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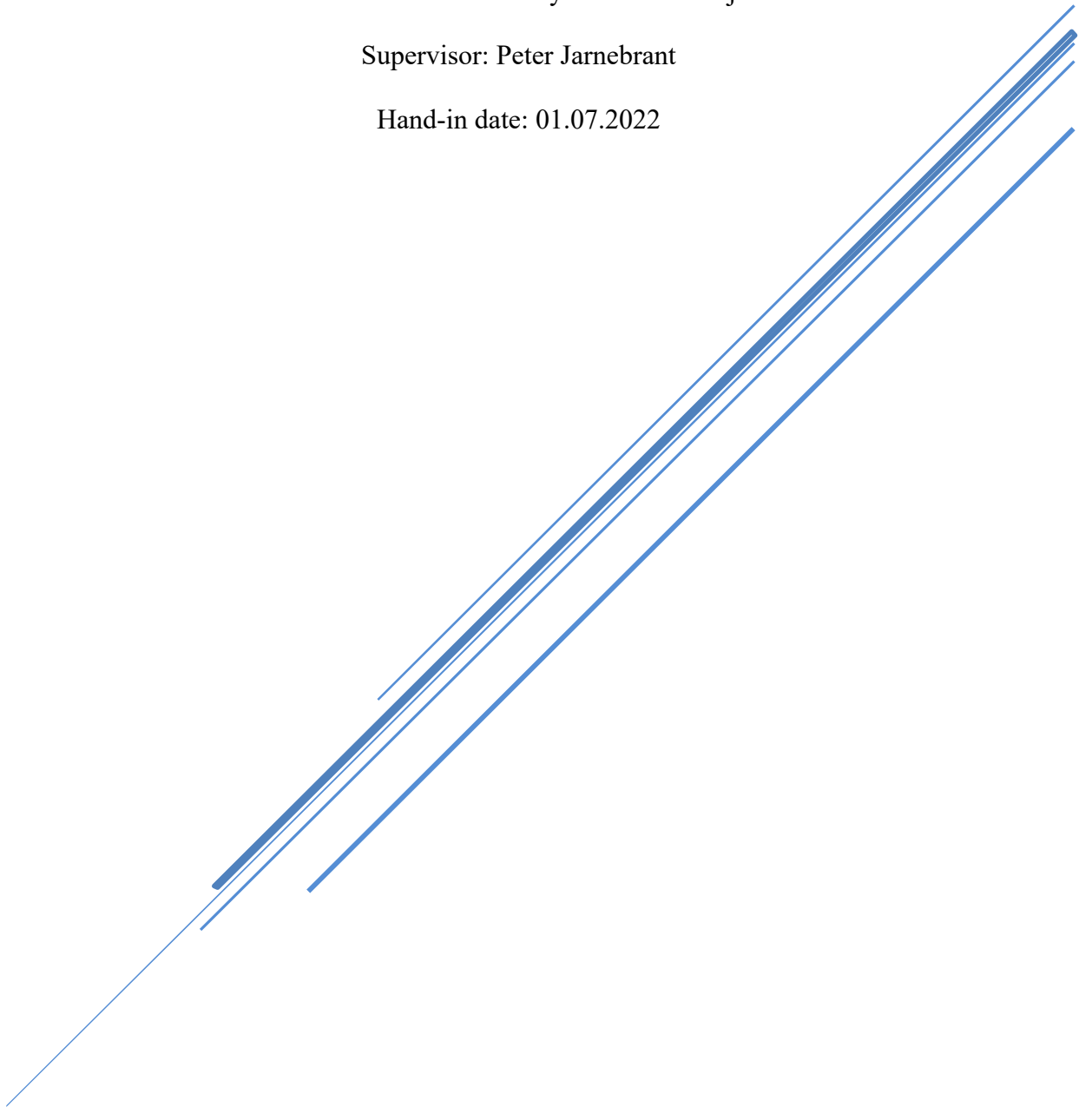
Employer Branding and its Impact on Brand Equity

A study examining the influence that different employer branding initiatives have on brand preferences among consumers and employees.

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Master Thesis in Strategic Marketing Management

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Preface

This master thesis is written as a part of our Master of Science (MSc) degree in Strategic Marketing Management at BI Norwegian Business School.

We would like to send our highest appreciation to our thesis supervisor, Peter Jarnebrant, for exceptional guidance throughout the methodological setup and the writing process. Furthermore, we would like to thank all survey-participants including HR- and marketing practitioners for taking time in responding to our survey.

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Abstract

For most firms the main objectives are to generate sales and profit. However, behind the bases of generating sales and profits, there are a bunch of strategic issues firms need to overcome when achieving success with its brand. The concept of branding was initially related to products and services, but in recent years branding have been developed into a larger scheme centered around design, employers, events, and more. Traditional organizational structures accolade the management of the human resources function to the Human Resources department. However, recently firms have realized the benefits of managing employees with a balanced internal (HR) and external (marketing) market perspective to satisfy the needs and expectations of both employees and consumers (King & Grace, 2009). Consequently, this thesis considers the interaction between employer branding and marketing. More specifically, our study aims to examine which employer branding initiatives firms should allocate their resources to when the goal is to increase brand equity. This is done by examining specific initiatives that are likely to attract and recruit new candidates, but also by understanding whether it influences performance and brand awareness among consumers. Our research explores the idea that employer branding is about continued marketing, and the need to understand what it is like to work for an organization. Firms that want their employees to stay loyal and live up to their brand promise need to understand what drives commitments and engagement (Kapoor, 2010). In this context, a combination between HR related activities and strategic issues within marketing will be examined to understand which specific employer branding initiatives that give a dual effect on employer branding and consumer branding.

To gather insights, an online survey was distributed asking the participants to choose between their preferences from both being in the position as a consumer and an employee. The participants were asked to choose among different

employer branding attributes connected to multiple firms in different industries. Based on the results that were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test, and crosstabs, another survey was distributed to specifically HR- and marketing practitioners. The idea was to get an understanding of what HR- and marketing practitioners believe were the most effective employer branding initiatives to boost brand equity and compare the results with insights gathered from consumers and employees.

The results showed significant differences between responses from consumers and employees compared with assumptions from practitioners in HR and marketing. Among the specific employer branding initiatives that were examined, particularly offering training and development opportunities to employees stood out as having a high chance of attracting both consumers and employees. While other findings suggests that some employer branding initiatives should only be used when attracting employees, such as offering hybrid office. To our surprise, initiatives concerned with economic factors ranked poorer than expected. Our aim is that this paper can help practitioners clarifying some of their misconceptions in HR and marketing while guiding firms to successful branding.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Employer branding is considered as one of the newer concepts in business. As the concept continues to develop, many firms are yet to experience the effect that good employer branding can have on marketing and revenues. Thus, the topic of this thesis centers around employer branding initiatives and how they can influence marketing decisions towards reaching higher brand equity. The thesis examines how firms can use different initiatives effectively to both attract new candidates and increase revenue. Currently, many firms are relying on older employer branding initiatives to enhance employee feelings, without even knowing how innovative employer branding approaches can drive success while boosting brand equity. Accordingly, this thesis aims to explore which specific employer branding initiatives that give a dual effect on employer branding and consumer branding - which again can lead to higher brand equity.

In contradiction to employer branding, product branding is designed to develop lasting images in the minds of the consumer so that they start to automatically associate quality with any service or product offered by the owner of the brand. An employment brand has the same goal in that it creates an image that makes people want to work for a firm where workers are continually learning and growing. (Kapoor, 2010). Therefore, by understanding the effectiveness of different employer branding initiatives, firms can adapt their recruitment strategies accordingly and save unnecessary HR- and marketing spendings.

As stated in Keller, (2013), a brand is not built by accident, but is the product of carefully accomplishing a series of logically linked steps with consumers. Consequently, based on the integration between consumer branding and employer branding, we have identified the following research question for our thesis:

“Which employer branding initiatives should firms consider when the goal is to increase brand equity?”

To effectively answer the research question, two online surveys were distributed. The first survey sample consists of answers from respondents being in the position as consumers and employees, while the second survey sample consists of answers from HR- and marketing practitioners. The reason behind this approach is to understand whether practitioners within HR- and marketing are catching the recent trends within employment, consumer preferences, and branding.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the thesis is to map which employer branding initiatives firms should take advantage of when attracting both employees and consumers. Followingly, the research aims to bring valuable insights to firms that are struggling to be innovative in the field of employer branding. Furthermore, we seek to test whether the current initiatives that are performed by HR- and marketing practitioners are effective.

