How to attract digital marketeers of the future?

Research into Employer Branding perceptions among potential employees.

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Abstract

Objectives

Effective employer branding is a key driver for becoming a successful company nowadays. This paper examines the effect of the employer branding experience of the digital marketing agency Adwise on four different elements of perception: attractiveness, image, value proposition and intention to apply. Moreover, the study aims to get insights into the assessment of specific work values.

Method

The experience and effects of Adwise's employer branding activities are examined through an online survey. In particular, ($N =101$) students with an interest in digital marketing were selected, by applying the purposive sampling technique. First, the students were asked to rank ten different work values. Secondly, all of the students went through an application scenario or so-called "employer branding experience" of Adwise including a LinkedIn message, an employer brand video and a virtual office tour. In addition, the students were asked to answer several items measuring perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, value proposition and intention to apply. Four simple linear regression analyses were performed to analyze the effects of the independent variable on the four dependent variables.

Results

The findings suggest that the perceived employer branding experience of Adwise has a significant positive effect on the perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition, and intention to apply. Also, a descriptive analysis of the work values revealed that working in a motivating environment is very crucial to students with an interest in digital marketing.

Conclusion

This research paper sheds light on the perception of Adwise's employer branding experience among their potential employees. The obtained information is relevant for HR practitioners as it might increase the probability to attract human capital. Also, the findings allow Adwise to identify their self-assessment and discuss prospective future steps concerning their employer branding practices.

Keywords: employer branding, employer branding experience, employer attractiveness, employer image, value proposition, applicant intention, workvalues

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1. Introduction

Traditionally, companies used to place job advertisements as a means to communicate their respective applicant expectations to hire a new employee. Subsequently, applicants were invited to the interview and ultimately the most suitable candidate was selected (Folger et al., 2018). Today, the site has turned. In many areas, especially in the technical and scientific fields, it is no longer the employer who decides on the hiring of a qualified candidate. Instead, the candidate chooses which offer he/she would like to accept from which employer (Baykal, 2020). Due to the shift in the balance of power on the labour market towards the employees, employer branding is becoming increasingly important (Mascarenhas, 2018).

In addition, the battle for talents is not only about winning high potentials but also right potentials that are most suitable for the job (Lievens et al., 2001). As a result, employer branding contributes to a market-oriented approach to human resource management. It aims to position a company as an attractive employer for the relevant target group (Thunnissen et al., 2013). Nevertheless, reaching suitable people is one task, but convincing them is a difficult challenge. A reason might be that the values of each target group or new generation differ, which needs to be considered by companies (Glass, 2007). This means that not only an authentic employer brand is needed to convince potential candidates, but also a more targeted and personal approach. Nowadays, graduating students form a significant role in this new generation. They belong to the so-called Generation Y and Generation Z and form the specialists of tomorrow (Titko et al., 2020; Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019).

The digital agency Adwise, located in the Netherlands, faces the challenge of attracting and convincing potential digital talents. In particular, in their employer branding experience the agency relies on modern employer branding activities such as the use of online platforms. Specifically, LinkedIn is used as a recruitment tool to approach potential talents. In general, Adwise values a rather informal yet professional tone within their LinkedIn requests and job interviews. Furthermore, Adwise attaches great importance to provide a full impression of their organization and their motivating workplace. Therefore, a published brand video of Adwise gives insights into the organization's culture and an experience manager provides potential applicants with a tour through their modern office. Moreover, Adwise emphasizes their success by taking part in several award shows and presenting their awards. Also, showing their unique values, such as being innovative and flexible, is an essential part of their employer branding activities.

Measuring the student's perception on Adwise's employer branding experience will in first place benefit the digital agency in terms of their employer branding and recruitment

strategies. It allows Adwise to optimize their employer branding experience to attract and retain talents in a more targeted manner. Following this, a good match between the employee and the organization will increase employer commitment, which in return impacts the organizational effectiveness (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). This is important for Adwise in order to survive in the competitive market (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Furthermore, the findings can support other companies in the conception of their employer branding. In particular, employers must understand the needs and desires of the new generations to adjust their employer branding strategies correspondingly (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019). Ultimately, this study may serve HR practitioners in deciding whether to adopt or improve aspects of their recruitment strategies upon the findings of the paper at hand.

Moreover, the paper seeks to provide impulses for science. It contributes to existing literature concerning employer branding and work values of students belonging to Generation Y and Z. Specifically, research in the field of effective employer branding is of high importance, as the right implementation of research results can avoid a misfit in organizations and positively influence job seeking behaviour of applicants (Elving et al., 2012).

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the first objective of the present study is to examine the importance of specific work values among students interested in digital marketing. Secondly, the aim is to investigate how the students perceive the employer branding experience of Adwise. The employer branding experience includes following employer branding activities: LinkedIn as a recruitment means, an employer branding video and a virtual office tour. Subsequently, the paper aims to examine to what extent the perceived employer branding experience influences the perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply. From these objectives, the following research questions (RQ) arise:

(RQ1) *How do potential employees perceive the employer branding experience of Adwise and how is this related to perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply?*

(RQ2) *Which work values are most and least important for Adwise's potential employees?*

The added value of the research is that the employer branding experience of Adwise has not yet been studied and in particular not among their potential employees. Although present research has been conducted on employer branding and work values of the Generation Y & Z, the field of research can be further elaborated. The findings help Adwise and other organizations to optimize their employer branding experience and to recruit potential employees in a targeted manner. Its novelty of the following study is mainly the special attention being paid to the digital marketing sector and its future specialists.

Having briefly introduced the objectives of the study, the underlying theoretical frameworks will be explained in the following section. In particular, concepts of employer branding will be clarified and work values of Generation Y and Z will be identified. Next, the study's methodology will be elaborated and justified. Afterwards, the results section provides an adequate analysis of the collected data. Finally, the results are discussed and interpreted before conclusions are drawn.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Employer Branding

The concept of employer branding has recently been recognized as a trending topic in literature, as it has been defined in multiple ways. One definition many scholars refer to is the one of Barrow. He defines employer branding as a package of functional, economic, and psycho logical benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company, whose function is to increase recruitment, retention, and commitment (Barrow & Mosley, 2011). Contrarily, Edwards (2010) defines employer branding as activities where principles from marketing, especially within branding, are used for HR initiatives regarding both existing and potential employees. Employer branding activities are thus the essence of an employment experience a potential candidate goes through.

Even though definitions vary amongst scholars, most theorists agree on some main functions of employer branding. These include attracting talents, rising retention and engagement (Barrow & Mosley, 2011; Hubschmid, 2012; McLeod & Waldman, 2011). Furthermore, theorists are of the opinion that the employer branding of an organization should be aligned with its corporate culture to be able to represent the organization in the right manner (Foster et al., 2010). This is in line with the theory of Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) who characterize employer branding as the organization's identity that is specifically directed towards employment. Furthermore, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) differentiate between internal and external employer branding. Internal employer branding deals with the picture the employees have about the organization whereas external employer branding implies how external stakeholders perceive and evaluate the organization as a potential employer. Thereby, the organization exposes itself externally (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). For this study, several definitions are combined to create an individual understanding of the concept. Employer branding will be considered as the process of building an employer identity, directed externally at potential employees, to attract them. Thereby employer branding activities are used that form a whole employer branding experience.

Nowadays, the employer branding experience of organizations, including Adwise, consists of modern employer branding activities that are becoming more prevalent within recruiting. The contemporary employer branding experience includes activities like social media channels and social networks that allow the organization to communicate online with potential candidates in terms of text, images and videos. Especially social media networks such as LinkedIn are on the rise when it comes to attracting talents of the future (Sivertzen et al.,

2013). Thus, organizations had to adapt and change their traditional ways of attracting employees. Moreover, Borstorff et al. (2006) claim that social media recruitment allows organizations not only to recruit candidates at low costs but also helps to find both active and passive job seekers. Further benefits are the free unlimited use and short response time. Despite this, Balasubramanian et al. (2016) argue that social media platforms are a beneficial tool to attract potential talents. Following this, it is useful for organizations to include social media platforms as a part of their employer branding experience in order to attract potential talents.

