

# HR and Marketing Converge

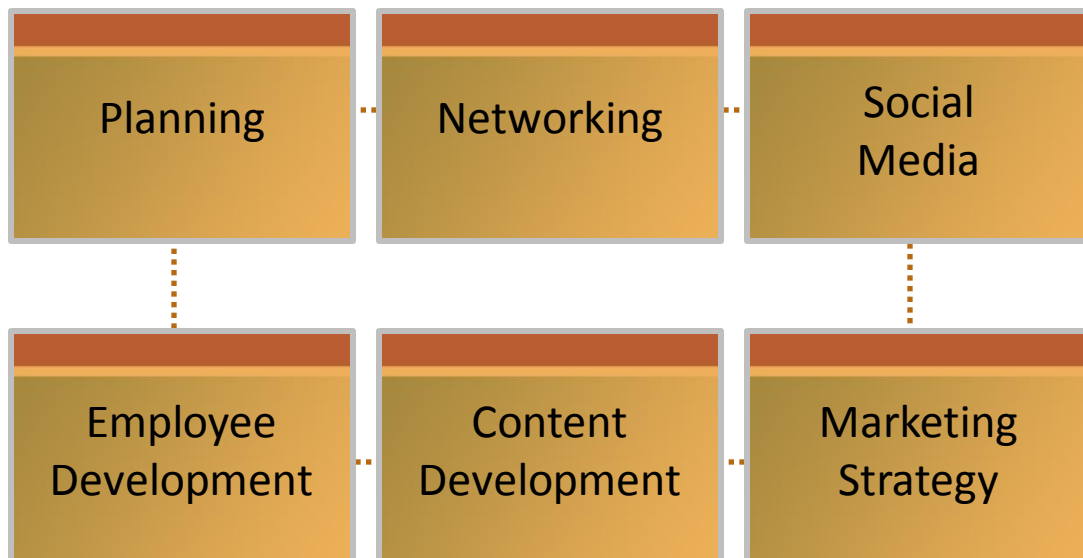
Learn an Integrated Marketing Strategy  
to Create Brand Ambassadors,  
Support the Employer Brand and  
Improve Community Relations

## An e-book offered by myMarketing Cafe

[myMarketing Café](http://myMarketingCafe.com) is an online resource center for owners of small to midsize businesses and nonprofit organizations.

The coffeehouse-themed café hosts an in-depth library of marketing communications resources to help business owners engage with the communities they serve. Visit the café to find FREE resources for comprehensive planning with effective and integrated use of employee development, content, SEO, SEM, and social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram, along with blogging strategies and various social media couponing.

myMarketing Café offers all the marketing resources you need in one cool place.



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## Learning Integrated Marketing Communications from an expert

Cited as an outstanding business leader by *The Business Report*, Jo Lynn Deal uses her leadership experience to help corporations build partnerships and greater collaboration with their customers. She is an Integrated Marketing Communications strategist with the unique ability to make connections with people to create mission-driven alliances. Jo Lynn founded [myMarketing Cafe](http://myMarketingCafe.com), an online community resource for owners of small to midsize businesses and non-profit organizations.

Jo Lynn is an engaged professional devoted to superb communication strategies driven by stories, creative content and excellent outcomes. Visit [jolyndeal.com](http://jolyndeal.com) to learn more about her and to see her portfolio. Follow her on twitter [@mymarketingcafe](https://twitter.com/mymarketingcafe).



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### What is Integrated Marketing Communications?

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is an approach to unifying all aspects of marketing communications in an effort to strengthen brand awareness, and deliver the brand's core message consistently across all traditional channels of external communication.

The IMC management approach helps when evaluating the content and communication channels within an organization to discover opportunities to increase brand awareness, improve community relations and develop and nurture brand ambassadors. Several organizations continue to operate using a departmentalized infrastructure where marketing, public relations and corporate communications function separate from one another. In addition, the human resources department is seldom recognized as an integral component of a company's external communications, when in fact, the communications developed from this department are an important part of the public's introduction to the company. As companies work to improve relationships with external audiences, it is important to take a closer look at internal communications and develop a plan that will enable departments to work together seamlessly, supporting the over-arching marketing communications strategy.

At [myMarketing Café](#), we add Human Resources into the IMC mix. Many companies already use internal communications in an effort to engage employees. Integrating HR into the external strategy is a natural transition, especially as business leaders begin to look at ways to better engage employees and develop employees to becoming brand advocates. Using this non-traditional channel, organizations can strengthen the employer brand and foster new relationships within the community.