1.2 Delimitations

To answer the thesis question, we have done research within the field of consumer psychology and marketing to outline specific limitations to avoid biases and other threats to validity. For instance, a strategic approach was to first conduct answers from consumers and employees, and then compare the results against responses from HR- and marketing practitioners. A slight limitation to the research is that we have specifically chosen to focus on specific employer branding initiatives, which do not represent all elements within the field. Initiatives outside of our research that can be investigated further include senior management engagement, alumni-networking, pension and insurance programs, childcare benefits, among others.

1.3 Outline

This thesis is outlined in the following manner. After the introductory part in chapter 1, the thesis reviews previous literature on employer branding and marketing in chapter 2, starting with the definitions of employer branding and consumer branding. Thereafter, the thesis reviews literature on specific initiatives in employer branding. Previous literature will be the key foundation to the development of the formulated hypotheses at the end of chapter 2. Hence, the theoretical foundation will be used as a basis for designing the survey. Moving on, chapter 3 focuses on the methodology that is used to answer the research question, followed by the analysis and results which are presented in chapter 4. In the latter stages of the thesis, findings are discussed in chapter 5, before the conclusion and final remarks are presented, respectively, in chapter 6 and 7.

Chapter 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

For our proposal, we have examined several different literature angles on the following topics that are considered relevant for the research question: employer branding, brand equity, workplace considerations, compensation, sustainability efforts at work, and training and development opportunities. The literature review will bring in findings from before and after the Covid-19 pandemic into consideration, and it will start with defining the relevant terms for our research. Arguably, creating a good brand is established through both external and internal communication (Ruchika & Prasad, 2019). Nowadays, the concept of employer attractiveness can be viewed as a forerunner of brand equity, meaning the more attractive the employer is, the stronger the organization's brand equity (Tkalac Verčič, 2021). In our research, some of the objectives will involve which employer branding initiatives have the most consistent performance effects on brand equity. In recognition of this, both HR and marketing literature will form the bases of this thesis.

2.1 Employer Branding and Consumer Branding

For many firms, their brand names have become their most valued asset (Kohli, 1997). Products are made by firms or organizations; however, it can be argued that brands are created by consumers in interaction with products, brand owners and other sources of associations. Such as perceptions, expectations, experiences etc. (Aaker, 1991). By using advertising, brands can strengthen over time; thus, images can be created for any brand name (Kohli, 1997). However, besides being highly valued by marketing departments, branding efforts have also been increasingly seen in HR management (Simelane, 2015). The concept of employer branding was firmly introduced in 1996, and since then, several organizations use employer branding actively (Aldousari et al., 2017). Branding concerns different dimensions, such as reputation, image, identity, and perception. (Aldousari et al., 2017; Kapoor, 2010). On the one hand, a brand's role is to convince consumers to purchase a certain product, however, on the other hand, it also affects consumers' perceptions of their identity (Aldousari et al., 2017; Wally, 2008). Thus, a brand is a vital tool in creating a connection between consumers and a corporate identity. Furthermore, the brand exercises its influence on the minds of both employees and consumers (Aldousari et al., 2017).

Since the term employer branding was first introduced, firms have implemented employer branding to make their image more attractive to existing and potential employees. In the long run, it is believed that this form of branding can lead to higher brand equity. Traditionally, the reasoning behind the development of employer branding is the necessity to attract and retain the most talented resources. Thus, several firms started developing a characteristic employer image, alongside their corporate and consumer brands. (Aldousari et al., 2017; Carrington, 2007).

Furthermore, employer branding is an important element of the organization's image. To be more precise, the concept refers to perceptions and knowledge about a company as an employer. Hillebrandt & Ivens (2011) defines employer branding as perception of the current and potential employees' image of the company as "a desirable place to work". This refers to the way organizations market what they offer to actual and potential employees, how they communicate and how they sustain loyalty to the working force (Aldousari et al., 2017; Biswas & Suar, 2016). This understanding of employer branding makes us able to understand all the dimensions to consider when performing research within this field.

2.1.1 Brand Equity

Brand equity relates to the fact that marketing and branding a product or service will yield positive outcomes, compared to if the same product or service was not associated with that brand. Thus, strategic brand management aims to enhance a brand's equity (Keller, 2018). Aaker (1991) defines brand equity as assets and skills. Assets create competitive advantages for a firm, while skills are the ability to differentiate yourself from competitors. Thus, brand equity is the total assets and skills attached to the brand. According to Kotler (1997), brand equity might decrease costs of marketing, because the consumers are already familiar with the brand and stay loyal to it. This theory is also applicable to human resources as companies with strong employer brands need less efforts in attracting qualified employees and obtaining retention. (Dalboy, 2019; Ritson, 2002). Thus, considering today's highly competitive market, brand equity initiatives and making the best use of HR resources are two very important aspects for firms.

2.1.2 Dual Effects Between Employer Branding and Consumer Branding

When thinking of branding, many consumers see it as an organization's values, mission statements, design colors and logo. That is the concept of consumer

branding, and as already mentioned, this concept is not the only important branding strategy. The concept of employer branding is on the rise and adds a new dimension to the firm's image. By using consumer branding strategies firms can boost the employer brand. The first step is to know your target audience, the second step involves building awareness of your employer brand and lastly harnessing the power of social proof. By taking advantage of the consumer branding strategies, research has found that you can develop, or boost, your employer branding with a reputation that stands out from the crowd. (Brooks, 2018).

According to a meta-analysis run by Rynes et al., (2002), which conducted research on behalf of HR professionals' beliefs about the effectiveness of HR practices, overall findings suggest that firms that place a high effort on HR have a higher survival-rate than firms that are not putting efforts into HR. The meta-analysis includes a sample size of 959 respondents which examined a wide range of beliefs about HR practices. Some of the key findings from the analysis include that most employees prefer to be compensated based on individual performance rather than on team or organizational performance, new companies have a better chance of surviving if all employees receive incentives based on organization-wide performance, and most employees prefer straight salary followed by individual incentives rather than variable pay systems. To continue, results suggest that there are in fact very large differences across companies in what their HR leaders know about best practices in HR. (Rynes et al., 2002). This creates an opportunity to study the best practices in HR and marketing that brings dual effect to brand equity.

To continue, research from Aaker (1996) indicate that improving branding allows firms to acquire more consumers and create a loyal relationship between them, along with helping the firm to attract the best employees. Therefore, it is of interest to understand the dual effect a great employer brand can have on business

results. Aaker (1996) suggests that the employer brand can be used as one of the most important assets firms obtains when it uses their brand as a part of their marketing strategy (Dalboy, 2019). After two long years of pandemic, our research focuses on examining whether firms that are actively using employer branding as a marketing strategy will achieve a competitive benefit on its competitors.

There are already a few studies that connect employer branding and brand equity. A study published by Kunerth & Mosley (2011), found that organizational initiatives which improve external image as an employer, can drive employee engagement. This was concluded based on a practical case study detailing how the soft drink company, Coca-Cola Hellenic, created an employee value proposition that could provide a central reference point for both its recruitment communication and employee engagement strategy. The authors findings bring value to our thesis as this research suggests that firms can be able to use their overall employer branding practices beyond just external recruitment purposes.

In the paper by Theurer et al., (2016), the authors identify 187 articles, which they integrate to fit along different employer branding dimensions and branding strategies. More specifically, the paper examines the correlation it has for firms to have the best employer ratings and its performances outside the firm. The authors suggest that being best-in-class in employer branding will (in most cases) increase the earnings per share, stock price and the overall market capitalization of the firm (Theurer et al., 2016). Our research differentiates from the abovementioned research by exploring which specific dimensions of employer branding that firms should allocate their resources to for greater results rather than just examining whether being good at employer branding influences brand equity. The findings will be supported by collected research that examines which specific dimensions of employer branding that are most likely to boost brand equity. Additionally, it

will bring added value to compare the findings up against some of the already existing research on this topic.

2.2 Psychology in HR and Marketing

Even though the employer market is experiencing increasing competition, there is little research that explores the different psychological mechanisms in which employees evaluate a future employer, and the characteristics of the employee-based brand equity in these assessments. As the amount of information consumers are exposed to is extensive, while the processing capacity is limited, it is important to look after potential psychological biases when conducting research. In the field of marketing research there are publications that address the issues behind potential biases. As the primary data is gathered through a questionnaire, it is significantly important to understand the mechanisms behind consumer responses.

2.2.1 Brand Knowledge and Cognitive Psychology

As firms are encouraging employees to embrace their role as brand ambassadors, employees can be used as a key asset when building a brand. Therefore, it is highly important that marketers understand how they can ensure that employees possess the required brand knowledge. If firms are not able to serve employees with the right brand knowledge, employees are at risk of not being able to transform the firm's vision into reality. (Miles & Mangold, 2004).