2.2. *Perceived Employer Branding experience and its impact on Employer Attractiveness, Employer Image, Value proposition and Intention to apply*

Employer branding practices are of high importance due to their ability to influence recruitment outcomes, such as candidate`s intention to apply (Sokro, 2012). In particular, former research has shown that employer branding is related to employer attractiveness (Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar, 2003), perceived employer image (Backhaus & Tikko, 2004) and perceived value proposition (Dabirian et al., 2019).

Firstly, the term "employer attractiveness" refers to the benefits that potential applicants expect to experience when working for a certain organization (Reis and Braga, 2016). Apart from this, employer attractiveness is considered as a core measurement to measure an organization's employer branding (Cable, Daniel, Daniel & Turban, 2003). In other words, if the employer branding of a particular organization was successful, the potential applicants would feel attracted. Also, Backhaus and Tikko (2004) claim that employer branding is used to increase employer attractiveness which can lead to competitive advantages and helps to attract and retain employees. In particular, literature discloses that social media and social networks are essential components of today's employer branding activities and can positively influence an organization's attractiveness (Sivertzen et al., 2013). In line with this, Priyadarshini, Kumar, and Jha (2017) point out that social media networks, as a source of employer branding activities, can influence the overall employer attractiveness.

H1 Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences perceived employer attractiveness

Secondly, employer branding can affect the way potential applicants think about an organization. In particular, employer branding practices are likely to influence applicants´ thoughts and ideas of an organization (Backhaus & Tikko, 2004). These thoughts and ideas

form a so-called employer image. Employer images are defined, as "an image associated with an organization uniquely in its role as an employer" (Knox & Freeman, 2006, p.697). Further research suggest that an employer image reflects an association regarding an organization held by a potential employee. This means that an employer image consists of specific attributes that individuals associate with the organization (Collins & Kanar, 2013). In line with Backhaus and Tikko (2004) who state that employer branding practices can positively affect an organizations image, Kissel and Büttgen (2015) show that modern employer branding practices involving the use of social media have a direct impact on the image of an organization.

H2 Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences perceived employer image

Apart from the image, employer branding can have an effect on the perceived value proposition an organization has to offer. It deals with the characteristics an organization can offer its employees that make the organization a great place to work (Dabirian et al., 2019) and the monetary and non-monetary benefits received through employment (Watson, 2008 in Aziz et al., 2019). Botha et al. (2011) claim that a unique and different employer value proposition could attract talents for the organization. In line with this, Aziz et al. (2019) describe employer value proposition as "a tool in the war for talent". However, an employer has to identify the unique selling points of their organization and emphasize those in their employer branding practices (Kreissl, 2020). Some of the most discussed selling points in the employer value proposition are basic salary, employee benefits, and flexible working hours (Aziz et al., 2019). According to Kreissl (2020) employer branding is all about matching internal realities with external perceptions. This means if an organization reveals their unique values in their employer branding activities and they fit to the applicant's values, it is expected that the applicant's perception of the value proposition is positive. This is in line with the organizational behavior of Adwise. Precisely, they pay attention to the fact that the unique values such as flexible working hours are portrayed in their employer branding activities. Therefore, it is expected that their employer branding experience affect the perception of the value proposition in a positive manner.

H3 Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences perceived value proposition

To conclude, successful employer branding can influence the perceived attractiveness, value proposition and image of a particular organization. Moreover, literature reveals that an employer branding experience can influence an applicant's intention and is therefore considered as highly relevant (Sokro, 2012). Especially employer branding experiences that involve practices like social media and social networks are able stimulate applicant's attraction (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015). Since students belonging to the Generations Y and Z experience technology in their everyday life, they expect the same technology to be present in their potential future workplace. Schawbel (2013) claims that social media networks are, compared to traditional channels, a very attractive communication tool for the newer generations and are hereby a new means for recruiting candidates. Therefore, it is expected that employer branding practices containing modern communication channels are highly attractive for students and positively influence their intention to apply. This is in line with Sivertzen, Nilsen and Olafsen (2013) suggesting that a profile on social media as a part of organization's employer branding practices can affect not only the employer image but also application intentions. Based on theory and the fact that Adwise makes use of modern communication channels, the subsequent hypothesis is derived:

H4 Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences employee's intention to apply

2.3. Employer Branding for Generation Y and Z

The respondents of this survey are exclusively students belonging to the Generation Y and Z. For Adwise and for organizations in general it is important to understand the motives and characteristics of their potential candidates to match their employer branding practices with their candidates' values. Therefore, it is of relevance to take a closer look at the work values held by these two generations.

2.3.1. Work values

The Millennials, referred to as Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2000, are a large part of the current labour market (Gursoy et al., 2013). They grew up in the "empowerment phase" and experienced safety and security so far. Moreover, Nobel et al. (2009) claim that this generation was not only encouraged to question authority and think critically, but also to make

own choices. Following this and with regard to employment, it can be said that Generation Y expects their employer to treat them respectfully and to fulfill their expectations as an employee (Nobel et al., 2009).

Contrarily, Generation Z grew up with current technologies. The oldest members of Generation Z are now 22 years old and they will represent more than 30% of the workforce by 2020 (Gaidhani, Arora & Sharma, 2019). Therefore, it is of advantage for organizations to identify their needs at earliest convenience. Generation Z can be described as "digital centric" and "environmentally responsible". Severo, Guimarães, Dellarmelin and Ribeiro (2019) describe that the newer generations are more conscious and concerned about environmental issues and thus strive for a responsible use of natural resources compared to former generations. Similar to Generation Y, the new generation seeks for transparency, self-reliance, flexibility and personal freedom at their workplace (Basha, 2011).

Reis and Braga (2016) reveal that both generations share similar work values. First of all, the two generations are known for prioritizing pleasure and focusing on individual interests. They are striving for high flexibility and a high life quality. Secondly, both generations show a high usage of digital technology and social media channels. A statistic of eMarketer (2018) indicates that more than 90% of the Millennials use social media actively. At the workplace, these generations seek for a positive environment with healthy relationships as well as recognition and regular feedback (Reis & Braga, 2016). Also, Gen Y and Z show a higher value for freedom and autonomy at work than former generations. Along these lines, Twenge et al. (2010) claim that younger generations place a high value on leisure at work. In addition, Smola and Sutton (2002) found that they place less value on work for its own sake. This means that those individuals want to add meaning to their work. Thus, they are striving for a specific purpose within the organization. This behavior is referred to as "purpose driven" and has a positive impact on employee engagement (Wiedemann, 2019).

2.3.2. Workplace Communication and Online Recruitment

Based on the work values identified in the prior paragraph, certain communicational strategies with regard to employer branding for Gen Y and Z will be determined. Literature suggests that online recruitment and modern workplace communication increasingly gain importance due to their potential to stimulate applicant attraction of younger generations (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Since statistics revealed that both generations spend a high amount of their time at social media platforms, organizations need to know how to communicate, using digital channels.

Thus, when recruiting young employees, organizations should take advantage of the high potential of social channels in order to attract potential talents via those channels. One of the main channels, initially designed for professional job search and recruitment, is LinkedIn with more than 400 million registered members in 2016 (Carpentier et al., 2017; Nikolaou, 2014). Due to its high number of members, this channel seems to be an ideal tool to attract both active and passive job seekers (Nikolaou, 2014). On the one hand, LinkedIn allows users to follow companies they are interested in and to present themselves as visual identities. On the other hand, companies are able to convey their corporate culture virtually and to target matching potentials. Companies, on the other hand, are able to convey their corporate culture virtually and to target matching potentials. By using keywords such as "job title", "job function" and "professional skills", online-recruitment is one of the most targeted, interactive and personalized way to attract potential talents. Apart from using online channels like LinkedIn as a recruitment means, a workplace is more appealing to the younger generation if the office embeds modern online channels in their daily practices (Tiffany Bloodworth Rivers, 2016).

Modern workplace communication involves the use of digital channels as well as a horizontal communication flow and informal communication type. As stated above, both Generation Y and Generation Z seek for flexibility and transparency. Therefore, they expect this transparency and flexibility to be present at their workplace. Supporting this assumption, prior research revealed that Generation Y and Generation Z prefer transparent and open communication at the office and are more likely to respond to horizontal and informal rather than vertical and formal communication (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011).

