



RECENT TRENDS IN BRANDING FOR IDEAL PLACEMENTS

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Abstract:

Placement Assistance is one of the most valuable services that educational institutions provide to their students. May it be part-time, Industry projects, Internship or full-time jobs; placements are the order of present higher education system. To provide this value addition, 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. These initiatives in turn become growing trends which every other institutes tend to follow in a competitive environment. In addition to digital communication methods followed these days to brand and attract corporates, several new channels are also being explored to capture industry attention for a clear Institute visibility. Therefore, this paper attempts to explore and examine all such new creative and exclusive branding trends institutions are following to attract industry attention to be noticed in front of companies to maximize their campus hirings.

Index Terms: Placements, Institutions, Branding, Events, Media & Trends

1. Introduction:

For an Institution's survival in existence, administrators must continue to explore, invent new things, encourage innovation and create sustainable ideas for the benefit of their system's success. This belief also serves as a strong factor for our present age Educational Sector and Institutions as well to innovate better. Therefore while branding one selves serves as a constant ongoing activity these days to market their identities for institutes in the market; a research thought was sparked to study recent branding trends that institutions have adopted to attract recruiters for placements. Well this particularly becomes important for colleges in present competitive age while ensuring industry placements through campus recruitment. To add up, one just cannot expect employers to turn on to students for employment whilst they are ignorant or do not know even 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 market trends in attracting recruiters for placements by institutes, new innovative branding concepts and techniques followed by institutes that are becoming trends are deeply analyzed. Accordingly, honest evaluation is also being made to bring out each of their merits and shortcomings through appropriate methodologies.

2. Objectives of the Study:

The mission of this paper is to educate the reader about various Branding trends that has been followed to maximize college and student visibility towards Industry 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. Research also focuses enabling various institutions to utilize any of new branding trends from this paper which they may find feasible for their prosperity. Study may expect a outcome which can be basis for further research or raw material for some new branding initiatives.

3. 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 learn the trends, gathered information was interpreted through grounded theory involving Axial coding approach. Lastly, to locate important underlying patterns among trends, tabulated data is distributed through Pie-Chart for inferences.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretations:

Well the data gathered from sources mentioned in research methodology, 11 trends were observed which can be briefly listed under event heads as follows to attract Industry attention:-

- ✓ **Conducting Project Exhibitions and Exhibiting 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
- ✓ **Setting up 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.
- ✓ **Entering into 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.
- ✓ **Media Marketing Campaigns:** Involves showcasing specific Students 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.
- ✓ **Launching 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 websites to assist book campus placement slots.
- ✓ **Undertaking Campus Promotions & Product Launches:** 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's products can be given visibility.
- ✓ **Industry Guest Lecture Series:** Involves organizing a week long lecture series by company officials to showcase student strength and quality.
- ✓ **Provision for Part-Time Work:** Organising Earn while you learn Programs by inviting companies who offer part-time work.
- ✓ **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.

- ✓ **Inviting Competition Judges:** This usual and simple includes inviting industry folks to judge management festivals, forum activities and case study competitions in colleges.
- ✓ **Hybrid Initiatives:** This is a innovative combination of all above discussed initiatives. It also goes to the extent of inviting alumni's for mock interviews to pull their associated companies for next placement season.

Anyways, effectiveness of each branding trends identified in research data above are depicted through rating table in Figure 1 below. From an unaided private educational institution's perspective, these trends can be rated based on cost factors, time, benefits and affordability falling under the Institutional Convenience bracket.

Therefore, Rating 3 here denotes 'Institutional Convenience' 2 denotes 'Neutral' and 1- Inconvenient for the Institution'

Serial Number	Institutional Branding Trends	Rating Scores
I	Conducting Project Exhibitions & Exhibiting Start-up Ideas	2
II	Setting Up Centre of Excellence	3
III	Entering into MoU	3
IV	Media Marketing Campaigns	3
V	Undertaking Campus Promotions	3
VI	Organizing Guest Lectures	3
VII	Inviting Competition Judges	3
VIII	Creating Campus Ambassadors	3
IX	Provision for Part-time Work	3
X	Hybrid Model	1
XI	Launching Social Media & Mobile Apps	1

Table 1: Now let us distribute the above scores shown in Table I on a Pie Chart below and study their inferences

INSTITUTIONAL BRANDING TRENDS

PIE-CHART DEPICTION

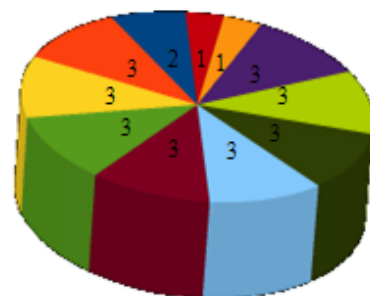


Figure 1

5. Findings:

From our Table I and graphical figure above, it is clearly inferable that Institutions are positive to choose a Industry attraction activity that suits their operational cost sheets, satisfies college management and contributes their convenience. That is why in this equal competitive atmosphere, convenient scores are allocated for setting up Excellence Centres, MoU, Media Marketing, campus promotions, guest lectures etc where institutions do not have to spend large moneys and allow corporates to utilize only their time and space. Preference is not given for Hybrid Trends because it is only possible for cash rich management boards who have large campuses with adequate manpower and time. It is also understood through this study that Institutions honestly want Companies to create a need or strong desire for student recruitments and not enjoy the campus as a means for personal recreations of visiting executives requesting lucrative stay, food or hotel accommodations. Even launching Mobile Apps for placement process involves investing funds in the project where there is no guarantee that it will yield active response from the recruiters. Also, it is worth noting that any cost effective branding initiatives rolled out by colleges regularly it becomes a trend among other competitor colleges raising the bar in the form of perfect competition which may prompt each other to start even new trends to attract corporates.

6. Conclusions:

To conclude this paper, it can be clearly realised that for a Institution to be identified by Industries for placement generation, Innovative branding has to be a continuous non-stop exercise. Especially in the speed 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. Atleast colleges must follow the new branding trends discussed in this paper to compete for survival. Finally, as observed in findings, responsibility will still be at the corporate court to decide on hiring and choosing their desired college for recruiting from analysis as per their corporate policies, competition and their other college evaluation criterias. Therefore Colleges should effectively plain their budget for lining up huge assortment assembly combination of various innovative methods, updated trends and strategies as a whole to use in alternatives to win in this visibility war for placement opportunity generation.

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