When drawing conclusions from the research that is conducted, our thesis explores research that conceptualizes brand equity from an employee-based perspective. From Keller's (2013) marketing perspective, brand knowledge consists of a brand node in the memory with a variety of associations linked to it. How these brand nodes are organized in memory has an influence on how individuals recall information about a brand, which influences behavior. It can

therefore be assumed that this does not only affect how consumers recall brand information, but also how employees are valuing and recalling employers. Having knowledge of a brand is seen as the driving force behind creating brand equity (Keller, 2013). This type of brand knowledge is represented in the cognitive psychology literature as a connectionist approach, that is concerned with units in the brain being linked to other units that depict certain information (Galotti, 2004). However, this approach does only account for how the brain processes information, but not for the environment in which such cognitive processes occur. Additionally, limitations in Keller's (2013) research include that it does not account for the influence of brand experience in the realization of brand equity (King & Grace, 2009). As stated by Galotti (2004), "cognition does not occur in isolation from larger cultural contexts; all cognitive activities are shaped by the culture and by the context in which they occur" (p. 33). Therefore, when conducting research within the field of employer-based brand equity, it is very important to consider the behavior and characteristics of the respondents.

2.2.2 Psychology in the Service Encounter

For firms in the service category specifically, the role that employees play in a consumer's evaluation of a product is particularly important. As a matter of fact, the limited physical evidence in a service often means that the complete service experience is an outcome of the firm's culture as well as the training and attitudes of its employees (Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003). This is particularly relevant for our research as a firm's employer branding strategy can have a direct effect on how employees are given incentives to enhance a service experience. Continuing with the service encounter, research within this field has found that the behavior of an individual is evaluated as being appropriate (or not) as determined by the reactions of other related individuals, meaning that consumers and employees share the same script (Solomon et al., 1985). Thus, highlighting the importance of a good employer brand.

2.3 Workplace Considerations

Decisions made at the workplace can be very important. In fact, there are multiple aspects at the workplace that firms need to consider when increasing brand equity. For our research, we want to particularly dig deeper into a firm's focus on facilitating hybrid-work opportunities among employees, and the promotion of work-life balance.

2.3.1 Hybrid Office and Flexibility

The aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic has directed firms to offer employees new models to their working life. During the pandemic, home-office has been the main means of communication, using software such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams (Agache et al., 2021). As employee behaviors and expectations change, firms should make multiple considerations prior to opening their offices. As the hybrid office model opens the doors to a best-of-both-worlds solution, we want to dig deeper into recent literature to understand whether it would influence brand equity to offer employees the ability to work wherever they prefer.

For firms, facilitating for hybrid office as an opportunity to work remotely will most likely offer employees greater flexibility. To confirm this, a Microsoft report suggests that hybrid work tends to include more freedom around when to work as well as where to work. However, the challenge has been to motivate firms to enable the collaborative and secure environment required for offering remote working. (Microsoft & TechRepublic, 2020). As physical presence might be required on specific projects, orientations and team-building activities, tasks that require more concentration might be more effective at home (Ro, 2020). As a matter of fact, Stanford Professor, and an expert in the field of remote work, Nicholas Bloom, suggest that once the pandemic subsides, working from home two days a week will be optimal to balance both collaborative and quiet work.

Additionally, employees will benefit from the reduced stress of less commuting, which adds personal flexibility. (Bloom, 2020).

The idea of working from home is not something that accidentally occurred because of the pandemic. A study initiated by Nicholas Bloom which he did back in 2013 forecasted the trend of hybrid work. In his experiment, Bloom worked with a Chinese firm to study the productivity of employees working remotely. Results made it clear that the staff members became notably more productive by working from home four days a week. (Bloom et al., 2013). However, one important limitation of Bloom's findings was that the experiment was easy to carry out as the workers which were analyzed did repetitive tasks. Examining the productivity of workers with a day-to-day life that is not repetitive will be more difficult. Additionally, inequality among employees is at risk of becoming more visible with remote work (Lufkin, 2020). Employees are at risk of being less productive when they are in a less ideal living situation, such as having to work from a tiny bedroom with no access to sunlight.

As we are now in a period where many firms are considering offering hybrid offices as a benefit to attract talent, it is important to understand the new expectations among employees. A survey conducted by the consultancy firm, McKinsey, found that over a quarter of the surveyed employees would consider switching employers if it meant working fully on-site after the pandemic (Bloom, 2020). Implying that firms are at risk of losing out on highly qualified candidates if they can't offer the flexibility it brings to offer hybrid office.

When exploring the impact offering hybrid offices can have on the firm's brand equity, firms should also consider how consumers react. The shift to hybrid work affects customer interactions, it is therefore necessary for firms to align their hybrid work model with the customer experience (Dalal, 2022). When using a hybrid model, firms are becoming more dependent on technology. While technology developments can enhance service quality and deliver increased

performance to the firm, overuse of technology can be less profitable. Firms that experience profit loss is suffering from the limited customer use, which according to Bitner et al., (2010), is because consumers do not always want technology to replace interpersonal, employee-consumer, exchange. For our research, this is particularly important as the way consumers perceive a brand can be influenced by a firm's ability to meet consumers face to face or providing a good digital service that is needed in a hybrid work model. As a result, when offering employees opportunities for a better work-life balance, firms should focus on maintaining good health among employees and offer them flexibility in working hours to gain a competitive advantage (Agache et al., 2021).

Moreover, research suggests that firms using hybrid offices as a strategic move to enhance the employee experience are more likely to have happier employees and, in turn, happier customers (Dalal, 2022). To add on this, a study by Glassdoor that included opinions from 300,000 U.S consumers on products and services found a strong statistical link between customer satisfaction and employee well-being. In industries where employees and consumers are interacting frequently and closely, each one-star improvement in Glassdoor company rating suggested a 3.2 increase in satisfaction among consumers. (Chamberlain & Zhao, 2019). As previous literature suggests that firms can experience many benefits from offering hybrid offices to employees, it leads us to the following hypothesis for this topic:

***Hypothesis 1:** Firms using hybrid-office will have more positive spillover effects to brand equity among consumers than offering fully remote or fully at office.*

2.3.2 Work-life Balance

Followingly, the Covid-19 pandemic has prompted many employees to question the traditional 8-hour workday culture and the need for work-life balance. As many as 41 % of 2,000 surveyed employees in Great Britain expressed a desire to retrain or find a more meaningful place to work in 2020. (Slater & Gordon, 2020).

Thus, it is essential that firms are reflecting on what they are giving back to their employees and society, while adapting their stories and messaging strategies accordingly.

Research shows that employer branding initiatives determine several outcomes for firms, such as talent attraction, loyalty, employee engagement and retention. In conjunction with this research, firms are facing challenges related to branding value among potential and current employees, as well as managing its talent. (Maurya et al., 2020). The working environment is changing at a fast pace, and especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. This has resulted in policies that promote finding a healthy balance between personal life and work life. A study done by Maurya et al., (2020), published in the International Journal of Organization Theory & Behavior found that perceived work-life balance has a positive effect on employees, and significantly predicts the employer branding attraction value. (Maurya et al., 2020).

Work-life balance is described as an individual belief and state of mind where the employee can effectively manage responsibilities at work, at home and in the community. When finding this balance, individuals will feel physical and emotional strength to overcome negative impressions and stress (Maurya et al., 2020). Thus, a proper work/life balance will allow individuals to manage all their other identities, outside of being an employee. (Dabirian et al., 2017). However, work-life balance is not as easy as it may appear, as it refers to management of several different tasks that occur in everyday life. A study conducted on work/life balance shows that out of 1,500 respondents, 70% stated that they do not have a healthy balance between their personal life and work life. (Babin Dhas & Karthikeyan, 2015). Research advocates the positive effects of perceived suitable work-life balance. Superior benefits in conjunction with employees' effectiveness

and performance is correlated with good work-life policies. Thus, it is essential for firms to engage in decent employer branding initiatives, such as promoting healthy work-life balance policies as the workforce is the most important asset for most firms. (Maurya et al., 2020). Thus, before insights was conducted, the literature review made us formulate the following hypothesis about work-life balance:

***Hypothesis 2:** Firms that encourage employees to have a good work-life balance will generate positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity among consumers.*

2.4 Compensation and Non-Financial Employee Benefits

As a part of our research, it is important to dig deeper into the area of compensation and non-financial employee benefits. As stated briefly in the previous section, there are different ways firms can make investments and spend money on employees. Our research aims to identify how firms can allocate their compensation spending to increase brand equity.

