

HOW TO:

Recruit Your Media-Savvy Gen-Ys

And drive traffic to your web site at the same time!

» BY KAREN RICHARDSON



Gen Ys (or “Millennials”), known as those born between the mid 1970s to the early 2000s, are a valuable asset to any organization. They are keen, talented, energetic and tech-savvy. As you will likely hire them in the upcoming years, you need to “market your jobs like a media buyer,” says Kim Peters, founder of Workopolis, Past-President of Eluta.ca, and the current President of Net Advertising Solutions. Peters showed some dynamic examples of companies using social media to attract talent (check out Cirque du Soleil’s recruitment video posted on our blog at www.yourworkplace.ca)

It’s also worthwhile to take a look at what kind of employee Gen-Ys really are, what they want in a company and how to attract them to your organization. For Starbucks, where 58% of employees are under the age of 34, or Mosaic, with 74% also under this age, attracting the best and brightest on Twitter, Facebook or through a cool video on your web site is more important than ever. This year’s Great Place to Work® Institute award winners are heavily Gen-Y oriented, with a number of organizations having more than 50% of employees up to the age of 34, according to Peters.

While it’s known that Gen Ys are very computer-literate, they are also very media-savvy. “They’ve grown up with an

entire lifetime of advertising and branding that has come to them,” says Peters. “What that means to you, as someone who’s trying to communicate to them, is that they’re really looking for authenticity and genuineness in the communications you give to them.”

So, if you have a story to tell, with real employees who are inspired and motivated at your company, why not tell it through video or using social media? “What you really need to do is optimize your corporate career site and tell everyone why you are a great place to work,” says Peters. “Using social media is a wonderful way to extend your reach and engage a broader community.” If your organization is on Facebook, be sure to have a career section there as well, she advises.

If you offer something unique, tell everyone about it, Peters recommends. Joey Restaurant Group (a heavily Gen-Y company with 98% of workers being under the age of 34) created a video to attract potential candidates of ambitious, real employees talking about how much they love their jobs. People in the video also talk about the possibilities for career progression in the restaurant industry. “When you think of a restaurant, you don’t necessarily think about career progression,” says Peters. “Their stories really come through and they don’t sound like ads.” Employees also talk about tuition reimbursements, cook-offs and the fun, social atmosphere at the restaurant. “This site is a lot less about job postings, and much more about who they are and what they do.”

Loving your job is definitely important for Gen Ys. Quoting stats from a recent article in the Journal of Management published last year, Peters says that Gen Ys, in contrast to Gen-X and baby boomer employees are more likely to be looking for jobs with an easy pace. “Lots of vacation time is very important to them, as is salary, status, work-life balance, relaxation and leisure,” she says, adding: “It is important to consider these things when you’re managing Gen-Y employees, but also when you’re looking to attract them,” she says. “These are the kinds of things you need to have identified in communication material so you can tell stories and actually attract this generation effectively.” This can go a long way towards recruiting talent and retaining employees.



Kim Peters spoke on “Building A Best-in Class Employer Brand” at the Your Workplace Conference 2011, May 2–3, Toronto, Ontario.

Peters cited other examples including Mosaic and Home Depot's Facebook pages, Microsoft's "Jobs Blog", Lockheed Martin's chat room for job seekers, Pepsi's "app" for applicants.

Ernst & Young also has an interactive careers web site and a "Picture Yourself" tool, which gives young graduates the ability to understand how their education can get them a job, and an opportunity to ask questions about the challenges. "People love interactive tools – particularly Gen Ys," says Peters. "They are used to using computers in very sophisticated ways. And it's truly very helpful."

Ernst & Young also offers an "interview insider" tool. "It's so difficult as a job seeker today to actually talk to someone within an organization," says Peters. "So any tools or information you offer that provide insight into your hiring process, are tremendously well-received."

Most importantly, tell your story, and take advantage of the opportunities available to expand your corporate profile and attract talent to your organization. **W**

INCREASE WEB SITE TRAFFIC

How to use your career site to increase the number of hits to your web site:

1 EVERY PAGE IS A HOMEPAGE: "Many people will come into your web site through a job description landing page," says Peters. So if you want to increase traffic to your site, remember that "every page is a home page."

2 MARKETING YOUR JOBS LIKE A MEDIA BUYER: Ensure your jobs are searchable, as jobs can drive a lot of traffic to your site. Take advantage of free sites and send your jobs out to them. Use relevant demographics, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and advertise both your organization and your jobs. "Think beyond your job sites in general and track everything," says Peters.

3 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZE: Ensure your jobs are search-engine optimized. The most relevant, the most recent and the most popular content will rise to the top of a search engine. Jobs or content that gets clicked on the most, or has the most links, will rise higher. "Check where your jobs come up on Google and all the search engines, and make sure that they do appear, because this will give you more applicants." Peters gave the example of the jobs at Shopper's Drug Mart, which have a consistent format and are easily picked up by search engines.

4 EVERY PAGE IS A LANDING PAGE: Remember that most people don't come through the front door of your site. Many are coming through search engines or job sites, and landing on the job description page. It's important to have links to all of your content accessible at every job description, so people know who you really are.

5 TRACK EVERY JOB: Talk to those who run your web site. Track the traffic and where it comes from. It's possible to add coding on every job easily today, so you can track where your applicants are coming from.