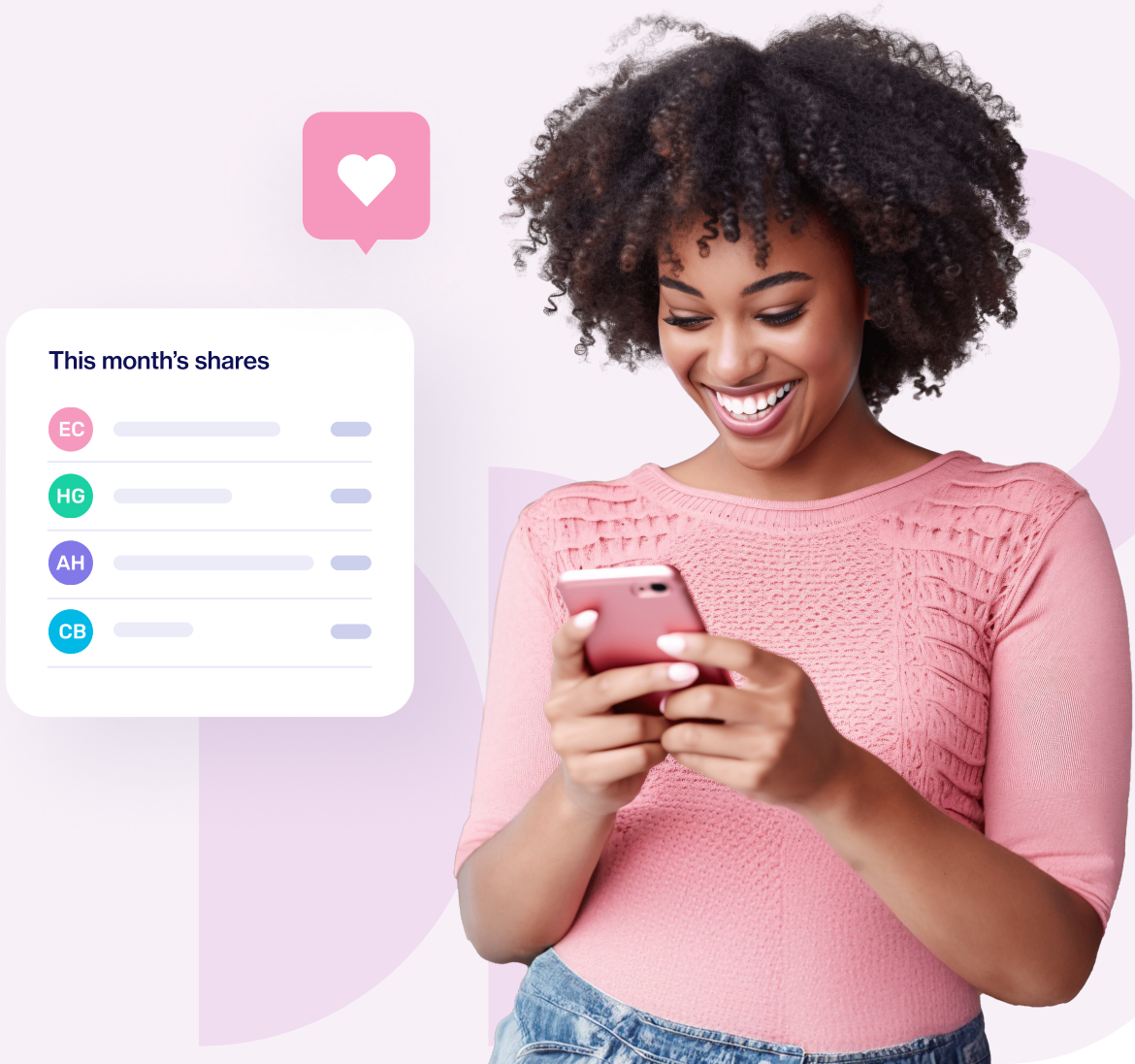
oktopost

Bridging Marketing and HR: Building an irresistible employer brand through social media advocacy



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Introduction

01

The importance of employer branding

In today's talent-driven market, employer branding is more critical than ever. Recent research by SHRM states that talent scarcity and skills gaps continuously challenge recruiting. Over 2300 HR professionals surveyed revealed that 77% reported difficulty recruiting for their full-time positions over the last 12 months.

