

Employer Branding Manager: Evaluating the need for a new strategic role between Marketing and HR

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Abstract

Effective Employer branding (EB) is seen crucial for talent acquisition and retention, yet the required competencies and their degree of overlap with marketing and human resources (HR) remain unclear. This study examines the distinct hard and soft skills associated with EB professionals to determine whether unique competencies beyond marketing and HR are prevalent. Furthermore, factors validating EB as a specialized role remain unexamined. We conducted a content analysis of a sample of 1,044 job advertisements generated through web scraping, identified skill sets through a randomized subsample, followed by coding the ads of the full sample. Cohen's Kappa was calculated to confirm inter-rater reliability. Two-sample Z-tests revealed significant differences in the prevalence of skills between EB and both marketing and HR roles. The findings indicate that EB's hard skills mainly consist of competencies typical of either marketing or HR, suggesting it uniquely combines exclusive competencies from each domain. Average Jaccard coefficients placed EB centrally between marketing and HR regarding hard skills, highlighting its integrative nature. In terms of soft skills, a broader range of EB soft skills are present than either in the HR or marketing subsample. This underscores the need for professionals who can integrate these competencies to bridge external brand perception and internal employee experience. Overall, the results suggest that EB uniquely combines selected exclusive hard skills from marketing and HR with a comprehensive range of soft skills, supporting the necessity of a specialized role of an employer branding manager as a standalone strategic function within organizations.

Keywords: Employer Brand; Hard Skills; Job Advertisements; Skill Set; Soft Skills