

Branding Innovations for Ideal Placements

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ABSTRACT

Placements are one of the most important services that Institutions provide to their students. May it be part-time work, Industry projects, Internship or full-time jobs; placements are the order of our educational system today. To provide this service, colleges and institutes every year come up with several innovative strategies to brand themselves up in front of Industries who ensure and provide ideal placements for their students. In addition to digital communication methods followed to brand and attract corporates, several new channels are also being explored to capture industry attention these days for Institute visibility. Therefore, this paper attempts to explore and examine all such new creative and exclusive branding strategies institutions have adopted of recent to be noticed in front of companies to maximize their campus hirings.

Keywords : Branding, Media, Placements, Institutions, Events, Innovation

I. Introduction:

For an Institution's strong survival in competitive existence, administrations must definitely continue to research, invent new things, encourage innovation and create sustainable ideas for the benefit of their organization. This professional belief also serves as a strong steering factor for our present age Educational Sector and Institutions as well. Therefore, while branding oneself in Media serves as a constant ongoing activity these days to market existential identities for institutes; a research thought was sparked to explore if the same branding initiatives are being experimented differently in reality also with cutting edge innovation and uniqueness to bid competition for rivals. Well, the answer was yes and this particularly became important for colleges who especially ensured industry placements for their students through innovations discussed in this paper. To add up, one just cannot expect employers to turn up to students for employment whilst they are ignorant or do not know

about Institute's existence at all. Sometimes colleges may not be even noticed in mainstream media too despite all marketing efforts as their competitors may have carved out catchy new different branding programs to have their Institute recognized and identified by the recruiters. Hence to judge the feasibility of growing innovations in attracting recruiters for placements by institutes, new innovative branding concepts and techniques used are deeply analyzed in this paper. Accordingly, honest evaluation is also being made to bring out each of their merits and shortcomings through appropriate methodologies.

II. Objectives of the Study:

The mission of this study is to educate the reader about merits and significance of various Branding Strategies to maximize college and student visibility for ensuring placements. It also aims to educate about various options, channels and choices that is available for the Institutes in present age to brand themselves up to improve their shine and attractiveness. The research also thrives to communicate on staying competitive in present markets to attract more stakeholders for its survival and goodwill creation through branding and visibility activities. To enable institutions to utilize any of new branding strategy from this paper which they may find feasible for their prosperity. Study also expects an outcome which can be basis for further research and developing brand strategies in the form of innovations.

III. Research Methodology:

To examine and explore this research, data was gathered qualitatively through Newspaper Articles reporting unique college events held and conducted, Word of mouth talks among Academic Communities about creative college events, Competitor College event Brochures and Invitations for participations, Local National TV Channel reports and Advertisements plus also News Website pressings about various innovative college events. To measure the effectiveness and feasibility of above collected data, an Industry Response Program (IRP) was undertaken to record feedback on the usefulness of above college events in attracting companies for student hiring. Through random sampling, recruiters were contacted through telephonic interviews, conducted direct face to face discussions with Industry People at their Offices, E-Mail Conversations, WhatsApp Chat conversations and even sometimes Skype discussions were also held for industry responses. The verbal responses and feedback obtained from recruiters through IRP was systematically recorded and structured through 3 Point Tabular Rating Method. Lastly, recruiters's Preferable Appeal Response Scores (PARS) for

college initiatives generated from IRP is distributed diagrammatically for deriving meaningful inferences and conclusions for the research.

IV. Data Analysis And Interpretations

Well the data gathered from sources mentioned in research methodology can be briefly listed under event heads as follows:-

I. Project Exhibitions and Start-up Ideas – Relates to exhibiting Student Projects in form of a Campus Expo or fair. Also involves Inviting Recruiters to inaugurate and judge the projects. Example: National Level Automobile Exhibition by BE BTECH Students, Business Start-up Models and Ideas by MBA BTECH BE students

II. Centre of Excellence CoE – This involves providing Campus space to Industry for setting up their Training and Excellence Centers. The COE give students access to the same technology that companies around the world depend on every day to develop innovative products in a wide variety of industries including automotive, aerospace, machinery, shipbuilding, high-tech electronics and many more. Graduates with this type of software training are highly-recruited candidates for advanced technology jobs.