2.4.1 Financial Compensation

Not surprisingly, the most common form of compensation that firms can offer employees is salary. According to research by Burton et al., (2018), on a general note, established firms pay higher salaries than smaller firms. However, for firms that may have fewer financial resources, there are plenty of ways to compensate employees. For instance, a firm can choose between salaries, equity, bonuses, or a combination depending on its nature. As found by Longenecker et al., (2017), firms will benefit heavily from choosing the correct compensation structure to give employees financial incentives to increase productivity and motivation. This is particularly relevant when examining whether firms should direct their investments into salaries or other employee benefits.

Notably, recent studies suggest that a strong workplace culture is more valued by employees than salaries (Taylor, 2019). Additionally, a 2010 study from Princeton University researchers found that having a higher income only increases happiness up to about \$75,000 per year (Kahneman & Deaton, 2010), meaning that the culture and values that the organization represents are extremely important when attracting top candidates. Arguably, firms can experience greater results by directing their marketing efforts on branding its values to be more identifiable while reaching out to larger segments. However, for the purpose of attracting top candidates, offering competitive salaries and financial benefits remains critical for employers (Chamberlain, 2017).

Interestingly, a firm's brand plays a key role when it comes to salaries and financial compensation. This is because strong brands can help attract consumers at higher prices, while they can also help attract employees at lower levels of pay. Research in marketing has shown that consumers value the self-enhancement benefits that strong brands offer and that this translates into top-line financial benefits (Tavassoli et al., 2014). Comparatively, this can also be applied to employees by enhancing the bottom line in terms of reduced payrolls. Results found in Tavassoli et al. (2014), show that a strong brand can do more than help recruit top talents, it can also lower the compensation that new recruits are willing to accept. Therefore, firms should focus on making the brand a key aspect of HR practices, while making the use of strong brands in pay negotiations that are typically not a part of marketing. As competitive salaries and financial benefits remain critical for employees, we have identified the following hypothesis related to the topic:

Hypothesis 3: Employees value firms that offer high compensation more than consumers do.

2.4.2 Non-Financial Employee Benefits

Research suggests that firms that provide the kind of benefits employees' value are the ones that succeed in the long term (Brenner, 2009). Additionally, firms are experiencing that employees are expecting their jobs to bring significant sense of purpose to their lives. Therefore, employers need to understand the needs of their employees, or they are at risk of losing valuable talent. (Dhingra et al., 2021). To continue, most employers would like to be perceived as a good place to work and offering benefits to employees can be a part of this image. A firm can realize the competitive advantage that is created by offering such benefits, while benefits programs will consistently motivate to individual performance. (Hennessey, 1989). Hence, there is an interesting link between benefits levels offered by firms and its performance.

Even though traditional management of employees is delegated to the HR department, the fact that employees are representing an essential organizational asset in the firms, suggests that firms should also focus on marketing and adapt their strategies accordingly. In the paper "Employee Based Brand Equity" by Tavassoli et al., (2014), the authors explore the correlation between making the firm's brand meaningful and relevant for both consumers and employees to make them realize value in terms of consumption and work-related behaviors, which in turn manifest itself in brand equity (King & Grace, 2009). For our research, it is relevant to understand whether consumers and employees would opt for firms that offers non-financial employee benefits over financial compensation. This highlights the need for more research on the employee perspective of brand equity, leading us to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Firms that are investing into non-financial employee benefits will have more positive spillover effects to brand equity than firms using the same resources on higher wages.

2.5 Sustainability in Employer Branding

The world is facing drastic climate change; thus, it is important that every company reduces their impact in energy use, manufacturing, distribution, raw materials etc. If this is not acted upon, you will be left behind by customer demands and regulations. A green brand is a brand that is substantially eco-friendly and appeals to those that are willing to prioritize green choices. (Grant, 2008). According to Grant, (2008), there are strong green brands that are targeting both B2B and retail consumers, therefore there is without a doubt a customer segment willing to choose green products and services. Thus, if your firm can offer a service or product that will make a substantial green difference, you are probably onto a winning strategy. (Grant, 2008).

Green marketing integrates a broad range of different activities. These activities range from product modification, production process changes, changes to the packaging, and adjusting advertising. Nevertheless, defining green marketing is not easy. (Polonsky, 1994). According to Polonsky (1994), green marketing consists of all activities designed to facilitate or generate any exchanges planned to please consumers, such that the satisfaction of the needs and wants of the consumer transpires, with minimal damaging impact on the natural environment.

Amazon is an example of a firm that uses sustainability as a part of their employer branding strategy. The firm highlights their responsibilities towards sustainability by powering their operations with 100% renewable energy within 2025. This is done by having more than 4,500 sustainability ambassadors in 1160 teams across 20 countries (Hurst, 2020). These ambassadors are making sure that Amazon is focused on driving processes, mechanisms, and a broad cultural change to waste reduction, increase energy efficiency and recycling efforts at their corporate

offices and operations sites. It is interesting for our research to check whether efforts such as taking on a “zero cup” challenge to reduce the use of single-cups or exploring food sustainability workshops will influence brand equity.

In August 2020, the abovementioned survey that was sent out to 2,000 workers in Great Britain also tested for how climate change and covid are transforming workplaces. 56% of the respondents stated that they are more likely to work for a firm that incorporates strong environmental policies in their business strategy. (Slater & Gordon, 2020). Social equity, human rights, and climate change are issues of growing importance to the millennial workforce. Clearly, employees do not just care for climate change on a personal level. It is important for them to feel that their employers are aligned with their values and are actively acting. (Acaroglu, 2020). As the thesis is diving deeper into sustainable practices at work, we have identified the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Investing in sustainable practices will increase attitudes of brand equity rather than it will increase well-being among employees.

2.6 Training and Development

An important aspect of the present business world is the increasing competitive market. Thus, it is crucial for the survival of a company to pursue sustainable competitive advantages. Facilitating for a clear career path can be seen as different source of competitive advantage. The human element with intangible characteristics is one of them, where attitude, knowledge and skills are crucial. Therefore, offering training and development are considered the main activities for businesses to have well-prepared, flexible, and qualified employees. (Aragón-Sánchez et al. 2003). For our research, we have defined training and development as opportunities that are offered to employees at firms to provide employees with

the tools to do their job along with the influence it can have on employees feeling challenged and motivated. Examples of initiatives belonging to the field of training and development are training of leadership and management, diversity and inclusion programs, and mentorship programs.

Over the recent years, businesses have shown increased interest in training and development practices related to their employees and management. There is a general acceptance of the fact that organizational knowledge and human resources are two of the most important competitive advantages of a company. However, the adequate level of investment in such activities is not correlated with the significant role of training and development. This is mainly due to the lack of knowledge that training and development has on goal achievement. (Aragón-Sánchez et al. 2003). From an employee-based brand equity perspective, diving deeper into the dual effects of offering training and development to employees is particularly relevant for our research.

There is little, and only very recent research on the influence of training and development on business results. However, most of the studies conclude that training positively affects productivity, labor turnover, financial results, and quality. Thus, as the objective of the employer brand is to motivate, attract and retain a firm's current and potential employees, training and development becomes a crucial dimension. (Sehgal & Malati, 2013). Existing studies have shown that various HR practices are positively associated with organizational innovation, such as product sales (Sjoerd Beugelsdijk, 2008). Investments into training and development leads the way for the firm's overall learning culture, which again increases the willingness of employees to advance their capabilities and engage in various self-learning activities (Sung & Choi, 2014). Indeed, the role of active learning and pursuing new knowledge can also be highly associated with innovation. For our research, this connection is particularly relevant as offering

training and development might also have a direct effect on whether consumers find a brand attractive, leading us to the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: *Firms that make investments in training and development opportunities for employees will overall benefit from the positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity.*

2.7 Summary of Hypotheses

Figure 1 represents an overview of the presented hypotheses based on the literature review.

