



Build the Best Budget for Your Recruiting Funnel

themuse

Think about the last time you bought a car. Was it an impulse purchase? Probably not. Did you learn about the make and model in the dealership lot—or had you been quietly picturing yourself in different cars for months? Had you been watching other drivers, talking to friends, or doing internet research?

Marketers will tell you that a car purchase happens long before you walk onto the lot. In fact, 52% of buyers only test drive one car before making their selection¹. Most of their decision happened at the awareness level, using outside research and friends as advocates, long before the actual purchase.

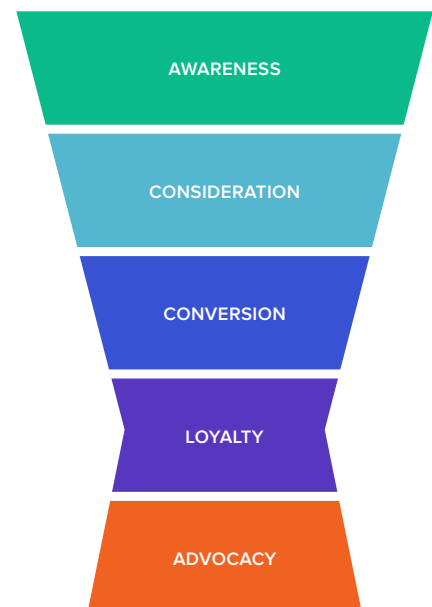
Today's candidates treat the job search much the same way. On average, candidates have 16 touchpoints with your company—before they decide to apply². Learning about your company once a position is open is often too late, because they've already been picturing their ideal career move for some time.

What does all of this mean for you? [When candidates are thinking like consumers, hiring leaders must think like marketers](#). So, take a page from the marketing playbook as you develop your next recruiting budget.

The Marketing Funnel

Awareness

- a. Where (and how) are you telling your story? Through awareness, you have a chance to start spreading the word about your company's authentic employer brand, and create familiarity long before someone is looking for a new job. It starts with creating great content that identifies and captures what makes your company different. From there, you'll share it through channels like your social media, earned media (such as local newspaper articles), and paid advertising.
- b. What about reaching out directly to passive candidates? That is a powerful tool in your awareness toolkit, which can be made more effective when combined with a strong brand and compelling content.



1. Autotrader's 2016 Car Buyer Journey
2. CareerBuilder's 2016 Candidate Behavior Study

Consideration

- a. Congrats! You're on your potential new hire's radar and their interest is piqued. That means the real fun can start! During the consideration phase, candidates are doing just that—considering what it would be like to work with you, as well as how they would fit in. If you've done a good job telling your unique story during the awareness phase, you'll be able to focus on the details here—like getting the right job description in front of them or providing an opportunity for a one-on-one conversation.
- b. In the consideration phase, your key internal tools are your job descriptions and career page, supplemented by job boards, career fairs, and sourcing tools like LinkedIn inMail.

Conversion

- a. As soon as you receive an application, it's time to start nurturing that relationship. That's because the candidate experience can have a huge impact on your conversion rate at each step in the hiring process. People are looking for signs. If they feel well-cared for from the email confirming receipt of their application, to the invitation to interview, straight through to an offer or rejection, they'll have a good feeling about your company. (Conversely, if they feel burned or ghosted, they won't be as inclined to accept, reapply, or refer others.) Every piece of communication is part of the “nurture experience.”
- b. There are a few key tools in your nurture toolkit—including your Applicant Tracking System (ATS) and your Talent Relationship Marketing (TRM) system, if you use them—but most of your results here will be defined by the human experience your candidates have with you, online and off.

Loyalty

- a. Marketing ends once you make a sale (or, in this case, a hire). Right? Wrong. In fact, marketers often talk about how much harder (and more expensive) it is to acquire a new customer than to retain one. Your employee engagement efforts are critical in making sure all of the hard work you put into recruiting great people pays off and you're able to retain them.

Advocacy

- a. It's often said that your people are your greatest asset, but they're also your secret weapon in recruiting. Employee advocates are one of your strongest (and most affordable!) drivers of awareness. That's because prospective candidates want the scoop straight from people who already work somewhere—and they find employees to be credible. A small investment in brand ambassador training or storytelling tools (like [BrandBuilder](#)) can have a huge payoff.

Worksheet

Now that you're thinking like a marketer, it's time to build a budget like one. We asked our Head of Marketing to share how she thinks about the funnel, and how it might apply to your recruiting budget.

TOTAL BUDGET: _____

Awareness

25% × Total = _____

I recommend not skimping on creating quality content, even if your budget is tight. Investing in content will improve your returns down the funnel.

Content Creation: 85% of awareness = _____

Paid Boost to Distribution: 15% of awareness = _____

A little boost can go a long way on social and when sharing press mentions!

Social media, PR, and other internal marketing channels: 0% of awareness = _____

These channels often don't require budget, but they do require a time commitment and clear strategy to be successful.

Consideration

40% × Total = _____

Where you spend your consideration budget will vary based on what roles you are looking to fill—and how urgently. Your internal, and external, recruitment team are also critical parts of your strategy, not represented here since needs vary so greatly.

Job Boards: 40% of consideration = _____

Sourcing Tools: 40% of consideration = _____

Other (Career Fairs, Campus Recruiting, and Job Advertising): 20% of consideration = _____

Conversion

25% × Total = _____

Much of your conversion stage is driven by human interactions, but your job apply process is also a major digital interaction with your candidates. A great user experience, paired with timely, personal communications, will make your application process memorable.

ATS: 70% of conversion = _____

Nurturing Tool (such as a TRM): 30% of conversion = _____

Loyalty

Loyalty, or employee engagement, is such a big priority it's a budget all in itself! Just make sure you don't forget it.

Advocacy

10% × Total = _____

Finding and activating employee advocates and brand ambassadors can be done on a shoestring budget, but a small investment can encourage even greater activation.

Training or Storytelling Tools: 50% of advocacy = _____

Trainings can range from social media 101 to sharing a brand book. Get creative!

Employee Referral Programs: 50% of advocacy = _____

AUTHOR

Alexis Tryon

Head of Marketing at The Muse

REFERENCES

Autotrader's 2016 Car Buyer Journey

CareerBuilder's 2016 Candidate Behavior Study

themuse

The Muse strives to make work more human by being a trusted resource for millions of people as they seek career satisfaction—not just another job. Companies partner with The Muse as they look to attract and retain the best talent by telling an authentic and compelling employer story. Our mission is to create meaningful connections between companies and candidates to make the world of work—from the job search to career development—more personal.

[LEARN MORE](#)