

Global Employer Branding Guide

Insights on how to market your brand
to today's job candidates



Employer Branding 101



Employer branding: It's not just a buzzword. As more and more candidates use a variety of tools to research organizations and their roles, employer brand is becoming increasingly important for all recruiting and retention efforts. What this generation is driven by are values, work/life balance, identifying with a culture, employee diversity, and business sustainability.

“A job ad is no longer enough. Generations X, Y and Z are making decisions based on relevant information and data. Talent can pick and choose between many job opportunities, and they will likely not be based solely on the highest salary.”

Stefan Hobiger,
VP strategy, solutions & delivery, Monster

To attract top talent and find better matches for your ever-evolving roles, employer branding is what will differentiate you—starting with your employer value proposition (EVP).

What's an EVP? It's your promise, as an employer, of what you will give to your employees in return for their time, loyalty and productivity. It's often a bold, compelling, yet genuine statement that defines you. It acts as a filter and a magnet, getting the right people to apply.

But why now, you may ask? For many years prior to the digital age, companies spent a lot of time, energy and money closing the curtain and making sure that candidates knew nothing about what really went on inside the company, says James Ellis, self-proclaimed employer branding nerd, podcaster, and author of “Talent Chooses You.”



"They made sure that candidates never knew how the sausage got made, or what the culture was like, and that they never got any sense of what the company really was," he says.

The thing that really forced companies to pull back that curtain in the last decade or so was social media. "We're going to show you everybody who works in our company via LinkedIn, and we're going to let them say whatever they want to say via Twitter, and we're going to let them talk about what happens in their outside life via Facebook, and we're going to let candidates connect the dots," says Ellis.

That's why they need to do something to control, or at least steer, the narrative in a positive direction.

Top talent will vet you, so you need to send the right message

If you look to the headlines for inspiration, you'll have an idea of what can go wrong in employer branding, says Rachel Weingarten, marketing and brand strategist and author of "Career and Corporate Cool." "On an incredibly simplified level, think of how Ellen Degeneres went from being the darling of daytime TV to being known as one of the worst employers in daytime TV history," she says. All it took was a few former employees to come out with stories of how they were mistreated, and then many more followed. "In this instance, it was a bit more complicated since there was a name and personal brand attached to the employer," says Weingarten, "but if we think of more corporations in that way, it's easier to understand how branding can make or break an employer overall."

Employer branding is necessary for making better candidate matches

"For the longest time, we spent a lot of time and energy and money pushing students to get MBAs [or other standardized qualifications] so that they could all come out of school with the same thinking process, having read the same books," says Ellis. You could just stick those candidates into various positions around the company and

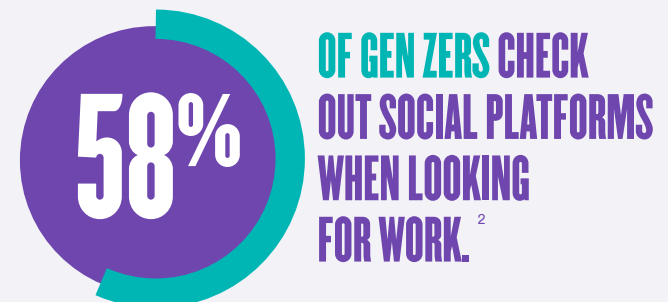
they were virtually interchangeable, and if one was slightly more effective than another, they would get the promotion.

But that's not how great work gets done anymore. "Great workers are artists, they're not cogs," says Ellis. "And so, you have the realization that individuals should be individuals and people and not cogs and machines. And that's where employer brand lives."

In other words, your employer brand should be able to attract a diverse team of people that will all pull in the same direction. "You hire for who you want the company to be, not just who you are," says Rod McMillan, B2B marketing manager, Monster UK. Employer Branding and your company's values and culture can attract those aspirational candidates, while also keeping mismatched candidates from wanting to work with you.

What Gen Z is looking for:

- flexible schedule (42%)
- career-development opportunities (36%)
- paid time off (27%)



Gen Zers prefer YouTube, Instagram and Facebook over LinkedIn and Glassdoor

What is (and isn't) employer branding

What it is

Simply put, your employer brand is the way your organization is perceived by job seekers. It's both separate from, yet completely aligned with your consumer brand. But instead of saying "this is the type of service or product you receive in exchange for money you give us," it's "this is the kind of workplace we are." In the same way consumers either feel attracted and connected to a particular brand, employees should also feel like your company is the right fit. And that's where your employer brand goes to work.