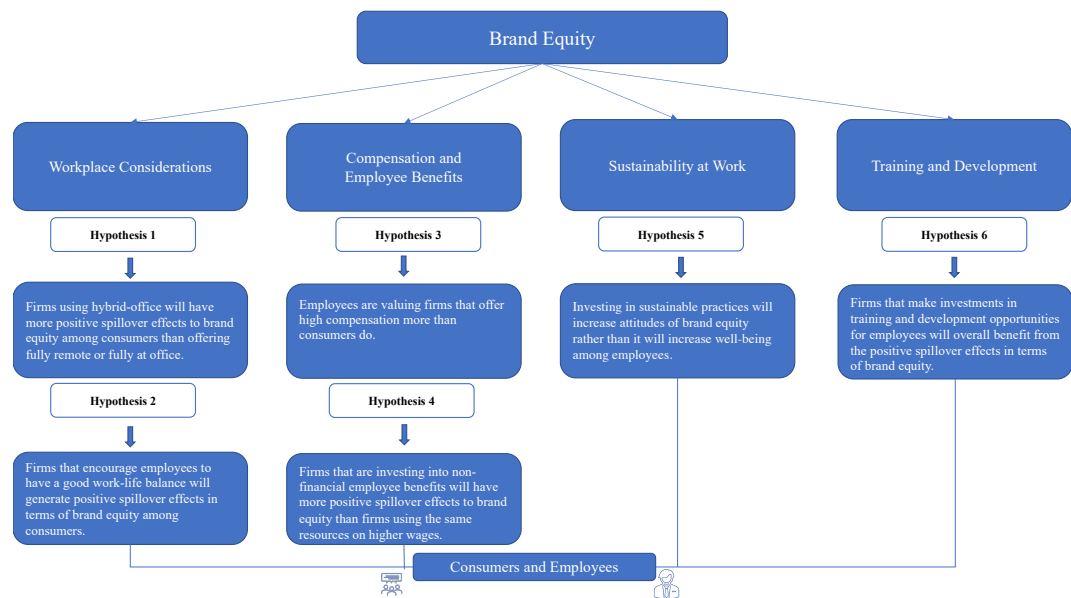


Figure 1 - Overview of Hypotheses

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For our methodological part, the main research will be conducted through two quantitative questionnaires. The questionnaires will be constructed in Norwegian language, as this is the population we intent to study. Our study aims to investigate the external and internal values with a strong employer brand. To

answer the research question and formulated hypotheses, a deductive research approach was used. Saunders et al., (2019) argues that a deductive approach is often used in conjunction with surveys where the objective is to efficiently collect standardized data from a sizable proportion of the population. Additionally, the authors state that a survey allows the researchers to identify relationships and correlations between different variables, thus creating models based on the data collected (Saunders et al., 2019). Based on the arguments presented above, we applied a cross-sectional survey to our thesis. Through Qualtrics, which is supported and advised by BI Norwegian Business School, we formed two online questionnaires with A/B testing to test the different variables of employer branding with within-subject design. The A/B tests for survey 1 and survey 2 were identical to ensure reliability. Particularly when the objective is to collect responses from a large sample that is geographically scattered, online questionnaires can be effective (Saunders et al., 2019). When researching whether current employer branding initiatives have a brand equity effect among consumers and employees, us as researchers first collected responses from consumers and employees, and then surveyed HR and marketing practitioners to understand whether they have sufficient knowledge of the responses from the employees and consumers. Lastly, we asked the participants socio-demographic questions to categorize the respondents into sub-groups.

A/B testing is a form of randomized controlled experiment and is one of the most utilized methods in online settings (Gallo, 2017). According to Gallo (2017), A/B testing, also known as monadic testing, is applied when the objective is to compare different versions of a concept to get a deeper understanding of which concept performs better. In our case, as we wished to test different variables of employer branding, we designed five fictitious company profiles about flexible working hours, training & development, employee benefits, salary, and sustainability. The company profiles contained a professional introduction of the fictive business, which aimed to inform the participants about different employer

branding initiatives. As we wanted to test the respondents' response to the different employer branding initiatives, we ensured that in every A/B test the two company profiles were identical, except the section explaining the chosen employer branding initiative. Additionally, in the first survey we also asked the participants other questions related to employer branding initiatives using a five-point semantic scale. The survey also contained a question that asked the respondents to compare a list of different employer branding initiatives with each other and arrange them in order of preference. By doing so, we could get a more thorough understanding of the importance which the individual initiatives bring.

3.1.1 Survey Biases and Limitations in Marketing Questionnaires

Currently, it has been known for a long time that consumer responses to questionnaires are influenced by content-irrelevant factors, such as the rating scale associated with an item (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001). Hence, when conducting research, one should consider how respondents can have tendencies to answer systematically to questionnaire items on some basis other than what was originally supposed to be measured. According to (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001), causal readings of scale development articles and the measurement section of empirical articles suggests that the response styles used are not frequently seen as a major threat to validity by marketing researchers. However, findings from the Handbook of marketing Scales suggest that many scales used in marketing apparently fail to control adequately for response styles (William O. Bearden et al., 2022). Thus, being able to align the strategic questions to the scale option is particularly important to achieve good validity. Main findings from Baumgartner & Steenkamp, (2001), suggests that the extent to which a scale is unbalances has an important influence on the degree of contamination of scale rates; biases can be both positive and negative depending on whether the items in a scale are positively or negatively worded. Thus, marketers should develop instruments that minimize the opportunities for stylistic responding.

3.1.2 Selection of Research Sample in Surveys

For our research, the main objective is to gain insight into how consumers and employees are influenced by employer branding initiatives. However, this requires that we distinguish between sample populations for the two different surveys. To fulfill the objective of the thesis, primary data was conducted with complementary analyses based on means of non-structured questionnaires and interview questions.

As a part of our research, we used convenience sampling when asking people for participation. For the first survey, which aims to target a more general population, the participants are chosen based on convenience. The target sample for the first survey is consumers and employees in Norway. The survey respondents belong to firms or universities in Norway, where most of the respondents are in the capital, Oslo.

The second survey aims to target HR- and marketing practitioners to get insight from working professionals within the research field of the thesis. The data from the second questionnaire was also collected using convenience sampling.

3.1.3 Pilot Testing

To ensure that the survey was interpreted correctly and according to our intentions, different pilot surveys were conducted between 15th of February and 10th of March. The target gave us useful insights into how engaging the questions were, and the estimated time it took to complete the survey. The pilot respondents were also asked to give feedback about how the survey could be improved.

The pilot test gave us good indications that some of the questions could be self-explanatory, and there were also a couple of questions that could be misinterpreted. Thus, the testing led to a few corrections of the setup and design.

3.2 Data Collection

The quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire with A/B testing, as well as questions on a semantic five-point scale. This gives a broad understanding of the different employer branding initiatives. We were not capable of studying an entire population; thus, we were forced to work with samples drawn from the population. Research from Taylor (2005) defines a sample as a defined subgroup of a population.

The online data collection was done through a convenience sampling, which is a commonly used approach. This method is a nonprobability sampling technique and is at risk of different limitations. The limitations can arise due to the biased way of collecting participants, which may indicate that it is not a prominent representation of the population. Nevertheless, convenience sampling method only has one criterion: convenience for the researcher (Dörnyei, 2007). This sampling method is extremely favorable when the researchers are facing lack of resources, limited time, and workforce. (Etikan et al., 2015). Additionally, we wanted most participants to be over the age of 18, as this is the group that is expected to be in the workforce.

3.2.1 First Survey

The first questionnaire was distributed in the period of March 23rd to April 3rd, 2022, using Qualtrics with anonymous participation. To reach a larger employee and consumer-base, the first questionnaire was sent through email, LinkedIn in-mails, and other relevant social media.

3.2.2 Second Survey

The second survey aims to target employees and managers from HR and marketing positions, thus providing us with a narrower subgroup. To collect data

from this specific workforce, the survey was distributed through LinkedIn messages and email. The second survey was distributed from April 8th to April 28th, 2022.

3.2.3 Data Cleaning

After distributing the first survey to consumers and employees through a convenience sampling, the total number of participants was 317 individual contributions. However, after reviewing the total number of N=317 respondents, 128 responses were removed due to cleaning unfinished, invalid, and unreliable data. Consequently, after filtering the collected data, we ended up with 189 respondents.

As the second survey aims to target a narrower population, we expected the number of participants to be somewhat lower than the first survey sent out. After distributing the second survey to HR- and marketing practitioners, the total number of participants were N=31.

3.3 Implementation

The first survey that was constructed in Qualtrics consisted of 24 questions, estimated to be completed in under 10 minutes. As our goal was to check for dual effect on specific employer branding initiatives, we had to carefully construct the surveys to achieve the most valid results.

During the construction process, it was decided that the study should contain two important variables: consumers and employees serving as the independent variable and the preferred employer branding initiative serving as the dependent variable (see Figure 2).

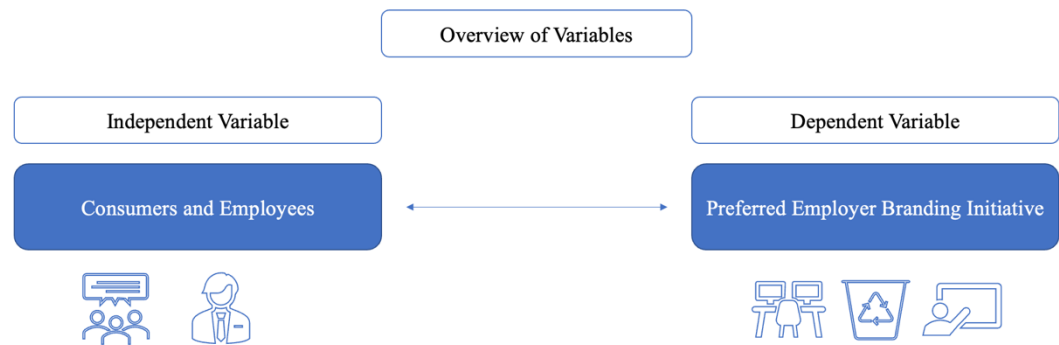


Figure 2 - Overview of the A/B Test Variables

To avoid any biases associated with previous associations to specific brands, the main part of the two surveys is constructed in an A/B test format with fictitious profiles of firms containing different characteristics (see Figure 3). The design of the different profiles is kept consistent to secure that respondent were not affected by visuals, but rather by the characteristics the texts involved in the profiles represents. As research from Baumgartner & Steenkamp (2001), suggests that biases can occur depending on whether questions are positively and negative worded, we have focused on constructing the survey with a neutral language.