The findings in literature provide a foundation of characteristics and values that are held by the two generations. However, it is of advantage for Adwise to gain a deeper understanding on the evaluation of specific work values. Therefore, it is of interest to include a second research question to measure which work values are important for their potential candidates. This investigation might bear useful implications for Adwise's employer branding practices in future.

2.4. Conceptual Model

Figure 1 represents the conceptual model that results from reviewing the relevant literature. The model visualizes the effect of Adwise's perceived employer branding experience on the dependent variables: Perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply.
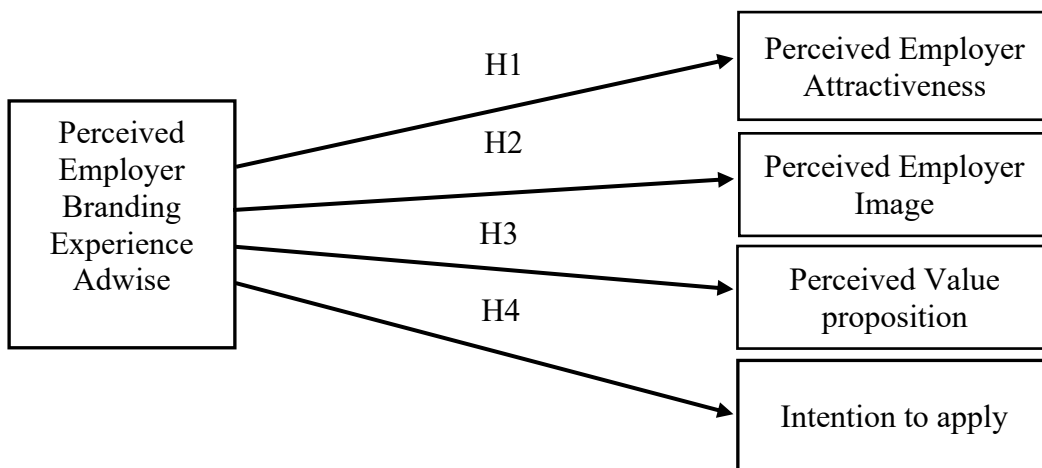

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

3. Method

3.1. Research design

After some modifications, the final research method constitutes a research design in form of an online survey. The ethics committee of the University of Twente granted the permission to conduct the research in this specific manner. The initial plan was to use a mobility research method which can be utilized to understand everyday experiences (Ross, Renold, Holland & Hillman, 2009). Participants would have followed a predetermined route designed by the researcher. The route depicts Adwise´s application journey, starting with a first contact via LinkedIn and ending with a personal job interview at the company. However, the current circumstances caused by Covid-19 led to a change in the research method. The fact that the initial data collection involved personal contact, led to an adaption in the research design to ensure a data collection free of personal contact.

3.2. Procedure

To begin with, the online survey was conducted with the program Qualtrics over a time frame of three weeks from end of April till May 2020. Students with an interest in digital marketing were mainly approached over social media accounts (e.g. Facebook) and by email. They received a link of the survey with the request to complete the form. In addition, the students were recruited via the Sona-System of the Twente University in Enschede, Netherlands. Completing the online survey took approximately 10 minutes.

All participants were briefed regarding the nature and method of the study, as well as any existing privacy implications and associated risks. Secondly, participants were asked to agree with a presented consent form to state their voluntarily participation. Once they have given their consent to take part in the anonymous research, they were exposed to ten different work values. The work values included intrinsic, extrinsic, altruistic, status-associated and social work values derived from "Work Values Inventory" (Super's, 1970). The students were asked to rank the values according to their importance. Afterwards, the respondents were invited to follow an application scenario including several employer branding activities of Adwise that form an employer branding experience. To be precise, the scenario first included a screenshot of a LinkedIn message. Figure 2 depicts the LinkedIn messages that include a job offer from Adwise. The participants were then asked to imagine to be interested in the job offer and keen to learn more about Adwise. *"Now, imagine you are interested in the job offer and want to learn more about Adwise. You start browsing through their online channels and find*

this video." Subsequently participants were asked to watch a video that represents the organization. Then, the participants were exposed to the following statement: "*After browsing through Adwise's online channels, you decide to meet the Talent Recruiter at Adwise for a cup of coffee. You are having a rather informal but still professional conversation with Adwise's Talent Recruiter. Then, the Experience Manager of Adwise will give you a tour of their office*". Hereby pictures were included that visualized Adwises' office (see Appendix A). After that the participants were asked to rate the employer branding experience/application procedure. Eventually, the participants answered questions that intended to measure the perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply. Subsequently, a couple of demographic questions concluded the online survey. As a final question, participants were asked if they are familiar with Adwise and LinkedIn, to identify potential influential factors.
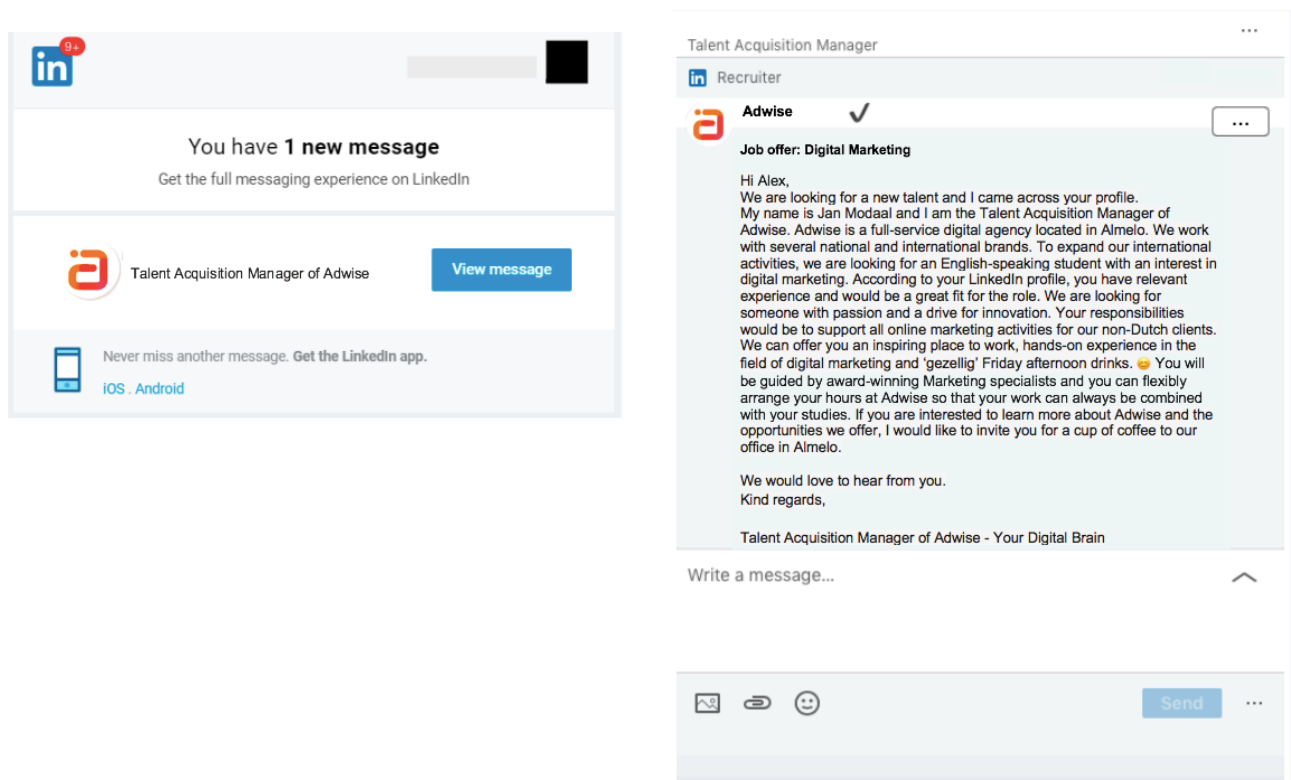

Figure 2. LinkedIn message

3.3. Respondents

The target group of this study includes exclusively students in the field of marketing and/or students with a general interest in digital marketing that are close to graduate and belong to the Y and Z generation. The choice for including exclusively students of this field was made, because of the fact that Adwise is a digital agency. Students with an interest in digital marketing are therefore potential employees. The total sample of potential marketing professionals was selected according to the purposive sampling technique. This form of non-probability sampling is a recommended technique for collecting quantitative data of a population difficult to reach (California State University, Northridge (n.d.)). It is based on the objective of a study and the characteristics of a population, which is in this study an interest in digital marketing.