### How does IMC tie into community engagement and employer branding?

Many organizations, at some point, undergo a re-organization where leaders evaluate all resources and reallocate the resources so that the company can reach an intended goal. The goal might be to improve operational efficiencies, reduce costs, or to help the organization grow its market share. Whatever the goal, the business leaders are looking at every means available in the organization and ensuring every resource is supporting the goal. During this process, leaders may decide to shift a resource to another part of the organization, where it is much better suited to support the goal.

Using an IMC approach follows the same philosophy. Your organization is communicating a brand promise or key message. Is every department aware of the promise or message? And, is each department doing what it can to support the promise when communicating with audiences? Take a moment to consider how various departments might be used as resources, or communication channels, for external marketing messages and community relations. We call these departments non-traditional channels of external communications.

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**“With an IMC management approach, organizations are able to reach new audiences using non-traditional communications channels...”**

**The HR and Marketing Partnership: A non-traditional link between employer branding and community relations**

Human resource managers direct the important function of talent acquisition and recruit for specific skills, diversity, organizational needs or to address deficiencies... the list is endless. Effective human resources management adheres to legislation, follows best practices and organizational policies, and serves as a key influencer in the sustainability of an organization.

A primary role for human resource managers is to assist with employer branding—using thought leadership to create an organizational culture that attracts talent. Organizations focus on employer branding because, in the end, you are only as good as your team, but also to better engage employees and improve operations. In turn, a strong organizational culture and overall positive employee experience can be leveraged to attract new talent. Employer branding also provides the opportunity for the organization to better engage with the community.

Here is how...

Posting a vacant position can result in hundreds of applicants. Reviewing applications to narrow the interview pool can be a daunting task for human resources (HR) staff. Because of this, many companies now use online application systems that pre-screen applicants based on whether they meet key qualifications. For purposes of IMC and employer branding, let's consider this tactic and how it affects the audience. The audience is the pool of applicants.

Audience key attributes:

- Genuine interest in the organization
- High percentage have researched the organization to some degree
- A small percentage have reached out to their social networks to learn more about the organization
- The results of the research have led them to feel a connection with the organization and develop an interest in supporting the organization by offering their time and talent

Now, what process does your HR team follow when communicating with new applicants? What message do you send when an interested candidate submits an application? Consider the key attributes for this audience and the message you currently send.

**This message is a key communication to introducing the employer brand. It's often the first communication prospective employees ever receive from an organization.**

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Below are real world samples of how many organizations are currently communicating with this important audience.

Sample messages sent when an application is received:

1

*Thank you for submitting your resume. Our management team is reviewing your qualifications and will contact you if there is a match with our current open positions. Meanwhile, using your email address and password, you can login to our careers website anytime to update your application information. We appreciate your interest in the ABC Company and wish you the best of luck in your job search.*

*Please do not reply to this email as it is not monitored.*

2

*Dear Applicant:*

*YOUR RESUME HAS BEEN RECEIVED.*

*Thank you very much for your response to our posting and your interest in a position with The ABC Firm. However, please note that due to the large number of responses we have received, only candidates being considered for the position will be contacted. If you are not contacted, please know that your resume will be kept on file for future positions.*

*Thanks again for your interest in our organization.*

Some organizations will send a first message like the ones above, via auto reply, when the application is received and then a second message when the candidate is not going to be hired. Look at your current process. What message does your hiring manager send when deciding not to hire an applicant?

Here is a real world example of the message sent when an applicant is not going to be hired: (usually the second message received)

3

*Thank you for your interest in the position at the ABC Company. We had several highly qualified candidates for the position and it has been a difficult decision, but at this time we have chosen to pursue another candidate for the position.*

*We appreciate your interest in employment at the ABC Company and encourage you to continue to apply for positions. Please visit our Online Employment System website for a current list of vacant positions.*

*Thank you,  
ABC Company HR*

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“I’ve learned people may forget what you said, people may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

What impression do any of the previous messages (1-3) leave on you? In most marketing communications the goal is to persuade the audience to do something. While these samples above are not typical marketing communications, they are still making an impression on an important audience and possibly giving a misleading impression about the organizational culture.

Look at sample two, *“due to the large number of responses we have received, only candidates being considered for the position will be contacted...”*

What do you think the above organizations are persuading the audience to do? The volume of people these messages are reaching presents a great opportunity to support the employer brand.