What it isn't

Employer branding is not your career site or your job postings, or any one element of your marketing for that matter. It's also not your "pillars" or your list of "values." And it's not your corporate brand. It's all of the above and more.

How to evaluate and improve your employer brand

A quick and dirty way to do it is to start monitoring your media mentions, says Weingarten. "Are you being talked about or featured in the media? If so, what's being said about you? What about social media? How do people respond to your outreach? Are you met with positivity overall or snark?"

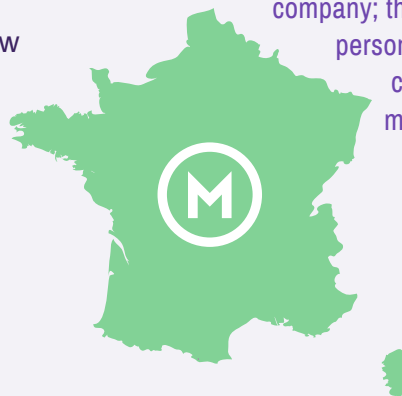
If you have the budget, you might consider a focus group to answer some questions in an unbiased way to help you understand if your brand creates the desired impression with your target audience, she suggests. "Also, study the way your competitors are perceived and see how you measure up or compare," she adds. "While employer branding can be hard to measure, one metric you can start with is employer net promoter score, which measures

employee satisfaction and how you're perceived in the market. You can also use engagement surveys to understand how connected people are to your workplace. As long as you establish KPIs, you can track and measure your brand's performance, and use those to share how employer branding has helped you attract, hire, and retain talent.

Employer branding in France

"Employer branding is very much a trending topic in France because employers want to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Candidates don't only want an interesting job with a good salary. They want to share similar values with their company; they want flexible hours to enjoy their personal life and they want transparency in communication and a collaborative management."

- Romain Giunta
B2B marketing manager, France



Meet Monster Strategic Talent Solutions

Our philosophy:
Authenticity is key.

More than ever, job seekers care about purpose and vision. They look for reasons to work for a company that go way beyond a bulleted list of perks and benefits. They want to see their potential future selves, thriving and growing at their new job. Attracting the right talent through an authentic employer brand helps create a happier workplace.

We believe employer branding should engender a feeling of belonging. When employer branding is done properly, your employees will feel their part, and candidates will be able to see themselves, in the story you tell.

Our goal

As an employer, you already have a brand. Essentially, it's how people perceive your company as a place to work. Your employer brand is communicated through your website, social media profiles, reputation sites, etc.

Our goal is to help you take control of your brand message and amplify it across every candidate touchpoint.

What we do

Whether it's updating career sites, conducting employer brand

analyses, or defining employer value propositions, we help companies get a clear picture of their current digital state and create a memorable identity that will help them attract candidates who fit their jobs, company, and culture.

How we help

Maybe you're a small business that's never done an employer brand analysis and you don't know where to begin. Or you might be a midsized company with an outdated career site looking for a refresh. You might

even be a large company ready for a total rebrand. Whatever your needs, our employer brand specialists can assess your career site performance and help you build a clear roadmap for your initiatives. We will work with you to implement seamless solutions and guide you every step of the way.

Ready to transform your employer brand? **Contact a Monster STS brand specialist.**

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4 signs



that your career site might
need an update



1. Design and UX don't follow current best practices

Users form their first impression of a website in milliseconds. Using Flash, sidebars, generic stock photos and dull colors, can immediately make your site appear dated and candidates will be left with a less than positive impression.

2. It's not mobile-optimized

Up to 80% of job seekers search on their phones. If your career site isn't optimized for mobile devices (meaning if it doesn't look or function as well on a phone or tablet as it does on a desktop computer), you could miss out on those potential top hires you work so hard to attract.

3. It's not accessible to all

A site that's easily read by visually impaired candidates and candidates with other disabilities and is designed with diversity, equity, and inclusion in mind, provides a more welcoming hiring process. It's also easier to maintain and update, provides a better mobile experience, and can help boost your site higher in search engine results.

4. It's not SEO-optimized (and doesn't rank in Google searches!)

Employing the right SEO strategies (optimization of images and page speed, good content structure, etc.) can help candidates find you faster. Both SEO optimization and accessibility improve the user experience, and positively impact SEO ranking.

Need help updating your career site?
Talk to a Monster STS brand specialist.

[CONTACT US >](#)

5 questions

FOR EVALUATING YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

Is it current?