Companies with strong employer brands attract top talent and experience higher retention rates and stronger employee engagement. A positive employer brand reflects a company's reputation as a great workplace, enhances the candidate experience, and contributes to better organizational performance.

Employer branding is not just the responsibility of HR. Collaboration between HR and marketing teams is required to create an integrated strategy that aligns company culture with outward-facing messages. For CMOs and CHROs, developing a transparent and authentic employer brand is key to attracting and retaining the right talent.

Employee advocacy & referral-based hiring: The secret ingredients

Employee advocacy and referral-based hiring are two powerful tools for successful employer branding. Employees who become brand ambassadors promote the company's culture, values, and job opportunities more authentically than corporate messaging alone.

Additionally, a well-structured referral-based hiring program leverages employees' networks to bring in qualified candidates already familiar with the company culture.

This guide will explain how to build a successful employee advocacy program, create a referral-based hiring initiative, and maximize the impact through strategic social media use.

The role of employee advocacy in employer branding

02

What is employee advocacy?

Employee advocacy empowers employees to share their positive experiences and insights about working at your company. It turns employees into brand ambassadors, allowing them to promote the company's culture, values, and career opportunities on their social media accounts.

Employee advocacy is particularly effective because it brings **authenticity** to employer branding efforts. Job seekers trust content current employees share far more than polished corporate messages. Additionally, employee advocacy programs expand the company's social reach by tapping into employees' personal and professional networks.

Why employee advocacy works

There are several reasons why employee advocacy is an essential part of employer branding:

1. **Authenticity**

Prospective hires are more likely to trust and relate to content shared by employees, making the brand more approachable.

2. **Extended Reach**

Each employee has their network on social media, exponentially increasing your employer brand's visibility when they share posts.

3. **Boost in Referrals**

Employees already advocating for the company are more likely to refer their friends and colleagues, adding value to referral-based hiring programs.

Key elements of a successful employee advocacy program

1 Incentivization

Employees need to feel motivated to participate in advocacy programs. Gamification, recognition, rewards, and small incentives—such as bonuses or exclusive opportunities—can encourage greater participation.

2 Training

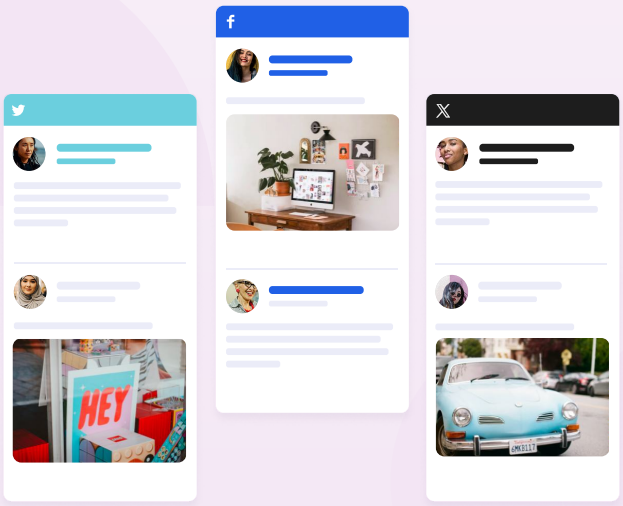
Equip employees with social media guidelines, best practices, and templates. Ensure that they understand the tone, messaging, and content that aligns with the company's employer brand. Provide training on using personal accounts for professional advocacy without being overly prescriptive.

3 Content Curation

While allowing employees to share personal perspectives is essential for authenticity, you should provide a variety of pre-approved content they can easily share. This could include company updates, behind-the-scenes posts, success stories, job openings, and thought leadership content. Balance is key— pre-prepared content should be editable, and try not to come across as forced.

