

# Chapter 16

## Employer Branding and Internet Security

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter promotes the concept of employer branding (EB) as special kind of value management being part of strategic human resources management (SHRM) and including elements of cyber security. Employees' and organization's shared values (EVPs) bring opportunity to create common sense of identity, which prevents potentially aversive behavior towards company's reputation. Chapter's background positions EB and EVP in process of SHRM, introduces the view of EB as architectural frame for core organizational values, and describes popular Internet tools of EB. The background is closed by descriptions of common Internet threats, their implications to overall organization's information security, as well as useful Internet security systems. Chapter concludes with recommendations regarding enhancing EB by better controlling company's information security. As a new research area is proposed sub-discipline of cyber security in management, with special dedication to SHRM.*

### INTRODUCTION

Organizations operating on a current competitive market are assessed not only through products or services, but also, increasingly, through their image as an employer – so called employer's brand (Botha et al, 2011). When public image of a company is highly rated on the market, the company is perceived as an attractive place to work and becomes the employer of choice for employees. Employer branding (EB) is an intentional human capital development strategy and important part of overall human resources management in company (Minchington, 2013). Demographic changes and deepening shortages between supply and demand on labor market causes that companies around the globe try to attract and retain talents - best employees. EB is here considered the accurate hr tool to recruit new talents and to bind most effective, creative and engaged workers. However, the question arises:

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Is EB adequately used by different stakeholders of organizations' to achieve planned aims?

When we plan EB, first we need to define core organizational values which in a best way exemplify company's Employer's Value Proposition (EVP). EVP must be attractive for future or current coworkers both in a mental sense, as the best result of cognitive benchmarking of different job offers, as well as in an emotional sense (i.e. it is perceived as authentic, unique, positively challenging, exciting, etc.). EVP should be wide enough to attract sufficiently big scope of different individuals, but at the same time - has to be precisely described to be easily distinguished from similar proposals of competitors. And it is a really challenging task for hr departments when it is very hard to control the communication and behavior of own employees, including their activities on open social networks. Hierarchically, EB as an element of hr strategy is subordinated to overall company's HRM policy. This policy should involve basic humanistic values including truth, trust, transparency, loyalty, etc. However, any officially promoted values will not be shared in an organization if there is perceived disagreement between theory and practice. Only people can decide whether they want to internalize some work content in form of shared organizational values or not. Thus, value management (VM) should be the basis for successful EB strategy, and the same - definition of company's EVP - delivers the argumentation for her VM.

EB represents also marketing and public relation tool aimed at promoting the company as an attractive and good work place for current and future employees. Its aim is to show the company as a socially responsible business for a wide range of different stakeholders. Marketing is an intentional activity to sell something on the market – and in case of EB – to sell the job place(s). This pragmatic aspect puts EB strategy into kind of a conflict: on the one hand EB loudly says about values, and on the other hand – strives for its own benefits. This ethically “double-bind” situation locates EB activities at problematic position in a space of all hr processes. Present, future and former employees of the company carefully observe EB's promotion and collect their own opinions and conclusions about it. They can keep these opinions to themselves, or can share them with others - doing it directly (face-to face), or by using different distant communicators. Especially, the latter channel spreads information very fast and widely. Internet and social networks are today the main communication tools and EB's efficiency mainly depends on a responsible usage of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and social networks. Employer branding, so carefully developed by organizations, can be easily compromised by unconcerned or hostile Internet activity of different stakeholders (both internal and external), including current and former employees, unsatisfied customers, and competitors.

The notion of employer brand serves, in authors' opinion, as a platform to discuss main pros and cons of using the Internet in the process of implementation of employer branding strategy. Their aim is to summarize the results of the recent academic literature regarding employer brand by using cyber security perspective for analyzing the overall efficiency of employer branding in contemporary digital times. The list of possible e-threats and risks of careless (or even hostile) use of social media and Internet serves as the argumentation for including organizational internal information security policy into general EB strategy.

## **BACKGROUND**

Scientists mostly trace the foundations of employer branding in aspects of organizational behavior (OB) such as the concept of psychological contract and customer relationship management (Beaumont & Graeme, 2003, p. 7; Dunmore, 2002, p. 195; Rosethorn, 2009, p. 4). Reviewing literature, the first im-

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