Maya Angelou authored a quote that is often shared today, *“I’ve learned people may forget what you said, people may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

This could almost be the mantra for employer branding—you want employees to feel great about the organization. We live in a social world. Our audience members are quick to share their feelings and perceptions about everything. How do the samples above (1-3) leave the candidate feeling about the organization? Remember, this is an organization in which they have a genuine interest, an organization they have spent time researching, and an organization with which they’ve chosen to become involved.

To illustrate the opportunity with this communication channel, consider the key attributes of a non-profit organization’s donor or volunteer:

- Genuine interest in the organization
- High percentage have researched the organization to some degree
- A small percentage have reached out to their social networks to learn more about the organization
- The results of the research have led the donor or volunteer to feel a connection with the organization and develop an interest in supporting the organization by offering their time, talent and/or treasure

What message do non-profit organizations typically send to a donor or volunteer who expresses interest in supporting the organization? Would they send a donor any of the above messages?

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*Dear prospective donor:*

*Thank you for your interest in donating your time, talent or treasure to the ABC Charity. We have several highly qualified donors and it has been a difficult decision, but at this time we have chosen to pursue another donor for the project.*

*Best of luck in your search for a charity to support.*

No one would send this message. If they did, it would be the last message they sent on behalf of the charity. Using an IMC management approach, you can truly engage the “large volume” of applicants. Below are message strategies that follow this approach. The first samples focus on non-profit organizations and then we move to for-profit businesses.

Messages strategies for when an application is received:

*Dear Mark,*

*The Children’s Home has been cited as a safe haven for abused children who have been turned away by everyone who was ever important to them. We take this responsibility very seriously, and we could never help as many children as we do without the thoughtful support from our community.*

*We received your application for consideration with the transporter position, and we appreciate that you are considering joining our team. Beth Davis is our HR Director and she will keep you up to date as we proceed through the hiring process.*

*We hope you will also consider sharing about our children with others. I invite you to watch and share [Amy’s story](#). Whether you join on our team, choose to volunteer in one of our rewarding volunteer programs, or choose to support an important service, we sincerely appreciate this opportunity to connect with you.*

*Thank you,*

*Bill Roberts  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Children’s Home  
Stay connected with our children through [Facebook](#)*



Link your message  
to a compelling  
video.

1

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*Dear Mark,*

*We sincerely appreciate that you are considering joining our team and our mission to protect children. Beth Davis is our HR Director and she will keep you up to date as we proceed through the hiring process.*

*I wanted to share with you about a way you can help today. Here is a [video about Amy](#). Amy is one of the hundreds of children we care for each year; each child is very special and has their own unique story. We could never help as many children as we do without the thoughtful support from our community. I encourage you to share Amy's story so that others can meet her and find their own unique way to get involved.*

*Thank you for your help. We look forward to connecting with you.*

*Bill Roberts  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Children's Home  
Stay connected with our children through [Facebook](#)*

Invite them to  
connect through a  
social media channel.

These first messages received by prospective employees are called introductory messages. Introductory messages familiarize the candidate to the organizational culture and employer brand. In a sense, they are informal brand nurturing communications. The introductory message offers several messaging opportunities.

Let's look at some alternatives for message content.

The introductory message can also be tailored to share organizational team successes or key strategic accomplishments. Share about the organization's commitment to its team and the opportunities provided to employees. Share about the organization's corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Or, use this opportunity to link to a social media platform:

- Pinterest - showcase the organization, individual departments, and other new team members.
- LinkedIn - create an organizational profile and show individual team member profiles.
- Facebook - link to an employee event page to showcase the organizational culture.
- YouTube - link to the organization's YouTube channel and showcase videos relating to organizational culture, employee benefits, training and advancement opportunities, or a CEO message.

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Below is a sample introductory message that focuses on team accomplishments and advancement opportunities.

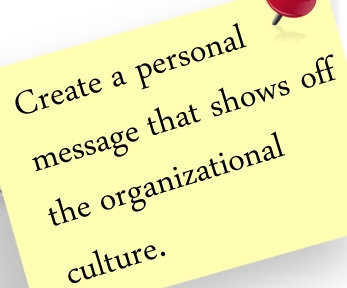
*Dear Mark,*

*We received your application for consideration with the transporter position, and we appreciate that you are considering joining our team. Last year, the team at The Children's Home helped over 500 at-risk children receive emergency services; they raised over \$250,000 to support educational programs; and, they helped recruit over 50 new volunteers.*

*From the front line to deep in the trenches, every single team member makes an important contribution to ensure our children receive the care and services they need. I want to encourage you to visit our [YouTube channel](#) where you can learn more about the many benefits we offer our team such as resources to help you succeed, an environment that fosters collaboration, and opportunities for development and advancement.*

*Beth Davis is our HR Director and she will keep you up to date as we proceed through the hiring process. Whether you join on our team, choose to volunteer as a mentor, or choose to support an important program, we sincerely appreciate this opportunity to connect with you.*

*Bill Roberts  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Children's Home  
Stay connected with our children through [Facebook](#)*



Create a personal message that shows off the organizational culture.