A total of 178 participants have filled out the questionnaire. However, 77 participants were excluded due to partial responses. Thus, the final sample consists of 101 respondents (*N*=101). Furthermore, it is of interest to note that 71,3 % (*n*=72) of the participants are female and 28,7% are male (*n* =29). The respondent's age ranges from 17-35 years with an overall mean of 22,7 years. Besides this, it is important to mention that 57,4 % of the respondents have a LinkedIn Account (*n*=58), while 30,7% do not have an account (*n* =31) and 11,9 % (*n*=12) are interested in obtaining one. It is equally important to mention that 7,9% (*n*=8) of the respondents are familiar with Adwise due to a job fair presentation, LinkedIn or an internship request. These facts are important to consider due to the fact that the familiarity with Adwise and the possession of a LinkedIn account could be influential factors for the respondent's perception in the online survey. However, the respondents being familiar with Adwise were were not excluded since none of them reported a close acquaintance with Adwise. Also, there were not exposed to this specific employer branding activities before. Therefore, their perception may still be of value. Table 1 provides further insights into the demographics of the respondents.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
Nationality		
German	60	59,4%
Dutch	18	17,8%
Other	23	22,8%
Education		
Bachelor	77	76,2%
Pre-Master	7	6,9%
Master	16	15,8%
PhD	1	1,0%
Study program		
Communication studies	45	44,6%
Business administration	21	20,8%
Psychology	3	3,0%
Other	32	31,7%

3.4. Design of instruments and scale development

The instrument that was used is an online survey which consisted of four parts. To be precise, the first part contains a ranking that measures the importance of specific work values. Secondly, the experience of Adwise's employer branding activities were rated on a five-star scale. Afterwards, the effect of Adwise's perceived employer branding experience on participants perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employee image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply is measured by several items. Each of the questions could be answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1 =*strongly disagree*; 2 =*disagree*; 3=*neither disagree nor agree*; 4= *agree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Eventually, the last part included demographic variables such as age, gender, country of origin and the current study that the participant is following. The following sections provide an elaboration of each scale development by including example items. The full survey scheme can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.1. Work values

To measure employment preferences of potential digital marketeers, ten work values were adapted and adjusted from a previous work values inventory (Super's, 1970). The items can be divided into *Intrinsic*, *Extrinsic*, *Altruistic*, *Status-associated* and *Social work values*. The participants are asked to rank each statement according to their importance, whereas the top position means most important and bottom positions indicates least important. Therefore, each work value can be measured according to their importance (1=*most important*, 10= *least important*). The work values were included to measure the work preferences of the respondents,

belonging to Generation Y and Z. In particular, the ranking of the work values should give insights on what potential digital marketeers find as most important and as least important when it comes to their future workplace. One example of a work value the respondents were exposed to is worded as follows: "When I apply for a job, I value a workplace that has a motivating environment". This work value should give insights on how important it is for the students to work in a motivating environment when it comes to their future workplace.

3.4.2. Perceived Employer Attractiveness

Employer attractiveness was measured using three indicators of the employer attractiveness scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005). These items intended to measure the attractiveness of an organization. Furthermore, two items were adapted from another scale (Highhouse et al., (2003). One example statement the respondents were exposed to is: "This company is attractive for me as a place for employment". The answer to these statements should indicate to what extent the respondents perceive Adwise as an attractive employer.

3.4.3. Perceived Employer Image

To measure the perceived employer brand image, symbolic attributes from Lievens and Highhouse (2003) were included. The attributes consisted of three dimensions *Sincerity, Competence* and *Atmosphere*. Respondents were asked to specify the extent to which each of these adjectives describe Adwise as an employer. One example adjective that intended to measure the employer dimension competence is "having a high status". These statements were included to give insights on the participant's perception of Adwise's atmosphere, competence and sincerity.

3.4.4. Perceived Value Proposition

Next, participants were exposed to several benefits that may derive from an employment with Adwise. They will be asked to rate five statements from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In particular, these statements were supposed to measure the extent to which the participants perceive Adwise as a company that offers growth, a great salary and a good reputation. One example statement that was included in this section is "Adwise looks like a company that offers a great compensation".

3.4.5. Applicant Intention

To assess application intention, three items were generated. Specifically, these items indicate to what extent the participants would intent to apply and work at Adwise. Furthermore, two items were adapted from a previous study that intended to measure to what extent the participants are interested in submitting an application to Adwise and if there are interest in learning more about Adwise. One example item that was included to asses application intention is worded as follows: "I would accept a job offer from this company".

3.5. Construct Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure validity of the study at hand, several measurements were taken before the survey was send to the targeted population. The first step was to request the ethical committee from the faculty of Behavioral Management Science (BMS) of the University of Twente which is responsible for monitoring ethical considerations in research involving human beings and using potential sensitive data from individuals. The Committee is responsible for assessing whether the research project complies with the ethical standards. Secondly, in order to assure that respondents did not encounter problems in answering the questions, a pretest in terms of a pre-inspection of random participants was conducted. Upon their given feedback, the questionnaire was refined. In addition, it was assured that a representative sample of the specified population was obtained. This study stroke to include at least hundred respondents in order to have a representative sample size. After obtaining a sufficient amount of completed questionnaires, a factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted.

3.5.1. Construct Validity

To begin with, a construct validity test was conducted by means of a factor analysis in order to identify latent variables or constructs. Hereby, it is important to mention that the work value items and the items measuring the experience of employer branding activities had to be excluded from the factor analysis since they are not scaled in intervals and thus do not meet the requirements for a factor analysis. Table 2 represents the first factor analysis, conducted in SPSS, which depicts the dependent variables: Perceived employer attractiveness, perceived value proposition, intention to apply and perceived employer image. A second factor analysis was conducted for the depended variable perceived employer image. This variable already consists of three constructs/dimensions and was therefore analyzed in a separate factor analysis. Due to the different internal dimensions the adjectives vary in meaning and thus do not load on one "image" factor. Table 3 depicts the factor loadings for each image dimension.

Most of the items of one variable ended up in one factor column, which indicated that the items measured what they were supposed to measure. Nevertheless, the item "social" initially belonging to the dimension "image sincerity" loaded on two factors equally strong. Thus, the decision was made to eliminate this item. Next, the item "friendly" belonging dimension "atmosphere" loaded stronger on the first factor 'image sincerity' but was due to conceptual reasons not moved. In addition, the item "for me the company would be a good place to work" loaded stronger on other factors than the intendent factor "perceived attractiveness". The fact, that it is conceptually not logical to include the item in a different factor group, this item has been eliminated as well.

Table 2: Factor Analysis

Item	Component		
	1	2	3
Perceived attractiveness			
The organization produces innovative products and services			,837
The organization both values and makes use of your creativity			,581
The organization offers an exciting environment			,625
This company is attractive for me as a place for employment			,504
Perceived Value proposition			
Adwise looks like a company that offers a great compensation		,784	
Adwise looks like a company that offers opportunities for growth		,703	
Adwise looks like a company that has an excellent reputation		,616	
Adwise looks like a company that achieves great success		,555	
Intention to apply			
I would accept a job offer from this company	,823		
I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer	,767		
I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company	,693		
I would be interested in submitting an application to this company	,842		
I am interested in learning more about this company	,737		

Table 3: Factor Analysis Image dimensions

Item	Component		
	1	2	3
Sincerity			
Honest	.719		
Sincere	.731		
Warm	.744		
Competence			
Exciting		.624	
Successful		.768	
Having a high status		.871	
Strong		.821	
Atmosphere			
Informal			.847
Friendly			.307
Caring			.535

3.5.2. Reliability

Moreover, the reliability of this study was tested by means of Cronbach's Alpha. This step helped to get insights into the internal consistency between the items, or in other words how closely related a set of items is as a group. In general, the Cronbach Alpha scored above 0.7 for most of the variables which indicates that the items are a reliable measurement due to their relatively high internal consistency (George & Mallary, 2003). However, the dimension atmosphere didn't score an acceptable alpha. Therefore, the decision was made to remove the item 'informal' which led to an increase of the Cronbach's alpha to .692. The Cronbach's Alpha for each group is represented in the table below.