Employers need to acknowledge today's world. *If you're coming to work for us, this is what our environment looks like today, and these are the procedures that are in place.*

Is it visible?

Where will potential candidates first see it? In many cases, a prospective employee will experience your company before heading to your career page, so every touchpoint counts. Your entire website must be mobile-friendly and accessible so everyone can learn about your employer brand from their device of choice.

Is it flexible?

Offer different methods of applying, interacting, and interviewing, and train your recruiters in these technologies as well. Recognize that people have a complicated schedule. You've got to be ready to discuss your flexibility—it can't be the same as before.

Is it present?

If you don't have social media pages, get going. You should be monitoring mentions and answering reviews to influence the perception. Don't let the conversation happen without you.

Is it true?

If you talk about values, you have to actually live those values. If your career site right now is not reflecting your truth today, update it. **"Hint: Your employees are the best people to confirm if your employer branding is authentic or not. Ask them,"** says Romain Giunta, B2B marketing manager, France.

The Elements of an Employer Brand

You need a framework to build a compelling employer branding message that will resonate with quality candidates. Try running your brand through these six values:

- 1. Care.** Is it obvious that you care for your employees as well as your customers? Do your benefits and workplace culture show that you support your workforce and go above and beyond to make sure you have a healthy and vibrant workplace?
- 2. Interest.** Do you deliver a stimulating, interesting work environment, and innovative employment policies and procedures? How does what you do add value to society?
- 3. Social.** Does your employment atmosphere promote teamwork and camaraderie? Do people get to work on cross-departmental projects? Does the company host social events and family days?
- 4. Economic.** Economic values are not just salary. What is the economic security of your company like? Is your pay competitive? Do you offer benefits that have real value?
- 5. Development.** Do you invest in growing your employees, recognize their achievements, and provide the opportunity for career-enhancing experiences? Are there clear paths to promotion?
- 6. Application.** Are candidates given the opportunity to use their skills and knowledge to contribute to the company beyond their job description? Are employees encouraged to bring ideas in an open forum? Is innovation rewarded?

How to evaluate and improve your employer brand

- **Career site.** Think of your career site as the hub for all of your content. It's where you share the story of the company, your EVP, images and videos of your employee culture and what various roles are like, and the ways in which you support employees with benefits, career advancement, and compensation. It should be sleek and professional, with lots of multimedia features.
- **Job ads.** Often the first impression, be sure you make it a good one. Make your job postings about life at the company, the impact the organization is making, and how the ideal candidate will contribute to that mission, rather than a laundry list of job responsibilities. **Bonus tip:** include video components to really bring the opportunity to life.
- **Social footprint.** Social media allows you to show and tell real stories. These platforms can help validate the claims you make in your EVP. Candidates can follow and watch your company in action in real-time to get a better feel for the culture.
- **The hiring process.** Candidate experience is so important for illustrating that the basic claims you make about your company are true. The process should be seamless, everyone involved should be sharing the same messaging and be on the same page, and there should be lots of communication. Every candidate touchpoint can impact the employer brand, says Hobiger. "Well-integrated, cutting-edge technology will make the difference. Innovative mobile-first products, profiles vs. CVs, quick apply functionalities, and integrated end-to-end employer branding solutions will be just the beginning to help candidates and employers find each other."
- **In all that you do.** "Employer branding doesn't stop once a new employee starts their job," says Rotmans. "Your employees make and live your company values every day."



Employer branding in Germany

"In Germany, branding is a top priority among all large enterprise companies. Many companies invest big budgets and resources in their employer brand. Some companies even have an extra employer branding agency to strengthen their brand."

- Jan-Eric Feldhaus, senior marketing & events manager B2B, Monster Germany

The relationship between employer brand vs. corporate brand

Ideally, your employer brand and corporate brand live together in harmony and are part of the same ecosystem. “There are a couple of brands that have really hit deep integration, where there is no sense of corporate brand or employer brand. It is THE brand,” says Ellis. The goal should be that consumers, investors, employees, and candidates can all look at the brand and understand what it’s all about, albeit from different perspectives. “It’s telling similar messages that are congruent so that when corporate says something, it’s not completely divergent or potentially divergent from what you want to tell a candidate.”