Additionally, in the implementation process, we decided that the survey was going to be constructed with firms belonging to different industries to secure variation. As the main goal of the research is to understand which employer branding initiatives have a dual effect on brand equity, it was important to make sure that respondents focused on the characteristics the different firms represents rather than previous brand knowledge. This is done by specifying the text representing each firm and include unique employer branding characteristics.

Furthermore, we also asked the respondents questions about their preferences for different employer branding initiatives as a consumer or an employee in a ranking scale and Likert scale format. By doing so we were able to examine the strength of importance that the different initiatives have in the eyes of the respondents. As such scales can be related to content-irrelevant factors (Baumgartner &

Steenkamp, 2001), it was important to include the ranking and Likert scales in addition to the A/B tests to secure additional validity.

As a part of the implementation process, there are specific limitations to consider when creating a survey. These considerations are particularly linked to validity and reliability. As we have developed the survey designs and intended manipulations on our own, results should not be interpreted with full causality.

A/B Test Setup		
A/B Tests		Employer Branding initiative
		Hybrid Office Vs Training and Development
		Employee benefits Vs High Compensation
		Sustainability Vs Training and Development
		Training and Development Vs High Compensation
		Sustainability Vs Training and Development

Figure 3 - Overview of the A/B Test Setup (Complete A/B test in Appendix 10 and 11)

3.3.1 Validity

As a part of examining the content validity, the questionnaire was assessed by sending the survey to a group of friends, supervisor, and family members. By continuously communicating with the respondents, we received in-depth feedback about the design and the structure of the survey. (Saunders et al., 2019). The question in the survey covers all dimensions of employer branding initiatives that the thesis investigates through A/B testing, questions measured on a semantic scale and questions measured with ranking.

External validity refers to if the results of the study are transferable to real life scenarios (Saunders et al., 2019). As the respondents in the study were both consumers and employees aged between 20 and 60 years old, the study has the potential to generalize findings with the sample to a broader context.

3.3.2 Reliability

According to Golafshani (2003), a questionnaire's reliability refers to whether results are consistent over a longer period and whether they can be reproduced under a similar methodology. As a part of our research, the questionnaire intended to gather primary research by asking the respondents about their personal opinions about workplace and employer branding initiatives.

The objective of the A/B section in the questionnaire was to test the respondents' response to different employer branding initiatives. Thus, to verify that the collected data is reliable we ensured that in every A/B test the two company profiles were identical, except the section explaining the chosen employer branding initiative. Furthermore, the participants had to adapt to different roles as being in the position as a consumer and employee. To make this more trustworthy, and reduce the chance of random errors, the participants had to read a fictitious narrative prior to answering the questions. This was done to make it

easier for the participants to adapt to the different scenarios and roles they had to familiarize themselves with.

Moreover, a feature that prevented the participants from going back to earlier questions was applied to reduce the respondents' ability to change their answers. Additionally, the beginning of the survey highlights information about confidential use of the data and anonymity. The goal of emphasizing the anonymous participation was to prevent social desirability bias (Steven Gittelman et al., 2015).

3.5 Research Model



Figure 4 - Research Model

Based on the literature review and the formulated hypotheses, the following research model (see Figure 4) contain a big picture illustration of the conducted research that summarizes the influence which different employer branding initiatives have on brand equity.

3.6 Legal and ethical concerns

When collecting data, there are ethical considerations to consider. To comply with NSD and GDPR, the survey is sent out completely anonymously, and the

respondents are asked to give consent to whether they agree to participate or not. Gaining informed consent from respondents is a central element of ethical conduct of research (Crow et al., 2006). One of the key principles of informed concept requires that participants in a study are provided with information about a research project they are invited to participate in. It also requires that the respondents freely accept to participate in the study and have the option to withdraw from it without any consequences. No demographic data is stored, and all data is deleted after the hand-in date.

To follow these principles, the first page of our survey includes a declaration form where respondents are allowed to become acquainted with the purpose of the research project. Here, we informed all participants that the purpose of our survey is to gather insights into employer branding activities and its effect on firm's brand equity. Additionally, respondents were informed that the survey is distributed completely anonymously, voluntarily, and no data is stored. As a part of doing research, it is critical adhere to the ethical rules when carrying out a study to present findings and results. Complying with all the above-mentioned principles is a part of our work to achieve a transparent analysis and findings.

Chapter 4. Analysis

This chapter will present the data that is gathered from the questionnaires and our analysis performed in the study. As a part of our research, we have used descriptive statistics and performed different types of other statistical tests to answer our hypotheses and check for exploratory findings. For most of our analysis, descriptive statistics is used to check for interactions between variables. More specifically, to obtain insights into potential underlying reasons, we performed t-tests and crosstabs to study differences between sub-samples. The experiment tested the effect of different concepts on several dependent variables

(concept: employer branding initiative vs. employer branding initiative) within-subject design. An overview of the statistical tests and measures used to answer the hypotheses is presented in Figure 5.

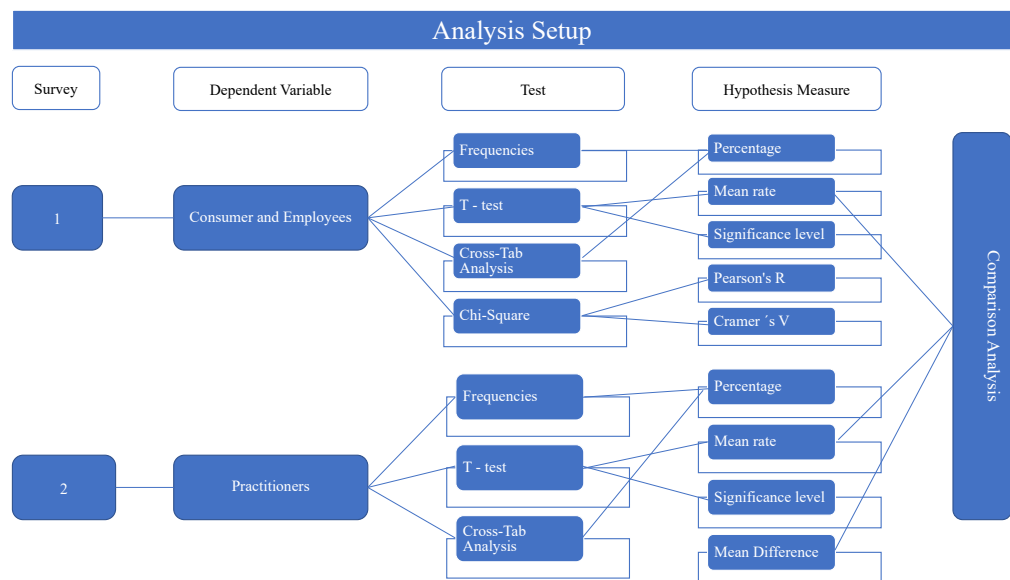


Figure 5 - Overview of the Analysis

4.1 First Survey

4.1.1 Research Sample

As discussed in section 3.2.1 Data Cleaning, we were left with 189 responses. The sample consists of 102 females and 87 males. Among these, the mean age is 36 and ranges from 20 years old to 82 years old. As the thesis is focused on portraying how different employer branding initiatives affect consumers and employees, we found it of interest to look at the level of education as well as year of work experience among the respondents, and how this might lead to future research. In the sample, 91 respondents stated that they have more than five years of work experience and 98 respondents stated that they have less than five years of work experience. Nearly 55% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree, 25%

have a master's degree while the remaining 20% either has a high school certificate, or a PhD.

4.1.2 Descriptive Data

To measure the specific employer initiatives that affects brand equity, the output from the frequency table (see Appendix 1) shows the frequency and percentage rates of which respondents have chosen different employer branding initiatives when answering the A/B test from a consumer and employee perspective. The options ranged from option A (1) to option B (2). Notably, firms highlighting *training and development* as a key part of their business model consistently rates above 40% frequency rate and has the highest average percentage rate (26.6%) regardless of being a consumer or employee in all the applicable cases.