The message above is from a CEO who is engaged with his team, and who clearly employs a leadership team committed to helping employees succeed. He shares this message in a personal and strategic manner and offers clear examples to back up the statement (links to organizational videos and success stories).

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Rejection is difficult but it can still be an opportunity to connect to candidates and build brand advocates. You will be rejecting all but one candidate and depending on the position, that could be hundreds of candidates (or potential brand advocates).

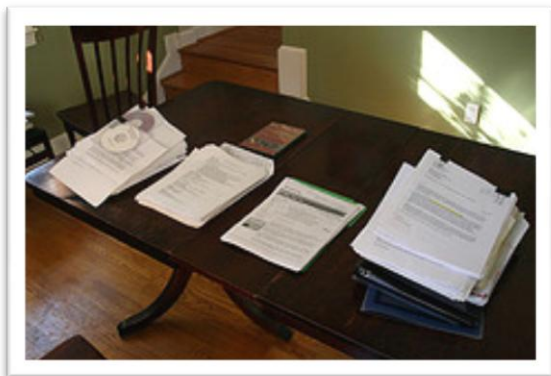


Photo credit: [woodleywonderworks](http://www.woodleywonderworks.com)

In 2012,  
one job posting  
can generate, on  
average, over  
100 potential  
brand advocates



Message sent when an applicant is not going to be hired (this message comes from the HR lead):

*Dear Mark,*

*I wanted to take a moment to update you on the transporter position with The Children's Home. Thank you again for taking the time to research our organization and send your application. This was an incredibly difficult decision for the team, and although your qualifications are very impressive, I regret to inform you that you were not selected for this position. We encourage you to apply for other positions that match your interests and qualifications.*

*Mark, we hope you will remain engaged with our children and help us share their stories. Below is contact information for current volunteer opportunities and here is a link to our [calendar of events](#) page. As you research and consider ways to get involved, we welcome your feedback about our programs and services.*

*Volunteer opportunities – Lisa Smith 212-555-1212*

*Mentor opportunities – Mable Lewis 212-555-1213*

*Thank you again for your interest and your support.*

*Sincerely,*

*Beth Davis*

*Human Resources Director*

*Stay connected with our children through [Facebook](#)*

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The previous examples demonstrate how every opportunity is an opportunity to share about the organization's mission and to strengthen ties within the community. The organization featured in these examples deals with the sensitive issue of child abuse, so the tone of the letter followed the tone used in donor communications. Adjust the tone of your letter to match your organization's culture, brand and mission. What is most important is personalizing the content and using the opportunity to connect and engage.

## Personalized HR communications provide the opportunity to connect and engage with a new audience and strengthen the employer brand.

For-profit businesses have the same opportunity to improve communications with this important audience. In the past decade, we have watched companies, both large and small, hold a greater focus on community relations, corporate social responsibility and charitable outreach. This coincides with the growth and popularity of social media, where consumers have changed the way businesses do business. Everything today centers around relationships. Consumers are savvy and they are well aware when the brand message doesn't match corporate behavior.

Businesses operate in a vulnerable state because consumers now have the power to launch a viral campaign in seconds. Consumers are just one audience. Employees are another equally important audience. Just as with consumers, employees quickly realize when the employer brand doesn't match the corporate culture. An effective employer brand is so deeply rooted that it is integrated through all communication channels, traditional and non-traditional.

Let's look again at the employee application process. Sophisticated application tracking systems are not without error. Most systems screen applications based on key words and specific job requirements. Screening is certainly important but what is also important is the fact that several qualified candidates may be screened out because of the contents of their application. These are candidates who may be future customers or may engage with the organization through affiliates or partnerships within the industry. These are candidates who may not be ideally suited for this position but may be perfect for another, or perfect for other opportunities like volunteering.