One company that realized it couldn’t rely on corporate brand alone was IKEA. “At one point in time, the IKEA consumer brand had been the main focus of all branding and marketing efforts,” says Maria Novak, talent sourcing and EVP leader, IKEA Group US. “And since it was performing so well, many felt that alone would help to create a positive employer brand.” The thinking went that if IKEA was a successful, socially responsible, fun company, wouldn’t candidates naturally view it as a great place to work? “So strategically, IKEA did not focus on employer branding.”

But things changed including the job market and the fact that candidates began demanding more information than a job description before they’d commit to applying to a job, and even more before accepting a job, says Novak. So in 2016, the company began tinkering with some employer branding guidelines, and that started the ball rolling.

In the years since, the team has embarked on in-depth employee research to uncover IKEA’s Employee Value Proposition (EVP). “We always start with our co-workers by engaging them because they really are our best ambassadors,” says Novak. In January 2020, members of the recruiting & sourcing, talent development and employer branding teams participated in our “Recruiting & Employment Branding Days” workshop in Sweden, with representation from all 70+ global markets. It’s still a work in progress, but IKEA is on its way to launching a whole new employer branding platform, says Novak.



“It’s important for us to authentically tell our story and communicate why it’s so great to work at IKEA,” she says. That will include concrete messaging that includes proof points, playful copy and visuals that make people want to read more. In addition, the IKEA employer brand will be amplified during recruiting, onboarding and retention initiatives as well as within consumer branding/ marketing communication, says Novak.

Employer branding in the UK

“Employer branding is something everyone knows they should be doing, but not everyone is doing it, or doing it well. Because candidates’ priorities have changed, people want work with meaning, people want the company’s values to align. So to attract good hires, you need to get that message out there.”

-Rod McMillan, B2B marketing manager, Monster UK



Employer Branding Done Right **Around the World**

**UK
Germany
Canada
Sweden**



Timpson, the UK's leading retail service provider, has a strong employer brand that they express well on their career site through videos of their current employees. After watching, you have a pretty good idea as to whether or not you'd be a good fit. You also learn that the senior managers were promoted from within the business, and that employees get unique perks like a day off for their birthday, extra pay, use of the company limo if you get married, and more.

XXXLutz, a major furniture retailer, offers a great example of a fully designed landing page for candidates searching for assembler jobs. The videos and employee profiles help viewers immediately sense the company's "work hard, play hard" mantra.

Cogeco is a cable operator in Ontario and Quebec that needed to give their employer brand an overhaul to reflect a shift in the industry (more technology opportunities) and to replace the outdated and generic marketing it was using previously. Working with Monster, they created a new EVP, a fully responsive career website and a campaign, as well as a full promotional package so their brand is seen everywhere. Cogeco saw a 67% increase in applications.

Spotify, the music streaming company, is one of Ellis' favorite employer brands. "Their entire employer brand is a function of "join the band". This extended metaphor goes beyond the commonplace employer brand pillars that most people are used to seeing. "Spotify is saying it's a band, and so the pillars are almost implied. You're being part of something larger than yourself. You have a part to play that is solely yours. Are you the band manager? Are you the roadie? Are you the drummer or are you the lead singer? Who are you? Find a place in this band," says Ellis.

Click on a logo to view each brand's experience.



How COVID-19 Changed Employer Branding

Candidates have said loud and clear in Monster polling and in other research that what's important to them as an employee changed practically overnight. From being afraid to go back to a physical workplace to needing new types of support, to upending the way companies recruit, hire and onboard, COVID-19 has had a big impact on employer brand.

Building a culture remotely. "Everybody in the industry has realized that they were working under the assumption that culture is a sense of proximate place, when you put 10, 20, 1,000 people in a building and say, "We work together," says Ellis. So to capture that, companies take out cameras and record some videos of the workplace. "Well, that's gone now," says Ellis. So what does this removal of proximate space mean to the employer brand? "It mostly means if you don't have a sense of what your culture is, it's really hard to define it and it's really hard to describe it because all those opportunities to just look at it and point to it and capture it are gone."

Remote work, as well as health and safety must be incorporated into employer branding. "With more people working from home, corporations have to be vigilant about branding and maintaining certain hallmarks even when people aren't in a shared office environment," says Weingarten. So even small things like everyone having a similar Zoom background or shared celebrations from a distance matter. "It's important to keep reinforcing the fact that we're also part of a larger corporation and the culture that goes with it," she says. And for the candidates and employees who will be on-site, it's so important to share what you're doing to follow public health guidelines and keep everyone safe.