Additionally, *employee benefits* stand out as a valued initiative, but it does not have the same effect on attracting new consumers as it has on employees.

However, in comparison to offering *high compensation*, offering *non-financial employee benefits* stand out as a more valued initiative among both consumers and employees. Focusing on *sustainability* has a great effect on attracting consumers, but not as valued by employees.

For the different A/B tests in the first survey, we performed a paired sample t-test to check for mean differences between responses from consumers and employees when responding to the most valued employer branding initiative (see Appendix 2). Company 1 (consultancy firm), which tested for *hybrid office vs training and development* proved not to be significant, however this was the only occasion. All other A/B tests had a significance level lower than .05. This tells us that it matters if you are an employee, or a consumer based on the preferred employer branding initiative. Additionally, the paired sample T-test suggests that focusing on *non-financial employee benefits* is more appealing to both consumers and employees than offering *higher wages*. Furthermore, findings indicate that consumers value *sustainability* significantly more than employees. For employees, *flexibility* and

training and development are much more valued. However, when the choice is between *training and development* or *high compensation*, consumers value *training and development* whilst employees value the latter.

To dig deeper into which initiatives that has the most dual effect on brand equity, a crosstab analysis of the A/B test is performed (see Appendix 3). From the first A/B test, as many as 42.3% of the respondent choose *training and development* as the most favorable from both a consumer and employee perspective. In comparison, there are only 23.3% that choose *hybrid office* in both cases. Remarkably, in all the A/B tests from survey 1 that include *training and development*, this initiative has the most favorable average percentage rate from both a consumer and employee perspective. Comparatively, *sustainability* is the initiative which is most dependent on whether you chose from a consumer or employee perspective. Firms that are attracting candidates by investing in sustainable workplace initiatives can achieve a positive effect on attracting consumers, but as predicted based on the formulated hypothesis related to *sustainability*, it is not as valued by employees. Notably, *employee benefits* in comparison to offering *high compensation*, seems to have a way higher dual effect on brand equity than predicted with as many as 50.3% of the respondents choosing this initiative from both perspectives. Employees in particular value *flexibility*, however, to increase brand equity there are other initiatives that should be prioritized as initiatives related to *flexibility* don't rate above 23.3% in any of the cases.

To summarize the key findings from the descriptive statistics, results indicate that that *training and development* along with offering *non-financial employee benefits* are the two initiatives that offers the most dual effect when achieving brand equity. In fact, these two initiatives can be used together to save resources when creating a great employer brand.

4.1.3 Chi Square for A/B Test

To test for statistically significant relationship and correlation between our nominal variables; the role of being a consumer vs. employee and the preferred employer branding initiative a Chi Square test was performed on each A/B test.

The first A/B test with Company 1 tested for *Hybrid Office* vs. *Training and Development*. After conducting a Chi Square test, the results indicate that there is a statistically significant association between being a consumer or an employee, and the preferred employer branding initiative, *hybrid office* or *training and development* ($\alpha=.05$, $p<.001$, $X^2 16.196$). Thus, the preferred employer branding initiative is dependent on whether you are a consumer or an employee.

Additionally, we looked at Pearson's R to get a clearer picture of the linear correlation strength between the two variables. According to Cohen (1988), the effect size is low if the value of r varies around .10, medium if r varies around .30, and large if r varies more than .50. For Company 1 the Pearson's R is .293 meaning that being a consumer, or an employee has a moderate effect on the preferred employer branding initiative, in this case being the initiatives hybrid office or training and development.

In the A/B test for the Company 2, we tested for *non-financial employee benefits* vs *high compensation*. Our P value is .027, $\alpha=.05$ and $X^2 4.859$, meaning that there is a significantly association and dependency between being a consumer or an employee, and weather the preferred employer branding initiative is employee benefits or high salary. However, the Pearson's R is rather low as it is close to .16 meaning that even though it is significant, being a consumer or an employee do not have a high effect on whether you prefer *high compensation* or *non-financial employee benefits*.

In the next A/B test we tested for *sustainability* vs *training and development*. The results showed $\alpha=.05$, $p=.01$, $X^2 10.545$, meaning that the test is significant.

Pearson's R is close to .24 thus being an employee, or a consumer has a moderate effect on the preferred employer branding initiative, in this case being *sustainability* or *training and development*.

Additionally, we tested for *training and development* vs *high compensation* where the result was not significant ($\alpha=.05$, $p=.179$, $X^2 1.802$) meaning that there is not significantly association or dependency between being an employee or consumer and whether the preferred employer branding initiative is *high compensation* or *training and development*.

Lastly, we tested for *sustainability* vs *work life balance*, where the results were not significant ($\alpha=.05$, $p=.087$, $X^2 2.926$). Thus, there is not significantly association or dependency between being a customer or an employee, and whether the preferred employer branding initiative is *sustainable initiatives* or *work life balance*.

4.1.4 Likert Scale and Ranking Scales

In the first survey, respondents were surveyed about their perception to various statements covering employer branding in a Likert scale format. Additionally, respondents were asked to rank specific initiatives being in the position of choosing between multiple job offers (employee perspective) and purchasing a product/service (consumer perspective) in a ranking scale format.

The perception analysis done in a Likert scale format, was intentionally added in the survey to gauge what consumers and employee think is important initiatives in employer branding. The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), examining the importance that different initiatives have in the eyes of the respondents. According to the mean rates from the Likert analysis, results suggests that firms offering *training and development* along with those that offers a fair compensation to employees are the most attractive without any manipulation. The full sample do not consider sustainability at the workplace to

be of any important value as it has the lowest mean rate of 2.71 out of all the initiatives. (See Appendix 4).

Moreover, respondents were asked to rate different initiatives based on what they considered important when firstly being a position of accepting a job offer, and secondly being in a position of a consumer choosing between different products. The ranking scales ranged from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important). After the results were obtained (see Appendix 5), *training and development* clearly stands out as the most attractive initiative among consumers with a mean rate of 2.65 being ranked a mean rate of 1.40 higher than the next most valued attribute from a consumer perspective which is *central office location* (4.05). Results differ particularly from an employee perspective where *employee benefits* are the most important initiative with an average placement rate of 3.24. However, from an employee perspective, the mean placement rates are less spread out meaning that results can't be interpreted as causal. Additionally, from an employee perspective, *training and development* ranks well with a mean rate of 3.72, less than 0.50 mean rate below *employee benefits*. As *training and development* has the best average ranking rates, there are valid reasons to believe that firms will increase brand equity by strategically market itself as a firm which offers *training and development* opportunities.

Additionally, we performed a Chi Square Test for Independence on questions when respondents were asked to imagine themselves in a position as a consumer and employee when ranking different employer branding initiatives depending on their situation. Chi-square helps us validating whether there is a significant association between being an employee or a customer and the specific preferred employer branding initiative.

We tested for eight different employer branding initiatives: *flexible working hours, flexible workplace, employee benefits, high salary, central location, sustainability at the workplace, training and development* and *reputation*. After

analyzing the results from the Chi Square Test, we see that *reputation, training and development, sustainability at the workplace, central location, high salary,* and *flexible workplace* are significant, whereas *flexible working hours* and *employee benefits* are not.

For all the Chi Square tests we performed, the 20% assumption was violated, thus we looked at the Likelihood ratio rather than the Pearson's Chi Square.

Reputation: How important the reputation of the company is, is dependent on the respondent's role a consumer or an employee. Likelihood ratio is 70.675, $p=.023$ and Cramer's $V=.228$.

Training and Development: We tested for dependency between the role of being a consumer or an employee, and how much training and development is valued. Likelihood ratio is 71.303, $p=.020$ and Cramer's $V=.228$.

Central Location: Tested for significant association between being in the position as a consumer or an employee, and if central location is highly valued or not. Likelihood ratio is 97.707, $p=.001$, Cramer's $V=.258$.

Sustainability at the workplace: Tested for whether consumer or employees care about sustainable initiatives or not, and if this is independent. Likelihood ratio is 84.593, $p=.001$, Cramer's $V=.245$

High Salary: Tested for high salary and if is dependent or independent on respondents positioning themselves as a consumer or an. Likelihood ratio is 103.171, $p=.001$, Cramer's $V=.269$

Flexible Workplace: We wanted to see if the option of flexibility regarding the workplace, such as the option of working from home, is independent or dependent on the role of being a consumer or an employee. Likelihood ratio is 74.847, $p=.010$, Cramer's $V=.228$.

Thus, for all the six employer branding initiatives that proved to be significant in the Chi Square Independence Test, there is a small to moderate effect on how much of value each initiative is based on whether you are a consumer or an employee as all Cramer's V values range from .245 to .269.