4 Measurement

Regularly track the effectiveness of your employee advocacy program by monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs) like engagement (likes, comments, shares), reach, referrals, and the impact on recruitment. Use the data you collect to fine-tune the program over time.



Referral-based hiring: A natural extension of employee advocacy

03

What is referral-based hiring?

Referral-based hiring is the process of incentivizing current employees to refer qualified candidates for open positions. Employees are often familiar with the company culture and the skills required for a particular role, making their recommendations highly valuable.

Benefits of referral programs:

1. **Cost-effective**

Traditional hiring methods like job boards and recruiting agencies can be costly. Referral programs significantly reduce these costs by leveraging the personal networks of current employees.

2. **Faster time-to-Hire**

Referred candidates are often a better fit for the company and can move through the hiring process faster than candidates from other sources.

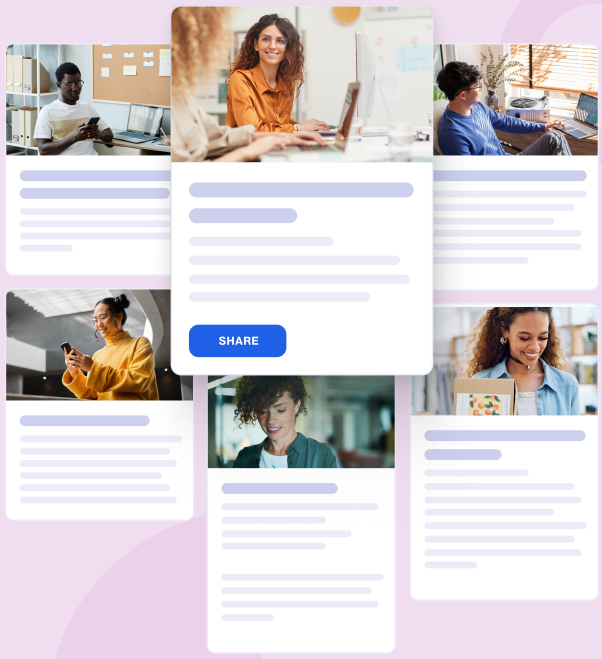
3. **Higher retention rates**

Studies show that employees hired through referrals tend to stay longer, as they are typically a better cultural fit and more informed about the company before joining.

Integrating referral programs with employee advocacy

A well-designed referral program naturally complements employee advocacy efforts. Encourage employees to promote job openings while sharing company culture on social media. Integrating referral bonuses into the program motivates employees to share job posts and refer candidates from their networks.

Incentivize your referral program with **referral bonuses, recognition, and career development opportunities** for employees who successfully refer new hires. Regularly update employees on current job openings and provide them with engaging content they can share on their networks to promote these opportunities.



Using corporate social media channels for employer branding

04

Corporate channels vs. Employee advocacy

While employee advocacy brings authenticity and reach to employer branding efforts, corporate social media channels offer more polished and controlled messaging. The key to success is balancing both approaches—corporate channels should highlight key company achievements, values, and professional development opportunities. At the same time, employee advocates bring a personal perspective to the same themes.

1 Company Culture

Share photos and videos of office events, behind-the-scenes activities, or team-building outings. Showcase your workplace as an exciting and rewarding environment.

2 Thought Leadership

Your leadership team should regularly post content reinforcing the company's values, vision, and industry expertise. This demonstrates that the company is an industry leader and a place where employees can grow.

3 Employee Recognition

Highlight employees who have achieved significant milestones, such as promotions, work anniversaries, or noteworthy accomplishments. This builds morale internally and shows potential candidates how much the company values its employees.

3 Open Positions

Share job openings, but do so in a way that highlights the unique benefits of working for your company. Instead of just listing responsibilities, focus on career development opportunities, company culture, and the impact the new hire can make.