Table 4: Reliability statistics

Section	Cronbach's alpha	*N* of Items
Perceived Employer Attractiveness	.77	4
Perceived Value proposition	.75	4
Intention to apply	.92	5
Sincerity	.78	3
Competence	.82	4
Atmosphere	.69	2

4. Results

4.1 Model testing

To provide an answer to the aforementioned research hypotheses, four simple linear regression analysis were used. They serve the purpose to examine the effects of the independent variable perceived employer branding experience of Adwise on the dependent variables perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply. Prior to the simple linear regression analyses, a Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to see if there is an association between the variables. Table 5 provides a quick and simple summary of the descriptive statistics as well as the strength and direction of the present relationships between the variables. However, the correlation analysis does not capture the causality between the variables. Therefore, subsequently four simple linear regressions were used to determine how the independent variable affects each dependent variable. A statistical significance is determined by a *p*-value. Next to the linear regression analysis, a descriptive statistics analysis provides insights into the importance of each work value ranked by the students. Ultimately an answer to the research questions and an overview of the supported hypotheses is displayed.

Table 5: Means, standard deviations and correlations

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
Employer Branding experience	4,29	,64	1				
Perceived Employer Attractiveness	4,01	,71	,469**	1			
Perceived Employer Image	3,83	,54	,365**	,676**	1		
Perceived Value Proposition	3,74	,60	,325**	,620**	,768**	1	
Perceived Intention to apply	3,74	,90	,516**	,720**	,661**	,585**	1

Note. M and *SD* are used to present mean and standard deviation, respectively.
**indicates p < .01.

4.1.1. Perceived Employer Attractiveness

Firstly, hypothesis 1 proposed that "Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences perceived employer attractiveness". As depicted in Table 5, the respondents of the survey showed a relatively high perceived employer attractiveness. This suggests, that the participants perceive Adwise as an attractive potential employer. A simple linear regression was used to assess whether perceived employer branding experience of

Adwise significantly influences perceived employer attractiveness. The results of the regression suggested that perceived employer branding experience of Adwise explained 22% of variance in perceived employer attractiveness, R^2 =.22, $F(1,99)$=27.98, p <.001. Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise significantly influences perceived employer attractiveness, b=.52, $t(99)$ =5.29, p <.001. Therefore, the first hypothesis can be confirmed.

4.1.2. Perceived Employer Image

Secondly, a simple linear regression was used to test hypothesis 2 which is worded as "Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise has a positiv influences perceived employer image". Overall perceived employer image shows a high mean (see Table 5). This indicates, that most of the participants perceive Adwise as a competent and sincere organization with a friendly atmosphere. The perception of employer branding experience also explained a significant variance in perceived employer image, R^2=0.13, $F(1,99)$=15.22, p <.001. Moreover, perceived employer branding experience of Adwise significantly influences perceived employer image, b=.31, $t(99)$=3.90, p<.001. Consequently, the second hypothesis can be confirmed.

4.1.3. Perceived Value proposition

Thirdly hypothesis 3 states that "Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise positively influences perceived value proposition". Table 5 shows, that value proposition has a high mean which means that most of the participants perceive Adwise as an employer that offers great benefits. Moreover, the results of the simple linear regression analysis reveal that perceived employer branding experience of Adwise explained 10,6% of variance, R^2=.11, $F(1,99)$=11.71, p <.001. Moreover, perceived employer branding experience of Adwise significantly influences perceived value preposition, b=.31, $t(99)$=3.42, p <.001. This means, that the third hypothesis can be confirmed.

4.1.4. Intention to apply

Ultimately, a simple linear regression analysis was used to test the fourth hypothesis which proposed that "Perceived employer branding experience of positively influences intention to apply". Table 5 depicts, that intention to apply has a high mean which suggests that most of the participants would intent to apply. Moreover, the results of the regression suggested that perceived employer branding experience of Adwise explained 27% of variance, R^2=.27, $F(1,99)$=35.96, p <.001. Perceived employer branding experience of Adwise significantly

influences perceived intention to apply, *b*=.72, *t*(99)=6.0, *p* <.001. Therefore, also the last hypothesis can be confirmed.

4.1.5. Visualization

Figure 3 serves to model the prior elaborated relationships between the independent variable and dependent variables. The single linear regressions were combined into one graph to show how the dependent variables change when the independent variable changes by a certain amount. In particular, the visualization shows that the perceived employer branding experience positively influences each of the dependent variables.
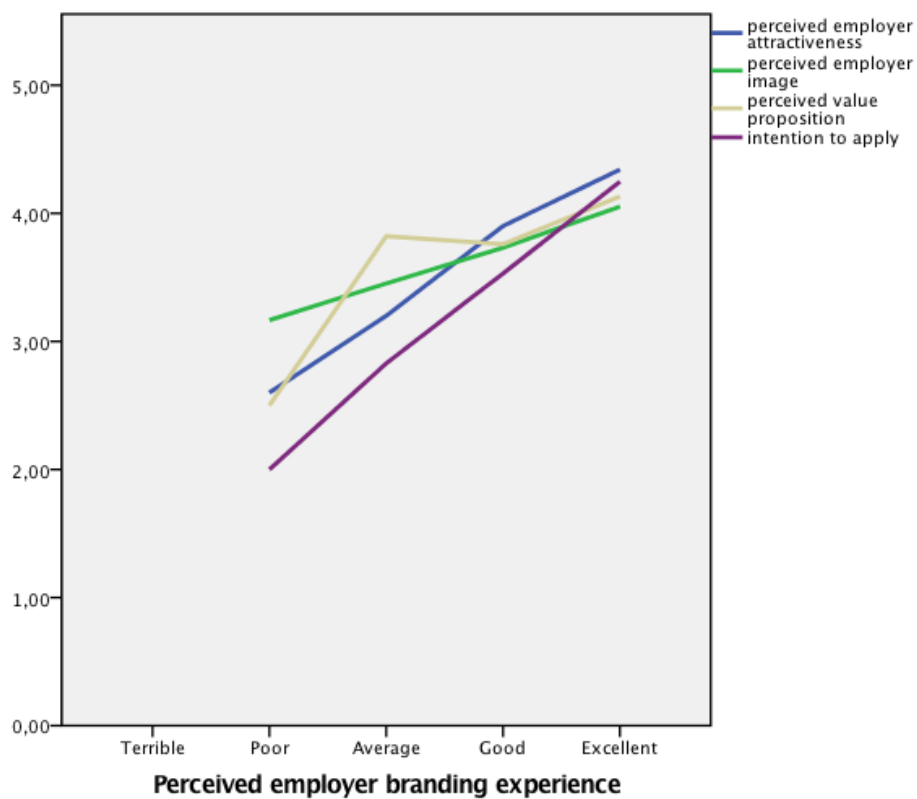

Figure 3. Effects of perceived employer branding experience on perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply

4.2. Work values

To get insights into the importance of each work value, ranked by the students, a descriptive statistics analysis was conducted. The importance of ten work values was measured by means of a ranking with ten positions ranging from 1 (*most importan*t) 10 (*least important)*. Overall the descriptive statistics analysis reveals that the work value being ranked most often on top and thus perceived as most important is *motivating environment* (M = 3.03, SD =1,94). Motivating environment is followed by *good relationship with coworkers* (M = 4,12, SD =2,37) and *work-life balance* (M = 4,43, SD =2,54). Also, the work value *find meaning at workplace* is overall ranked on top positions (M = 4,47, SD =2,91). Work values that are overall ranked as moderately important are *working independently* (M = 5.82, SD =2,73) and *fulfill achievements* (M = 5.90, SD =2,65). Contrary, the values *long career* (M =6,36, SD =2,78), *environmental care* (M = 6.62, SD =2,37), *flexible hours* (M = 6,69, SD =2,51) and especially *companies' status* (M = 7,56, SD =2,54) show a high mean. This indicates that respondents often ranked these values on one of the last positions which suggests that these values are overall less important to the respondents. Figure 4 depicts the ranking distribution of the most important and least important work value in percentage. The figure visualizes on the one hand that most of the students ranked motivational environment on top positions and on the other hand that most of the students ranked the company's status at bottom positions. To conclude, when it comes to the student's potential workplace, a motivating environment is highly important to them while a company's status is compared to the other work values of little importance.
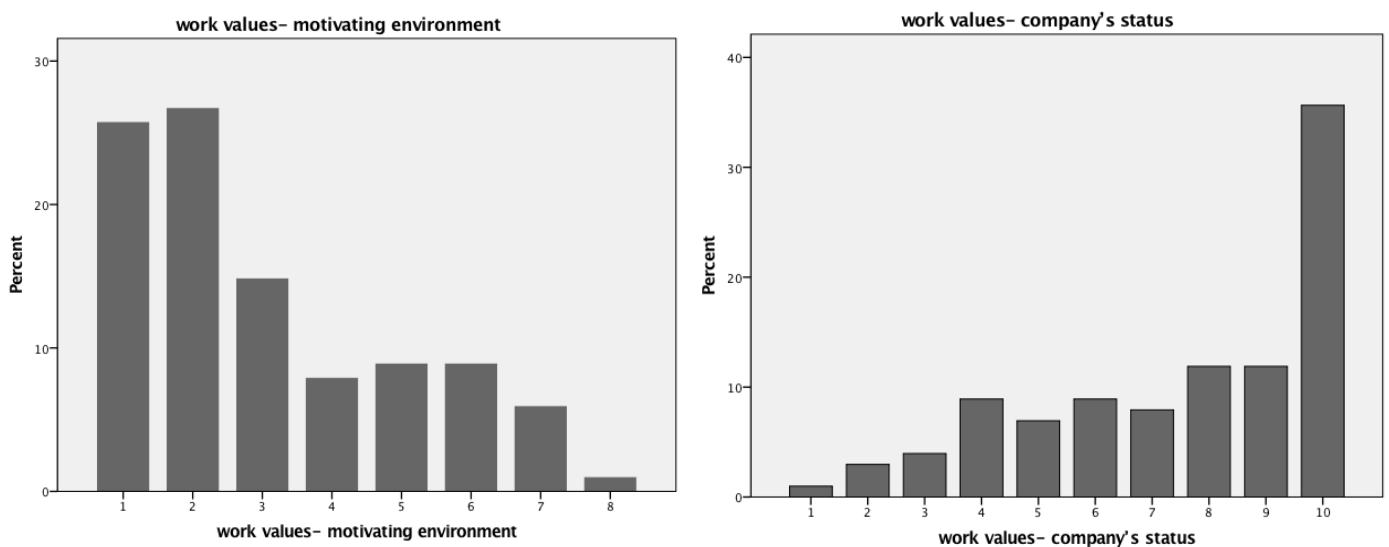

Figure 4. Distribution of the work values motivating environment and company's status in percentage

4.3. Research questions

Bearing in mind the findings of the conducted analyses, conclusions can be drawn to provide an answer to both research questions of this paper. To begin with, the first research question attempts to find answer on how students perceive the employer branding experience of Adwise and how this is related to perceived attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply. At this point, it can be concluded that most of the students perceive the employer branding experience of Adwise as good or excellent. Further, evidence could be found for the first hypothesis. As stated above, it was expected that respondent's perception of Adwise's employer branding experience positively influences the organizations attractiveness. To be precise, the participants that liked the employer branding experience reported a high employer attractiveness. Thus, the results of the study show that the level of employer attractiveness can be influenced by the perceived employer branding experience. Also, significant effects could be found for the second, third and fourth hypothesis, which means that not only the level of employer attractiveness but also the a) perceived employer image b) perceived value proposition and c) intention to apply can be influenced by an employer branding experience. Subsequently, the confirmed hypotheses suggest that the independent and dependent variables relate in this respect: the perceived employer branding experience of Adwise has to be considered as an influential predictor for the organization's perceived attractiveness, image, value proposition and intention to apply.

Next to the first research question, the findings provide answer to the second research question. It becomes apparent that students interested in digital marketing find following work values as most important: motivating environment, good relationship with co-workers and work life balance. This implies for Adwise that they should take this work values into account when recruiting in future. Therefore, a further elaboration on practical implications for Adwise follows in the discussion. To conclude the result section, Table 7 presents an overview of the aforementioned hypotheses and whether they could be confirmed by the findings of this study.

Table 7: Overview Hypothesis

Hypothesis		Supported
H1	Perceived employer branding experience positively influences perceived employer attractiveness	Yes
H2	Perceived employer branding experience positively influences perceived employer image	Yes
H3	Perceived employer branding experience positively influences perceived value proposition	Yes
H4	Perceived employer branding experience positively influences employee's intention to apply	Yes

5. Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to get insights on how to address students interested in digital marketing, thus potential digital marketeers of the future, as prospective employees. With an interest in their opinion, the present research looks specifically at the importance of certain work values and perception of Adwise's employer branding experience. The focus hereby was on the effect of the perceived employer branding experience on the perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply. To summarize, the findings of the research questions imply valuable theoretical and practical implications that are elaborated in the following sections.

5.1. Theoretical implications

In view of the presented effects, the study at hand adds on the field of research about employer branding and work values of Generation Y and Z. In particular, the findings of the study could improve the theoretical understanding about the role of employer branding activities for addressing potential candidates belonging to the field of digital marketing. Thus, the effects support other researches that found indirect as well as direct effects of employer branding on organizational attraction, employer image, application intention, and value proposition.

5.1.1. Employer Branding experience and its effect on Employer Attractiveness, Employer Image, Value proposition and Application intention.

To start with, multiple researchers have investigated the concept of employer branding. For instance, Sivertzen et al. (2013) investigated effective employer branding strategies by means of measuring employer attractiveness. Furthermore, Backhaus and Tikko (2004) tried to assess the organizational image of an organization when employer branding is used. Also, Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003) have shown that there is a relation between employer branding and employer attractiveness. In addition, Sokro (2012) considered employer branding as highly important when it comes to applicants' intention to apply. Thus, prior research assumed that there is an effect of employer branding, but none of the studies provided evidence that the perception of an employer branding experience directly affects organizational attractiveness, employer image, application intention, and value proposition. Therefore, this paper adds value to the direct relationship between the concepts. However, further research should examine which other underlying factors are at play influencing perceived employer attraction, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply.

5.1.2. Modern recruitment channels and communication style

The paper seeks to provide impulses for science by contributing to existing literature on recruitment and workplace communication. Specifically, the findings of this research suggest that the use of LinkedIn is a suitable recruitment tool to attract and recruit potential digital marketeers by applying an informal but still professional tone. This is in line with what Nikolaou (2014), and Hartman and McCambridge (2011) state. They described LinkedIn as an ideal recruitment tool and claimed that this generation is in favor of an informal rather than formal communication style. This implies that the findings of this study fit the prior research on this generations.

5.1.3. Work values Generation Y and Z

Beyond that, the findings of this paper give insights into the assessment of specific work values amongst students and thereby add value to the literature on work values of the Generation Y and Z. Amongst others, prior research claimed that these generation seek for a positive environment (Reis & Braga, 2016). This is in line with the findings of this study, as many of the respondents find a motivating environment as most important. Next to this, Smola and Sutton (2002) suggest that younger generations place less value on work for its own sake and want to add meaning to their work. Results of this paper are in line with this suggestion, since in this paper 'find meaning at workplace' falls under the fourth most important work values. Contrary, in this paper the work value 'flexible hours' is considered as less important than other work values and thus one of the least important work values for students interested in digital marketing. At this point prior literature of (Reis & Braga, 2016) contradicts with the results of this study, since they highlight that the new generations value especially flexibility. Also, it has to be mentioned that respondents in this study showed a high deviation, meaning they varied a lot in which work values they considered as most and least important. Thereby the findings of this paper contradict with prior research that claimed individuals of one generation share the same values and attitudes (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000).