III. MoU – Here Institutes followed entering into Memorandum of Understanding with Industries in area of CoE, Utilization of College Infrastructure for conducting series of job mela, projects, internships and part-time jobs for their students. Tie-Ups also included Industry representations in Board of Studies or Education.

IV. Media Marketing – Involves showcasing specific Student achievements in Print Web News Media. Example a team of BE students found a new machine that helps to boost the speed of a car. Also write to companies for funding assistance, patents and copyrights.

V. Social Media and Mobile Applications – To enable recruiters to book slots for recruitment visits, launch easily sharable and downloadable college apps, Open Pages in Facebook, WhatsApp LinkedIn, Twitter, E-Commerce like websites to assist book campus placement slots.

VI. Campus Promotions Product Launch – Provide college space and infrastructure for releasing new products of recruiter thereby also becoming business partner for the recruiter.

Management Festivals, Case Study Competitions are some of the forums where recruiting companies' products can be given visibility.

VII. Industry Guest Lecture Series – Involves organizing a week long lecture series by company officials to showcase student strength and quality.

VIII. Part-Time Work-Organising Earn while you learn Programs by inviting companies who offer part-time work. Paid Internships and Stipend Project Work stints with Companies also could be used to convert the time spent into possible job offers. Counselling students in this regard is very essential.

IX. Creating Students as Company agents, Brand Endorsers and Campus Ambassadors – Examples of this initiative can be students being Insurance agents having been written IRDA agents, Mutual Fund distributors having NISM certified etc. Institutes can easily invite the companies for recruitment visit through student contacts.

X. Competition Judges :- This includes inviting industry folks to judge management festivals, forum activities and case study competitions in colleges.

XI. Hybrid Initiatives:- This is a innovative combination of all above discussed initiatives. It also goes to the extent of inviting alumnis for mock interviews to pull their associated companies for next placement season. It also involves Institutions taking up consultancy work from Government Bodies and Corporates.

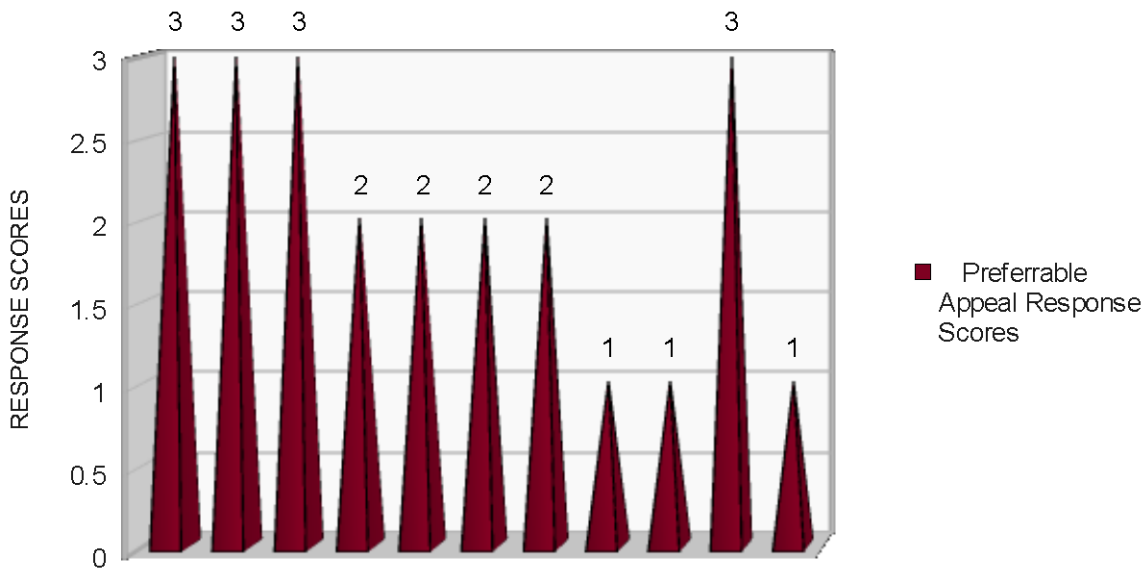
Anyways, effectiveness for each of above branding innovations identified in research data are depicted through below rating table whose PARS (Preferable Appeal Response Scores) from recruiters are obtained through IRP (Industry Response Program). Moreover, each of above Institute brand showcase initiatives that appealed recruiters significantly are recorded in 3 point scores to convey their mood on such initiatives.