Social network-specific strategies for building employer brand

05

Different social media platforms serve different purposes, each with strengths regarding employer branding. Below is a breakdown of how to use LinkedIn, X, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook to build and promote your employer brand.

LinkedIn

Best suited for:
LinkedIn is the most professional platform, making it ideal for sharing detailed job openings, industry thought leadership and professional development stories. It is especially effective for targeting experienced professionals and passive job seekers.

Content focus:

1. **Employee stories:** Share employee testimonials and personal experiences to give the company a more human face.
2. **Industry insights:** Position your leadership as industry thought leaders through articles and posts about key trends, innovations, and challenges.
3. **Detailed job postings:** Provide a comprehensive overview of open positions, focusing on your company's career growth opportunities.

Employee advocacy tips:
Encourage employees to share their own career progression stories or offer professional insights. LinkedIn recommendations and testimonials from employees about their experience can significantly enhance credibility.

X

Best suited for:
X is great for sharing quick updates, engaging in real-time conversations, and contributing to industry discussions. It's a powerful tool for building brand authority and connecting with industry influencers.

Content focus:

1. **Live updates:** Share live posts from events, conferences, or company milestones to keep followers engaged.
2. **Short job posts:** Post concise job openings, linking to more detailed descriptions on your company website.
3. **Industry commentary:** Have leadership and employees discuss trending topics and industry news.

Employee advocacy tips:
Encourage employees to participate in industry conversations, share company events, or promote job openings with personalized commentary. Use hashtags to boost visibility.

Instagram

Best suited for:
Instagram is a visual platform that showcases your company's culture through photos and videos. It's especially effective for showing off your work environment, team spirit, and community involvement.

Content focus:

1. **Behind-the-scenes:** Use Instagram Stories or posts to show casual, fun, and engaging moments inside the office.
2. **Employee spotlights:** Highlight individual employees and their achievements through visually compelling content.
3. **Team events:** Post photos or videos of team-building exercises, community service projects, or company celebrations.

Employee advocacy tips:
Encourage employees to post their behind-the-scenes moments, team selfies, or photos of their workspaces. Use branded hashtags and highlight employee posts on the company account for extra visibility.

TikTok

Best suited for:
TikTok is ideal for creative and fun content that appeals to younger audiences, particularly if your company has a modern, innovative culture. Short-form video content showcasing the company in a lighthearted or creative way can significantly boost your employer's brand.

Content focus:

1. **Employee takeovers:** Give employees control of the TikTok account for a day to show what a day in their life looks like.
2. **Fun challenges:** Participate in or create fun TikTok challenges that align with your company culture.
3. **Behind-the-scenes:** Short videos give viewers a quick, authentic look at your company's day-to-day life.

Employee advocacy tips:
Encourage employees to create and share short TikTok videos highlighting their experiences or participate in TikTok trends that reflect the company's culture. Make it fun, engaging, and aligned with popular content trends on TikTok.

Facebook

Best suited for:
Facebook is great for building community and engaging with longer-form content. It's especially useful for companies that want to share updates on corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives or employee-centered content.

Content focus:

1. **Community involvement:** Share stories and posts about the company's involvement in community service, charitable events, or employee volunteer work.
2. **Event recaps:** Post photos and videos from company events, conferences, or team activities.
3. **Job postings:** Share job openings with more detailed explanations of the roles and expectations, allowing for a more personal touch.

Employee advocacy tips:
Encourage employees to share their involvement in company-sponsored activities, post about their experiences working at the company, or tag friends in job postings.

Best practices for collaborating between Marketing and HR

06

Joint strategy development

Marketing and HR must collaborate to create a consistent and powerful employer brand. The employer branding strategy should align with marketing objectives (brand awareness, external communication) and HR (talent acquisition, retention).

Create a shared employer branding plan that outlines goals, key messaging, and the platforms you'll use. Ensure both teams understand how they will contribute to content creation, employee advocacy management, and promotion of referral programs.