5.2. Practical implications

The findings of the research bear important implications for developing and adapting recruitment and employer branding practices in order to create a better applicant experience among potential digital marketers. In first line, this research bears meaningful practical implications for Adwise. But also, some meaningful implications for HR practitioners in digital agencies and human research managers in general. Moreover, the findings of the study provide

substantial insights on how contemporary an employer branding experience can look like and how it can push a company's performance.

5.2.1. Practical implications for HR practitioners

With regard to the usage of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool, the present study would like to underpin the channel's effectiveness and significance for the recruitment practices to attract potential applicants. Given the relatively low cost and the fact that most students possess a LinkedIn account, it may be beneficial to recruit candidates via this channel. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that in this research the recruitment tool proved to be efficient only for a specific group of people, namely students with an interest in digital marketing.

Specifically, the findings support that companies should apply a rather informal but still professional tone when recruiting potential applicants from Generation Y and Z and highlight their value propositions at the first moment of contact. For example, offering an invitation for a cup of coffee at the office for a simple 'get to know each other' has proofed to be attractive in this study. Also highlighting specific values and benefits that derive from an employment with the company are of advantage. Such as underlining, that hours can be arranged flexibly, or that social gatherings take place each week to strengthen the co-worker relationships. In particular it is of advantage that the benefits are in line with the applicants' work values.

In this study, the work values were measured right at the beginning. It stood out which work values are overall found as most important and least important. In particular, this study revealed that potential digital marketeers value a motivating environment, a good co-worker relationship and a healthy work-life balance as most important. Whereas, flexible hours and a company's status was in sum rated as least important. With regard to digital agencies, it might be of their interest to take this specific work values into account when recruiting potential digital marketeers.

Beyond using an informal tone and taking note of specific work values when recruiting, this research proved the effectiveness of a personal office tour guided by an *experience manager*. After a personal conversation, companies might consider giving their potential applicants a personal tour around their office, so that the applicant can create an accurate perception of the company. In general, and with regard to the above-mentioned points, companies should note that an employer branding experience is an influential factor for the organization's attractiveness, image, value proposition and intention to apply. Thus, in order to strengthen these factors, it can be recommended that companies, especially HR practitioners,

ensure that their employer branding experience is attractive for potential applicants, to perform successfully when recruiting matching applicants.

5.2.2. *Practical implications for Adwise*

Now it is known that Adwise's employer branding experience has proved to be beneficial for their perceived employer attractiveness, image, value proposition and applicant intention. Overall it is recommended for Adwise to maintain most of their activities in future. However, there are a few points that can be optimized.

To be precise, Adwise should maintain to use LinkedIn as a recruitment tool as well as keeping a rather informal but still professional tone in their message. Also mentioning social activities such as "having gezellig Friday afternoon drinks" proofed to be an attractive addition in the employer branding experience. Moreover, an invitation for a personal and informal conversation at their office as well as a subsequent guided tour through their workplace by an experience manager is something that Adwise should hold on to. In addition, the branding video of Adwise clearly left a good impression in the application procedure. However, it is advisable to monitor their activities in future and adapt them if necessary. Therefore, a regular survey on how potential applicants perceive Adwise recruitment activities might be of benefit. The fact that the perceived employer branding experience turned out to be highly influential for other performance factors, Adwise should continue to attach great importance to their employer practices.

With regard to the fact that certain work values are most important to the students, it is recommended that Adwise takes these work values into account and incorporates them in their employer branding practices. To start with, the students find a motivating environment as most important. This implies, that Adwise should keep showing their creative and inspiring facilities, such as the lounge to relax or the cafeteria that offers a rich lunch buffet. Further, students value a good co-worker relationship as highly important. Here, Adwise can maintain to highlight the fact that their regularly organize team activities to strengthen the teambuilding like they do in their LinkedIn request. Next, the findings show that the students find it important to have a healthy work-life balance. Following this, Adwise could add to their employer branding experience, that they offer weekly sport activities at the office, such as the afternoon yoga sessions. Furthermore, Adwise should emphasize that they are not just a workspace but much more a purpose driven agency that takes action on something bigger than just its products and services. This might be of benefit due to the fact their potential candidates find it important to find meaning at their future workplace. Due to the point that a company's status and flexible

hours are rated as least important amongst their potential applicants, it is advisable that Adwise shift these values in the background and places the more important once into the foreground.

Considering all above mentioned recommendations, it can be concluded that it may be of advantage for Adwise to create an employer branding video that takes all the above-mentioned points into consideration. It may be beneficial to send this branding video to potential employees when requesting them on LinkedIn so that they immediately get a full impression of the agency that matches the candidates' values. It might optimize the employer banding experience among potential candidates and allows Adwise to attract talents in a more targeted manner (Shahid and Azhar, 2013).

5.3. Research limitations and future research

Even though the study at hand yielded some meaningful findings, the research is not without limitations that need to be considered. Important to mention here is that a small amount of the participants knew Adwise already before the study. Even if none of the respondents reported a close relationship with Adwise, it is not entirely clear in how far it influenced the perception of the respondent. Other than that, some participants are not in the possession of a LinkedIn account and were therefore not familiar with this recruitment tool. Thus, both limitations might have influenced the outcomes of this study.

Furthermore, respondents of this study were going through a recruitment scenario rather than experiencing a real-life recruitment process. Thereby, participants were exposed to screenshots of a LinkedIn message including fake names in the title, rather than receiving an actual personal LinkedIn message. Also, a video was presented to the respondents that should depict the culture of Adwise. In a real application process, one might have looked at their website and or social media accounts to get more information than only the ones provided in this scenario. Moreover, the participants were asked to imagine a tour throughout Adwise's office which was presented by means of pictures. Instead, receiving a real tour through Adwise's office might have led to a more accurate perception by the respondents. Participants were also not able to compare another employer with Adwise which would have been likely in a real-life application setting. To conclude, these limitations may all have resulted in lower levels of realism as participants were not able to go through a personal application process and explore Adwise by actually visiting them. A real-life setting might have led to different outcomes of this study. Therefore, a recommendation one can give for future research is to make use of a mobility method that allows the participants to experience a real-life employer branding experience.

Besides this the sample size is another factor to consider. With regard to the current circumstances of Covid-19 and the specific characteristics of the sample group, a sample size of (N=101) participants could be yielded which is a representative sample size. However, a higher sample size might have led to an increase in reliability and validity. To ensure this, it is recommended that future research should include a higher sample size.

In this study, the ten work values were measured by means of a ranking. Even though, the ranking measurement was suitable to get an understanding of which work values are most and least important to the students, the ranking could not reveal if some of the students find a work value not important at all. Therefore, it is recommended to use a different measurement technique for measuring the assessment of work values in future. In sum, the study can be used as a foundation for future research to examine the perception of employer branding experiences among potential candidates. Now that we know which factors attract this specific group of people, future research might focus on factors that not only attract potential digital marketeers but also retain them. Therefore, it might be of interest to conduct a follow up study amongst their current employers in future.

5.4. Conclusion

To conclude, this research intended to erception of Adwise's employer branding experience amongst students interested in digital marketing. By doing so, the present study included the use of LinkedIn as a recruitment tool with an informal application request, an employer branding video and a virtual tour through Adwise's office. In providing answer to the research question, this study shed light on how to attract students that are interested in digital marketing as new employees. The study explicitly stresses the importance of an effective employer branding experience for organizational attractiveness, image, value proposition and applicant's intention to apply. Thereby, this study does not only add value to the employer branding literature but also pursues to help especially HR practitioners of digital agencies and organizations in general to attract valuable human capital. Finally, this research helps companies and Adwise to survive the current shift in the labor market by adapting their employer branding practices. However, it has to be noted that this research is conducted within a specific context as it is a company-related case study. In order to assure that the findings of this research are generalizable to other settings future research is needed.