Be transparent about new work styles. COVID-19 has fast-forwarded initiatives for companies and created all types of questions, like what will I do if my child has to school from home? That's why employers need to refresh their message and explain to audiences what they're doing to support employees. These are the safety measures, this is how we're going to be hiring. All of those questions that have been out there must be addressed front and center.

Whether it's COVID-19 or the next challenge, your actions as an employer will speak volumes and future candidates will remember, says Wassenaar.

"In times of crisis, you see the true nature of companies and how they treat their people, how purpose-driven they are, and how they truly embrace diversity and inclusion," he says.

90% of candidates say it's important for companies to have defined COVID-19 guidelines and return to work strategies.²



Your Employer Branding Toolkit

Now that you know what employer branding is and have some examples of what works, it's time to get down to some best practices. Here are five to keep in mind as you move forward:

Move away from a transactional hiring model.

What used to be the standard way to “put the butt in the seat,” needs to become a more relationship-driven recruiting model, says Ellis. “It’s where you say, ‘I don’t want a million people applying for my jobs. There’s no value for me in having more than five people apply because I’m only hiring one person.’” The only way to make that happen is to have pools of relationships with people who get what your brand is about, and what your company stands for”.

Stop being vague. Most employer branders think that their job is to make their company look like a great place to work, but that is the most BS phrase in the world, says Ellis. That’s because the definition of what it means to be great will be different for everyone. “You can’t take leadership from Goldman Sachs and leadership from Facebook and say, ‘We’re just going to switch you two because you’re both really smart,’” he says. “What Goldman is looking for and what Facebook is trying to achieve is so different,” he says. “And so when you say you’re a great place to work, the more important questions are, for whom is it great and in what way”?

Maintain good relationships with former employees. “They are ambassadors for or against you,” says McMillan. When people change jobs or get a new job they can be very vocal about the place they have left. “Having an exit interview process and helping staff to leave on good terms will have an impact on your employer brand,” he says. This can be especially true in middle-sized towns where some firms can get a bad reputation that is hard to shake, he adds.

Get into the daily details. “We often see employer branding strategies with highly marketed information including team building videos, super cool office pictures, etc. While this is an important part of employer branding, candidates also need to know day-to-day information,” says Giunta. “What is the hiring process? What is a normal day of an employee at this position? What are the specifics of the work-from-home schedule offered?”

Walk the talk. If you go on a company’s career site, sometimes it’s too close to the corporate brand where it feels like they’re talking about products and not people. What candidates really want to see is how your employees are living the brand internally. If you say we are a company that is focused on career growth, but internally the managers are not enabling mobility, your brand is not being lived.

“As a company you truly have to believe and act according to your employer branding and company values,” says Rotmans. “If you make hires based on false expectations of your culture, values and atmosphere, your new hires will be disillusioned and leave. If you hire based on a promise of collaborative teamwork, when it’s really a competitive shark-eat-shark dynamic, that will come back to bite you. That will harm your business.”

If there’s one important takeaway to remember, it’s this: “Companies need to understand they already have an employer brand—it’s their reputation as an employer,” says McMillan. The good news is that you can play a role in how your company is perceived. By developing an action-oriented employer brand, you can ensure that you not only have an attractive message, but that it’s being lived out each day.

Employer branding in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, employer branding is often considered as important as product branding. In addition to this, we see that

companies are placing emphasis on purpose in employer branding/value proposition. Given the remote nature of much recruitment now, it’s an important way they can express the humanity of the company.”

**-Joyce Rotmans, marketing manager,
Monster Netherlands**



Case Study

David's Bridal: modernized and optimized

Challenge:

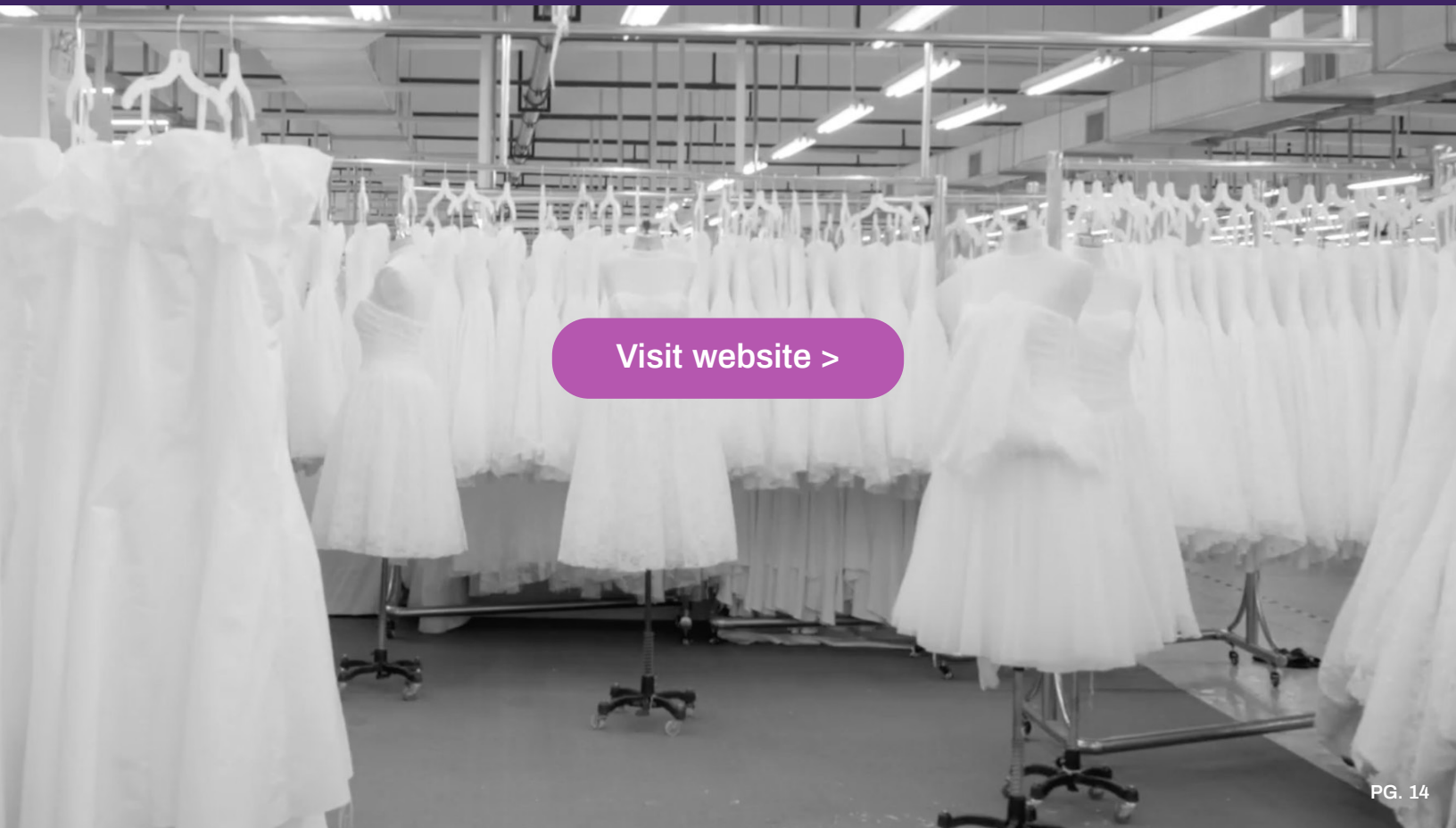
David's Bridal, a large clothing retailer that specializes in wedding dresses, prom gowns, and other formal wear, was moving from a third-party provider to Monster, and wanted to modernize the design and update the UX and accessibility of its site.

Solution:

After a discovery call with the customer, Monster created a site mock-up. The customer loved it and used it to get buy-in from internal stake holders. Copywriters updated the copy to better represent the David's Bridal employer brand and improve the site for accessibility and SEO. The design team made a few minor changes to the mock-up, and then it moved into development.

Outcome:

The Monster team designed something that lives and breathes David's Bridal's essence and brand. Something that calls to "all dreamers, celebrators and magic-makers" and helps the organization strengthen its teams with individuals who believe that "every special event can be a magical moment." Three sites were launched in Canada, the United States, and the UK.



Case Study

Helen of Troy: the creation of an EVP

Challenge:

Helen of Troy, a designer, developer and worldwide marketer of consumer brand-name housewares, health and home, and beauty products, needed an employer value proposition that would help them enhance their digital footprint, clearly articulate their employer brand, differentiate from the competition, and optimize their Web presence.

Solution:

Monster followed its proven two-phase, five-step EVP methodology:

Phase 1:

Understanding internal and external perceptions

1. Research 2. Assess 3. Validate

Phase 2:

Messaging and visuals

1. Uncover and create
2. Execute and monitor

Outcome:

Our team created a beautiful end-to-end product with messaging and visuals that bring to life the Helen of Troy brand, and resonates with its target audience.

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The End