Content collaboration

Develop a **shared content calendar,** including posts from corporate channels and employee advocates. Plan the type of content each department will be responsible for and ensure a mix of company-driven and employee-generated content. Marketing can assist HR in crafting job posts that highlight culture, and HR can provide employee testimonials and behind-the-scenes content that marketing can amplify.

Cross-functional teams

Form a **cross-functional task force** consisting of representatives from both HR and marketing. This team can oversee employee advocacy, referral programs, and social media engagement, ensuring that HR and marketing goals are aligned and the strategy is implemented consistently across departments.

Measuring success

07

Key metrics to track

Measuring the effectiveness of your employer branding efforts is crucial for optimizing your strategy over time. Key metrics include:

1. **Engagement rates:** Track likes, comments, and shares on employee and corporate posts to measure how much traction your content is gaining. Employee-generated content should show higher engagement as it is seen as more authentic.
2. **Referral metrics:** Measure the number of candidates coming through your referral program, time-to-hire, and retention rates of referred employees.
3. **Brand perception:** Use surveys or sentiment analysis tools to assess how your employer brand is perceived by employees, candidates, and the general public.

Optimizing your strategy

Regularly review the data to see what's working and what's not. For example, if you notice certain employee posts consistently outperform corporate ones, adjust your content strategy to encourage more of that content. Likewise, if one platform generates more engagement than others, focus more resources on that channel.

The synergy between employee advocacy, referrals, and social media

In conclusion, strategic employee advocacy, referral-based hiring, and targeted social media efforts build a strong employer brand. CMOs and CHROs must collaborate closely to create a unified strategy that integrates these elements, ensuring that employees are engaged in the company's mission and eager to share their experiences.

By encouraging employees to share authentic, personal stories and leveraging their networks for referrals, your company can significantly enhance its employer brand, attract top talent, and improve retention.

Oktopost

About us

Oktopost is a B2B social media management platform that helps marketing and revenue teams drive engagement, measure success, and link social media to revenue growth. Trusted by thousands of marketing professionals in some of the world's leading B2B technology and financial services companies, Oktopost provides a robust suite of solutions for social media publishing, business intelligence, social listening, and employee advocacy, all in one platform.

Learn how to measure social media impact and increase revenues with Oktopost's specialized B2B social media management platform.

Book a demo

Appendix

Employer branding shoutouts for best practices

Examples of companies excelling in employer branding on social media

Employer branding on social media is critical to attracting top talent and showcasing a company's culture, values, and opportunities. Many companies are using different platforms to convey their unique workplaces, and below are examples of organizations that are doing an exceptional job across X, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

These examples show how mid-sized companies in law, finance, and tech are leveraging various social media platforms to enhance their employer brand, build a strong company culture, and attract top talent. By understanding how each platform can be used effectively, CMOs and CHROs can implement tailored strategies that resonate with their desired audiences.

Below are company examples across various social networks (LinkedIn, X, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook) for three key industries: law firms, financial services firms, and tech firms.

These examples showcase how mid-sized organizations can effectively build their employer brand on social media by highlighting culture, employee advocacy, and more.

LinkedIn

As the leading professional network, LinkedIn is a go-to platform for employer branding, especially for organizations looking to attract experienced professionals, showcase thought leadership, and communicate corporate culture.

Tech Firms:

Elastic (437K Followers)

What they do well:
Through employee stories and blog posts, elastic highlights its distributed workforce and work-life balance. It emphasizes its flexible work culture and frequently posts about employee growth, tech innovation, and company values.

Splunk (681K Followers)

What they do well:
Splunk's LinkedIn page features employee success stories, tech industry insights, and diversity initiatives. It showcases how its technology is transforming businesses and highlights employee engagement in community service and internal mentorship programs.

Law Firms:

BakerHostetler (24K Followers)

What they do well:
BakerHostetler focuses on professional development and career growth, often highlighting new hires, employee achievements, and internal initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). They also feature case studies and legal insights, reinforcing their expertise while giving followers insight into their team's talent.

