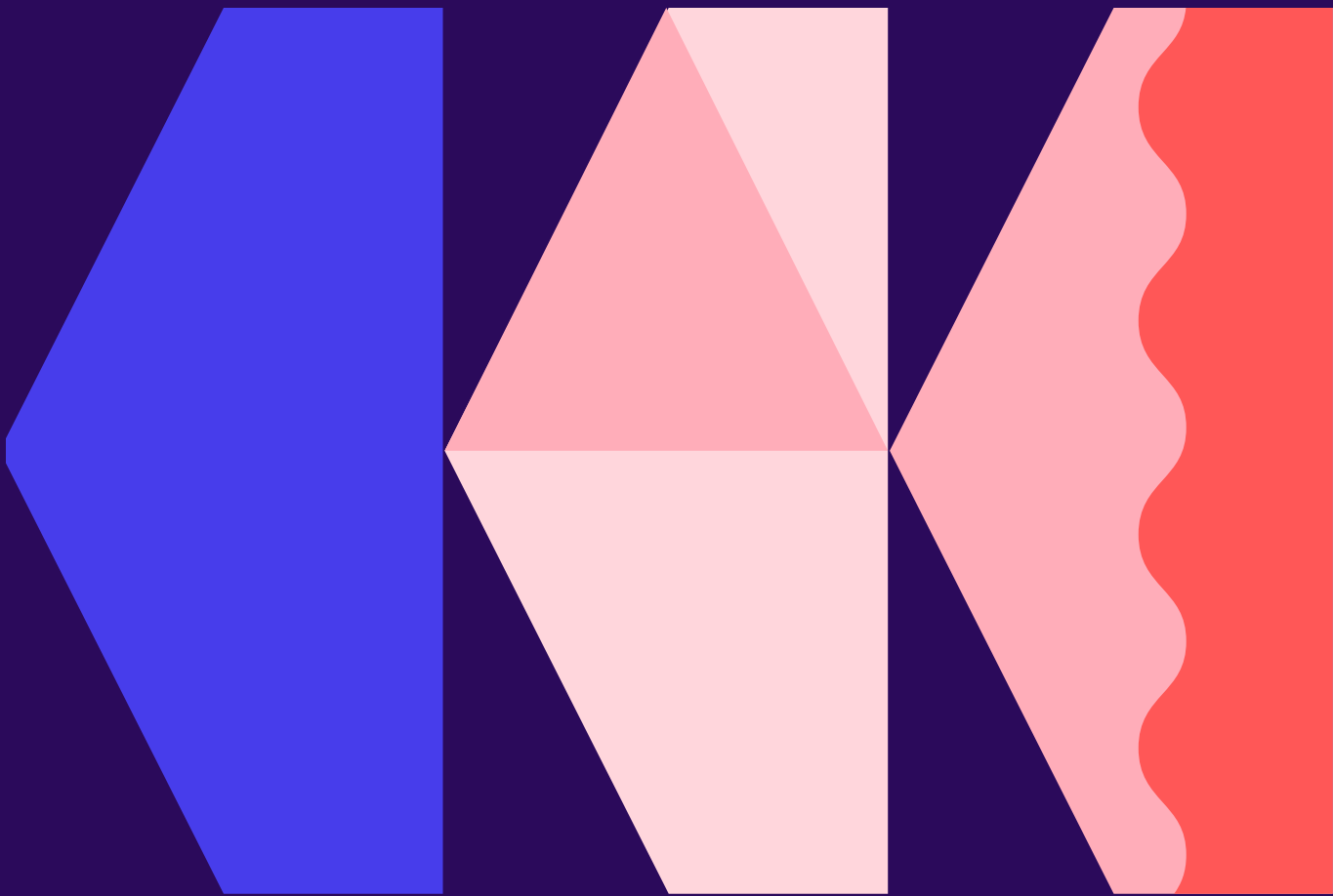
How does Papirfly empower your people?

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
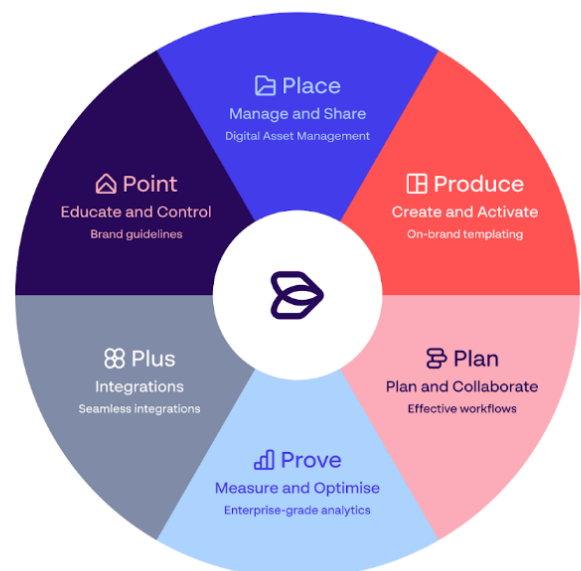
Trusted by the world's most recognisable brands

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 onesecure 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."
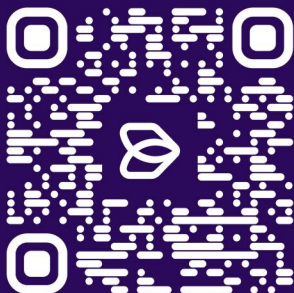
Jo Bedford
Global Recruitment Branding Manager, IBM

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