Here, 3 denotes 'Placement Favourable' 2 denoted 'Neutral' and 1- 'Cannot Say on Placements' by recruiters on a particular branding initiatives or innovations for visibility from Institutions.

Serial Number	College Event Initiatives for Branding	Preferrable Appeal Response Scores (PARS) from Recruiters
I	Project Exhibitions & Start-up Ideas	3
II	Centre of Excellence	3
III	MoU	3
IV	Media Marketing	2
V	Campus Promotions	2
VI	Guest Lectures	2
VII	Competition Judges	2
VIII	Campus Ambassadors	1
IX	Part-time Work	1
X	Hybrid Initiatives	3
XI	Social Media & Mobile Apps	1

TABLE I

[Now let us distribute the above permutations shown in Table I on a graph to better understand recruiters and study their scores](#)



I.Project Exhibitions & Start Up Ideas,II.Centre of Excellence,III.MoU,IV.Media Marketing,
V.Campus Promotions,VI.Guest Lectures,VII.Competition Judges
VIII.Campus Ambassadors,IX.Part-time Work,X.Hybrid Initiatives,XI.Social Media&MobileApps

FIGURE 1

V. Findings:

Despite various Institute Branding innovations depicted above, as per HR a hiring need still gets ignited only if Job openings are created due to various business reasons. Secondly with Robotics and Automation gaining widespread industry practice, most of the work is being done by the machines. Thirdly Economy of the Country and Government Industrial Policies has also got to be prosperous to look into a robust hiring season among graduates. Whilst these factors trigger recruitments, finally it is up to the recruiters in a competitive environment to decide on which college to visit for candidate selections. Anyways, from our Table I and graphical figure above, it is clearly deducible that companies are positive to choose a college for Placement visit who innovatively showcase and support technical projects inviting companies also for inaugurating or as a judge for the same, provide campus space for mutually funded Excellence Centres for innovation and also those who partner MoU for high mutual benefits. High Preference is also given for Institutes who have a host of all above discussed branding initiatives through Hybrid Method. It is also realized through this study that companies honestly want Institutions to create a need or strong desire for them to determine as to why they should choose to recruit their particular Institute students. This

million dollar question should ignite colleges to innovate further and further towards chalking out a more and new commendable brand strategies to convince corporate HR to achieve ideal placements. Of course there will be costs involved in brand communications especially whilst you are doing it differently for visibility and especially in a cut-throat competition environment. Also, it is also worth noting that branding has got to happen in two forms namely Institute Student Branding and as well as Institute Name Branding. Again, Human perception and psychology still matters as to how company HR will view a college for evaluation for a recruitment visit in alignment with company practices, policies and procedures.

VI. Conclusions:

From the judgements gathered from analysis and interpretation of evidences in this study, it can be clearly inferred that for a Institution to be recognized by Industrial Sector for placement generation, Innovative branding from institutes has to be a continuous non-stop exercise. Especially in the fast paced era of today, where recognition is obtained only through competitive performance and initiatives, it has to be also showcased to industries through appropriate channels only at the right time. of course, Institutions have to bear the cost of branding but should also be made as a strategy of overall institutional growth cost. Finally, as observed in findings, onus will still be at the corporate court to decide on hiring and choosing their desired college for recruiting as per their corporate policies, competition and their other college evaluation criteria's. Therefore Colleges should always have huge assortment, assembly and combination of various innovative methods and strategies as a whole to use in alternatives to win in this visibility war for placement opportunity generation.

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