Goodwin Procter LLP (49K Followers)

What they do well:
Goodwin Procter uses LinkedIn to highlight its employee experiences, company culture, and firm values. Its focus is on diversity, sustainability, and philanthropy, and it often showcases stories of employees contributing to pro bono cases or participating in community service.

Financial Services Firms:

Silicon Valley Bank (149K Followers)

What they do well
SVB emphasizes its focus on innovation and client success while promoting an inclusive and growth-oriented work environment. Its LinkedIn feed is filled with employee spotlights, leadership content, and industry insights that attract talent interested in fintech and financial services.

Charles Schwab (357K Followers)

What they do well:
Charles Schwab uses LinkedIn to share career stories from their employees, promote their referral program, and spotlight internal diversity initiatives. They also post regularly about their corporate culture, particularly focusing on work-life balance and career development.

X

X is known for its immediacy, making it ideal for real-time conversations, quick updates, and short bursts of engaging content. Companies use X to enhance their employer brand.

Tech Firms:

MongoDB (485K Followers)

What they do well:
MongoDB actively shares updates about its product innovations and features tweets about employee events, tech talks, and interviews with team members. Its X strategy humanizes its brand, presenting its engineers and tech teams as thought leaders.

PagerDuty (24.9K Followers)

What they do well:
PagerDuty promotes its tech conferences, company news, and employee experiences on X. It often tweets about internal diversity programs and community engagement, making its values clear to prospective employees.

Law Firms:

Cooley LLP (10.5K Followers)

What they do well:
Cooley LLP frequently tweets about industry news, their involvement in high-profile cases, and the personal achievements of their attorneys. They also engage with trending legal topics and feature updates about their workplace culture, particularly related to work-life balance.

Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP (8.8K Followers)

What they do well:
Orrick actively promotes employee engagement, diversity initiatives, and thought leadership. They often post live tweets from industry events and share insights from their team members, making their culture of innovation and inclusion more visible.

Financial Services:

Oppenheimer & Co. Inc.
(4.7K Followers)

What they do well:
Oppenheimer frequently tweets updates on market trends, but it also showcases its employees through career milestones and highlights new team members. It engages with financial industry influencers and maintains a balance between market updates and humanizing its brand.

Raymond James Financial
(16.9K Followers)

What they do well:
Raymond James uses X to showcase its commitment to corporate social responsibility and employee well-being. It often tweets about events it sponsors, employee volunteer initiatives, and thought leadership pieces authored by its team members.

TikTok

With its short-form video content, TikTok is ideal for creating fun, engaging, and relatable content that resonates with a younger audience. Here are two companies excelling at using TikTok for employer branding.

Tech Firms:

GitLab

What they do well:
GitLab is a fully remote company, and it leverages TikTok to show how it creates an inclusive, productive remote work culture. It posts videos about remote work hacks, employee stories, and fun behind-the-scenes content from its virtual events.

Asana

What they do well:
Asana focuses on workplace productivity and employee well-being. Its TikTok videos showcase its office space, team activities, and informal content, highlighting its focus on creating a positive, supportive work environment.

Law Firms:

Morrison & Foerster LLP

What they do well:
Known for embracing new trends, Morrison & Foerster uses TikTok to showcase legal practice's more fun and relatable side. They create behind-the-scenes videos, share tips for law students, and highlight stories of their junior attorneys navigating their early careers.

Sidley Austin LLP

What they do well:
Sidley Austin posts short, engaging videos focusing on their workplace culture, office tours, and personal employee stories. Their TikTok strategy humanizes the firm by showing the people behind the legal work.

Financial Services:

Betterment

What they do well:
Betterment focuses on financial education and company culture. Its TikToks mix helpful tips for financial planning, employee day-in-the-life content, and fun, informal videos that highlight its flexible and modern workplace environment.

SoFi

What they do well:
SoFi uses TikTok to engage a younger audience by promoting financial literacy while showcasing the company's culture of innovation. They often highlight their employees in short, lighthearted clips, providing a behind-the-scenes look into life at SoFi.