Acknowledgements

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Appendices

Appendix A: Visual Material Adwise Office

Appendix B: Online Survey

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this online study about employer branding.
At first, you will have to rate statements regarding your personal work values. In the next step, you will be asked to follow a recruitment scenario of a specific company. Imagine that you are qualified for a position in this company and that the company is in your field of interest. After this, you will have to rate statements about employer attractiveness, value proposition and intention to apply. In the end some demographical questions will be asked. Keep in mind, there are no right or wrong answers to the questions, but you should fill in the survey conscientiously. The study will take about 15 minutes. All data is kept anonymously and will be used only for the purpose of the study. Personal information will not be passed on to third parties. The participation of this study is voluntary, and you can refuse or quit the study at any point of time. If you have any questions about the study or you are interested in the study results, please note the researchers email address at the end of this study.

Continuing with " → " means that you declare to have been informed about the nature and method of the study and that you want to start the survey.

University of Twente, Marina Wenning

Work values

Please rank the following statements in order of importance to you (most important item on the top

1. When I apply for a job I value to work in a motivating environment as important.
2. When I apply for a job I value a workplace where I can work independently as important.
3. When I apply for a job I value the company's status as important.
4. When I apply for a job I value the opportunities to a long career as important.
5. When I apply for a job I value companies who care about the environment as important.
6. When I apply for a job I find it important to find meaning at a workplace.
7. When I apply for a job I value a good relationship with my co-workers as important. When I apply for a job I value flexible hours as important.
8. When I apply for a job I value my work-life balance as important.
9. When I apply for a job I value to fulfill achievements as important

Recruitment scenario

You will now follow a recruitment scenario of a company that is searching for a new employee. Please, look at the following content very carefully. You will not be able to go back and look at it again.

→ LinkedIn Messages (see method)

Now, imagine you are interested in the job offer and want to learn more about Adwise. You start browsing through their online channels and find this video.
Make sure you watch the full video.

→ link to video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6R_LN3aufE

After browsing through Adwise's online channels, you decide to meet the Talent Recruiter at Adwise for a cup of coffee. You are having a rather informal but still professional conversation with Adwise's Talent Recruiter. Then, the Experience Manager of Adwise will give you a tour of their office.

→ Visual Material Adwise (see Appendix A)

Well done! The scenario ends here.
How would you rate the overall experience of the application procedure?

☆☆☆☆☆

Attractiveness
Now, please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements

Table 8: Attractiveness scale

	Strongly disagree – strongly agree				
The organization produces innovative products and services (1)	1	2	3	4	5
The organization both values and makes use of your creativity (2)	1	2	3	4	5
The organization offers an exciting environment (3)	1	2	3	4	5
For me, the company would be a good place to work (4)	1	2	3	4	5
This company is attractive for me as a place for employment (5)	1	2	3	4	5

Image
Please indicate to which extent the following adjectives describe the organization.
To me, Adwise appears as...

Table 9: Image dimensions

	Strongly disagree – strongly agree				
Honest (1)	1	2	3	4	5
Sincere (2)	1	2	3	4	5
Social (3)	1	2	3	4	5
Warm (4)	1	2	3	4	5
Exciting (5)	1	2	3	4	5
Creative (6)	1	2	3	4	5
Succesful (7)	1	2	3	4	5
Having a high status (8)	1	2	3	4	5
Strong (9)	1	2	3	4	5
Friendly (10)	1	2	3	4	5
Informal (11)	1	2	3	4	5
Caring (12)	1	2	3	4	5

Value proposition
Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following benefits that may derive from an employment with Adwise.

Table 10: Value proposition scale

	Strongly disagree – strongly agree				
Adwise looks like a company that offers a great compensation (1)	1	2	3	4	5
Adwise looks like a company that offers opportunities for growth (2)	1	2	3	4	5
Adwise looks like a company that has an excellent reputation (3)	1	2	3	4	5
Adwise looks like a company that achieves great success (4)	1	2	3	4	5

Intention to apply
Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

Table 11: Intention to apply scale

	Strongly disagree – strongly agree				
I would accept a job offer from this company (1)	1	2	3	4	5

I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer (2)	1	2	3	4	5
I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company (3)	1	2	3	4	5
I would be interested in submitting an application to this company (4)	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in learning more about this company (5)	1	2	3	4	5

Demographics

Almost done! Just some last questions about your person.
What is your gender?

    ◯ Male (1)

    ◯ Female (2)

How old are you?

    _____

What is your nationality?

    ◯ Dutch (1)

    ◯ German (2)

    ◯ Other (3) _____

Which study do you follow?

    ◯ Communication studies (1)

    ◯ Psychology (2)

    ◯ Business Administration (3)

    ◯ Other (4) _____

In which phase of your study are you?

○ Bachelore (1)

○ Pre-master (2)

○ Master (3)

○ PhD (4)

Are you familiar with Adwise? If so, what is your relationship to Adwise?

○ yes (1) _____

○ no (2)

Do you have a LinkendIn Account?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ I am interested in obtaining one (3)

Well done, you finished the survey!
Please click on the ">>" button to save your answers! Thanks for your participation. For more information about the research and/or the research results you can contact the researcher at any time.
m.wenning@student.utwente.nl

Appendix C: Literature Study Log

Research questions literature study

(RQ1) *How do potential employees perceive the employer branding experience of Adwise and how is this related to perceived employer attractiveness, perceived employer image, perceived value proposition and intention to apply?*

(RQ2) *Which work values are most and least important for Adwise's potential employees?*

Concepts in research question

- Employer branding
- Employer brand
- Employer branding strategies
- Employer branding practices
- Employer Attraction
- Employer attractiveness
- Employer Image
- Value proposition
- Intention to apply
- Generation Y
- Generation Z
- Recruitment
- Modern Recruitment strategies
- Work values
- Graduates marketing
- Digital marketing

Materials and Databases

Most literature was chosen from scientific databases, such as Google scholar and Scopus. This source enabled to retrieve relevant articles in order build a sufficient theoretical framework. While Scopus is one of the largest databases for literature in the field of social sciences, google scholar holds millions of scientific documents and is thereby the biggest search engine for academic literature. Further the online library of the University of Twente proofed to withhold valuable literature that were of use for the concepts of this study.

Relevant terms

Table 12: Relevant terms

Nr.	Concepts	Related terms	Broader terms	Narrower terms

1	Employer Branding	Employer branding trategies	Perception of employees and future employees	Organizational culture, promotion/communication channels
2	Employer attractiveness	Employee attraction and engagement	Organizational attributes	Attractive workplace, Motivating workplace
3	Employer Image	Brand Image	Atmosphere, Success	Caring, Friendly, Strong
4	Value proposition	Organizations value,	Organizational benefits	Compensation, Career prospects, gowth
5	Intention to apply	Recruitment	Applicants intention, Factors influencing applicant intention to apply	Workplace communication, Modern recruitment channels, Linkedin
6	Generation Y and Z	Workvalues, attitudes, Behaviour	Generational differences, Similarities	Flexibility, purpose driven, suistability, work live balance
7	Young digital marketeers	Millenials, Millenials in the workforce	Digital marketeers of the future, Marketing Graduates	Communication science students, characteristics of millenials

Search actions and results

Table 13: Search actions and results

Nr.	Date	Database	Action and terms	Results
1	26.02.2020	Google scholar	Employer branding	39.800
2	26.02.2020	LISA	Employer branding	11.603
3	02.03.2020	Google scholar	Employer branding AND strategies	43.100
4	07.03.2020	Google scholar	Employer Attractiveness	99.900
5	12.03.2020	Google scholar	Employer image	1.250.000
6	18.03.2020	Scopus	Value proposition	170
7	20.03.2020	Google scholar	Intention to apply AND Millennials	21.000
8	21.03.2020	Google scholar	Effect of Employer branding	49.100
9	22.03.2020	Google scholar	Generation Y AND Z	5.320.000
10	25.03.2020	Google scholar	Generational differences AND Work values	17.500
11	27.03.2020	Google scholar	Millennials AND Employee attraction	4.800
12	27.03.2020	Google scholar	Millennials as Employees	35.300