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Below is a sample of what could be sent when an application is received:

1

*Dear Mark,*

*Thank you for applying for our sales manager position. We are incredibly proud of our team. This past quarter they reached record sales and beat the previous quarter's earnings by 38%! You can see them in action on our [YouTube](#) employee channel. They are a close, dynamic group and are looking for someone who can help them expand our market reach and meet our strategic goals. Beth Davis is leading the charge to find this sales superhero and will be in touch with you as we move forward.*

*We value you as a customer and a potential employee. Thank you for taking the time to connect with us.*

*Sincerely,  
John Smith  
Bayside Pool Supplies*

2

*Dear Mark,*

*At ABC Company we are changing the way the America works. Together, we are changing the way we experience life. We have received your application for the position of Business Development Manager and wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for considering to join the ABC team. We are proud to share that in 2012, ABC was cited among one of America's most ethical companies and one of Fortune's 100 best companies to work for.*

*Beth Davis is our manager of talent acquisition and she will keep you up to date as we proceed through the hiring process. As we move forward, please visit our [Careers Webpage](#) to learn about the tremendous contribution our team is making to change the way America uses technology.*

*Sincerely,  
John Smith  
Chief Executive Officer*

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In the previous examples, the content is engaging, personal and inviting. If the candidate is not chosen for the position, the news will have a far less negative effect on their relationship with the business. And the organization is sending the clear message that leaders are engaged with their team and value the contribution every team member makes toward organizational successes.

### Craft your message

Strategic brand messaging is a part of your organization's overall Marketing Plan. What is most important is to begin by sharing the Plan with everyone in the organization, to build awareness and align your organizational culture with the brand message. Your team is an excellent sounding board for message strategy, after all they were once a part of this audience.

Crafting your message is a team effort. An effective strategy to follow is for the Human Resources team to meet with the team from the hiring department, and together craft messages that reflect the personality of the team. Look at message 1 on page 13. This message is a direct reflection of the dynamic sales team and that department's personality. By working with various departments, you are engaging employees in other areas of the company and show the importance of working together. You are sending the message internally that employees can make a valuable contribution to other areas of the business, not just their own department. Finally, the process helps to foster cohesiveness and teamwork among departments, and ensure a consistent message across all channels.

### Track effectiveness of HR Marketing Communications

**Video** – The video effectiveness can be tracked using a private URL source through YouTube. YouTube allows channels to upload a video for private viewing where only the audience provided with the URL can view the video. Videos used in HR Marketing Communications can be managed using this functionality or on a separate YouTube channel.

**Assign a tracking URL and landing page** – A clean strategy for tracking the return on email marketing is using a tracking URL and analytics. URL tracking allows you to direct visitors to a landing page. In the samples we provided, the landing page can be a link to the video library instead of the YouTube channel or another dedicated page on the company website.

**Exploratory interview** – When prospective donors or volunteers contact an agency about opportunities, the person serving as the 'first point of contact' can ask exploratory questions to learn how the prospect learned about the agency. Results of these questions can be tracked on a master spreadsheet and reported to the Integrated Marketing Communications team.

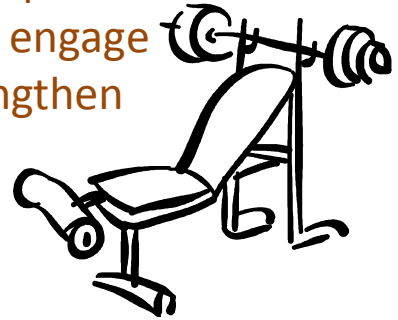
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Personalized HR communications provide the opportunity to connect and engage with a new audience and strengthen the employer brand.



In this e-book, we have introduced the concept of using non-traditional channels of communication to strengthen the employer brand and ultimately better engage the community. We shared about the importance of this untapped audience and the affects that formatted, auto-reply communications can have on brand perception. We provided messaging content strategies that are transferrable across various industries and the non-profit and for-profit business sectors. Lastly, we provided tracking mechanisms to show results of engagement using this concept. If you have questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to give us a call at 386-527-0871.

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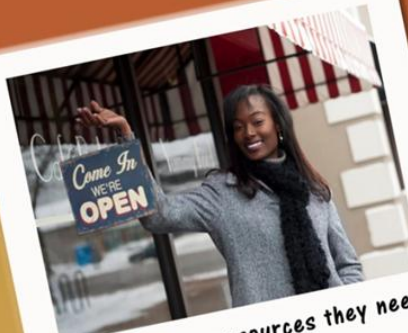


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A community cafe where  
small business owners gather...



... to find the resources they need  
to succeed.

## START STRENGTHENING YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND WITH AN IMC STRATEGY

If you are interested in learning more about Integrated Marketing Communications...

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- ✓ Take a short , 4-minute [tour of our café](#) to learn how to effectively use all the information we've placed at your fingertips.
- ✓ Sign up for our "[Cup of Jo](#)" blog to stay up to date on everything we uncover.
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