Interesting Extra Shoutouts

Ryanair

What they do well:
Ryanair has gone viral multiple times for its witty, meme-filled, and humorous TikTok content, which gives a glimpse into the company's personality. Their TikToks are often humorous takes on customer service and the behind-the-scenes lives of employees.

Example: Ryanair frequently posts humorous skits involving their cabin crew, showing the company's sense of humor and creativity.

Duolingo

What They Do Well:
Duolingo's TikTok account has become famous for its lighthearted and humorous approach to branding. The company's mascot, the Duolingo owl, has become a recurring star. Their TikToks often involve playful, engaging content that highlights their corporate culture in a fun way.

Example: Duolingo uses their mascot to interact with pop culture trends, creating TikToks that subtly promote its brand while focusing on entertainment.

Instagram

Instagram's visual nature makes it ideal for companies to showcase their culture, people, and workspaces. These companies use Instagram to attract talent and display their employer brand.

Tech Firms:

Datadog

What they do well:
Datadog shares behind-the-scenes photos of its offices and teams, employee spotlights, and snapshots from conferences or company events. It highlights its diverse and collaborative culture, often using Instagram Stories for quick team updates. They also have a specific section about their outstanding interns.

Twilio

What they do well:
Twilio posts about its employees' involvement in meaningful projects and commitment to a positive workplace culture. It uses Instagram to showcase its team's creativity and commitment to community outreach and volunteerism.

Law Firms:

Fenwick

What they do well:
Fenwick uses Instagram to visualize its offices and team events. It shares content around employee milestones, DEI initiatives, and firm-sponsored charity work. It also uses Instagram Stories to feature employee takeovers, giving insights into a day in the life of its legal teams.

Wilson Sonsini

What they do well:
Wilson Sonsini shares photos and videos of firm events, employee gatherings, and pro bono activities, emphasizing its commitment to community involvement and a collaborative culture. It frequently posts about its mentorship programs and internal employee development opportunities.

Financial Services:

Robinhood

What they do well:
Robinhood shares content about its office culture, focusing on innovation, collaboration, and growth. They highlight employee stories, photos of their fun and modern offices, and visual content around their corporate events and outreach programs.

Fidelity Investments

What they do well:
Fidelity uses Instagram to highlight its corporate values, including diversity and inclusion, through photos and videos of employee resource groups (ERGs), community involvement, and team-building activities. Their posts focus on employee experiences and their professional journeys within the company.

Facebook

Facebook allows companies to build communities and share longer-form updates about company culture, events, and employee achievements. Here are two companies that are using Facebook effectively for employer branding.

Tech Firms:

Cloudera

What they do well:
Cloudera uses Facebook to share in-depth updates on corporate news, tech innovations, and employee success stories. They also feature posts about their involvement in diversity programs and community service initiatives.

Appian Corporation

What they do well:
Appian shares employee recognition, highlights from corporate events, and content about its internal career development programs. It also uses Facebook to build community by posting about team-building exercises and client success stories.

Law Firms:

Holland & Knight LLP

What they do well:
Holland & Knight uses Facebook to highlight community involvement, charity work, and employee success stories. They post long-form content about the firm's corporate social responsibility initiatives and showcase team-building activities demonstrating their workplace culture.

Troutman Pepper

What they do well:
Troutman Pepper shares firm news, client success stories, and employee recognition on Facebook. They frequently spotlight their DEI efforts and pro bono work, offering followers a deeper understanding of their firm's values and mission.

Financial Firms:

Edward Jones

What they do well:
Edward Jones uses Facebook to share company milestones, employee recognition, and community impact stories. They frequently post about their support for employees through professional development programs and emphasize their family-friendly culture.

Stifel Financial Corp.

What they do well:
Stifel shares content about client success stories and employee engagement. Their Facebook page highlights corporate social responsibility efforts, financial education events, and employee achievements, fostering a sense of community among employees and clients.