4.2 Second Survey

4.2.1 Research Sample

The aim of the second survey was to target a narrower population with a high degree of competence within the field of HR and marketing, thus the sample size is smaller than for the first survey. After distributing the second survey to HR- and marketing practitioners, the total number of participants were N=31. This survey aims to check for differences in assumptions from HR- and marketing practitioners and responses from consumers and employees. The idea is to discover any misconceptions. In the sample, the respondents were equally split between marketing- and HR-background with N=15 and N=16 respondents.

4.2.2 Descriptive Data

For the five different A/B tests we presented for marketing- and HR-practitioners, a frequency test (see Appendix 6) and a paired sample t-test (see Appendix 7) was performed to check for percentage- and mean differences between the roles of being a consumer or an employee, and the most valued employer branding initiative. The result from both tests shows that professionals within the field of marketing and HR believe that consumers value *sustainability* more than employees, whilst employees value *flexibility* and *training and development*. Additionally, the paired sample T-test suggests that focusing on *training and development* and employee benefits is more appealing to both consumers and employees than offering higher wages, according to professionals within the field. Thus, we can reject the null hypothesis of equal means at the .05 level.

As a part of understanding HR- and marketing practitioners preferences towards specific initiatives, another crosstab analysis of their responses to the A/B tests was performed (see Appendix 8). Generally, practitioners believe that *training and development* has a way higher attractiveness performance among consumers, while employees should be more tempted by initiatives that facilitate flexibility and the opportunity to be able to work from home. There are only 19.4% of the practitioners that choose *training and development* in both cases compared with *hybrid office*.

Interestingly, in all A/B tests in the second survey, the main proportion of the practitioners believe that consumers and employees are having different preferences towards different initiatives depending on their position as a consumer or employee. As findings from the first survey indicate that specific employer branding initiatives can have just as much effect on attracting consumers and employees, this contradicts with what practitioners assume. However, similarly with findings from the first survey, *sustainability* is the initiative which is most dependent on whether you chose from a consumer or employee perspective. The practitioners consider *sustainability* as a very important initiative to attract consumers, but they are not considering this to be a priority from an employee perspective. This is clearly visible when looking at results from the A/B test, where as many as 71% of the practitioners suggests that employees would choose *non-financial employee benefits* over *sustainability* at the workplace. As a matter of fact, from an employee perspective, initiatives that include either *non-financial employee benefits* or *high compensation* are always the preferred option. This is a particularly interesting finding as results from the first survey, suggests that *training and development* can outperform these initiatives both from a customer and employee perspective.

4.2.3 Chi-Square Test

To check for relationship between the nominal variables in the A/B tests, we performed a Chi Square test, as done with the first survey. After conducting a Chi Square test on the survey handed out to HR- and marketing-practitioners, we see that none of our tests are significant and all Chi Square values are below .1, meaning that there is not a significant relationship between the preferred employer branding initiative and the role of being a consumer or an employee. In other words, professionals believe that the preferred employer branding initiative is independent on whether you are a consumer or an employee. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis of no relationship at the .05 level. However, as the sampling size is relatively small, this might affect the significance level and increase margin of error.

4.3 Comparison Analysis

Referring to the comparison table that explores means from Survey 1 and Survey 2 (see Table 1), generally, most practitioners were able to predict the initiatives that generate the most dual effect on brand equity. From the comparison analysis, it is evident that consumers are more likely to choose *sustainability* as their preferred employer branding initiative, and the practitioners predicted this very well. However, this initiative is the one with the least dual effect, as employees do not value it to the same level. On the other hand, *training and development* along with *non-financial employee benefits* are the two employer branding initiatives that offer the greatest dual effect. In most cases, both employees and consumers value these two initiatives. Notably, in A/B test 1, the practitioners believed that employees value *hybrid office* over *training and development*, however this is not the case. In A/B test 2, most practitioners believed that employees would prefer *higher compensation* over *non-financial employee benefits*. Nevertheless, employees are preferring being offered more benefits. Thus, it is evident that

when it comes to the two initiatives that offer the greatest dual effect, practitioners were not able to accurately predict which initiatives employees value.

Comparison Analysis of Means				
Consumer and Employee Responses				
Profile	Initiatives effecting consumer and employee responses	Mean response	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Hybrid Office (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.63	.048	.035
	Employee preference Hybrid Office (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.56	.498	.036
Company 2 - Bank Firm	Consumer preference Employee benefits (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.24	.433	.032
	Employee preference Employee benefits (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.38	.486	.035
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.41	.494	.036
	Employee preference Sustainability (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.72	.450	.033
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Training and Development (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.27	.445	.032
	Employee preference Training and Development (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.51	.501	.036
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability (1) Vs Employee benefits (2)	1.16	.366	.027
	Employee preference Sustainability (1) Vs Employee benefits (2)	1.59	.493	.036
Practitioner Responses				
Profile	Initiatives effecting consumer and employee responses	Mean response	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Hybrid Office (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.71	.461	.083
	Employee preference Hybrid Office (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.32	.475	.085
Company 2 - Bank Firm	Consumer preference Employee benefits (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee preference Employee benefits (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.61	.495	.089
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee preference Sustainability (1) Vs Training and Development (2)	1.65	.486	.087
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Training and Development (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee preference Training and Development (1) Vs High Compensation (2)	1.52	.508	.091
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability (1) Vs Employee benefits (2)	1.10	.301	.054
	Employee preference Sustainability (1) Vs Employee benefits (2)	1.77	.425	.076

Table 1 - Comparison Analysis of Means

To dig deeper into the comparison between what consumers and employees prefer in comparison to what the practitioners predicts, we have performed a paired sample t-test to check for the statistical significance of the mean differences between the two surveys (see Appendix 9).

For the first A/B tests, the mean differences are relatively low with differences lower than .300 testing for both consumers and employees. However, the t-score of 1.754 for consumers and -2.334 for employees with a p-value of less than .05

suggests that there is a significant difference between the results from survey 1 and 2, meaning that responses from practitioners differ from the consumer and employee responses. However, the practitioners were mostly right when predicting what consumers value. This is highlighted with the fact that *training and development* comes on top in both cases. Interestingly, the most significant difference among all the A/B tests occur in A/B test 1 when predicting what employees value between *hybrid office* compared to *training and development*. Practitioners were off with their assumption as the p-value is as low as .013. Consequently, branding the firm as one that offers flexibility to employees might not have the desired impact on brand equity that practitioners assume.

The mean difference for consumer responses and the practitioners' assumption to the consumer responses in the second A/B test is particularly small standing at only .031. This is correlated with the corresponding p-value of .401 being way above the significance level of .05, meaning that there is no significance difference between what consumers prefer and what practitioners think they prefer. When comparing the results with employee responses, there is a greater difference in means between the responses of .258 with a corresponding p-value of .015, meaning that there is a statistically significant difference between the initiatives that practitioners believe will attract employees compared to what employees prefer. Therefore, results from the second A/B test suggests that practitioners will experience far greater dual effect of increased brand equity by focusing on offering employee benefits rather than higher compensation.

Moreover, the mean differences from the third A/B test for both consumers and employees are low with a p-value of above .05 level of significance. In other words, practitioners' assumptions correlate with the findings that consumers in particular value *sustainability* efforts and employees are more concerned with *training and development* opportunities to accelerate their career and acquire the required competence.

After conducting the results from the fourth A/B test, the mean differences testing for both consumers and employees are less than .10 with a corresponding p-value of .224, clearly showing that there is not a significant difference between what practitioners predicts and the actual results from consumers and employees. To our surprise, results suggest that offering *training and development* opportunities to employees is just as effective when attracting candidates as offering *high compensation*. Thus, when attracting new consumers, firms should rather focus on the *training and development* opportunities in the organization over the financials.

For the fifth A/B test, results from the mean differences analysis shows that there is a small statistical difference in means when testing for consumers and a larger difference when testing for employees. As the corresponding p-value for consumers is .080, results suggests that there is no significance difference between consumer preferences and assumptions from practitioners. The fifth A/B test shows that *sustainability* has a higher chance of attracting consumers. Comparatively, when checking for employees, the corresponding p-value of .022 is less than the level of significance, meaning that there is a significant difference between responses from the two surveys. On a general basing *training and development* is more appealing to employees than *sustainability* practices at work, however, the practitioners were not able to predict employees' level of preference precisely.

Comparison Analysis of Mean Differences				
"Is it a significance difference between what practitioners assume and actual responses from consumers and employees?"				
Profile	Initiatives effecting consumer and employee responses	Mean difference	Sig (1-tailed) <.05	Significant difference
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Hybrid Office Vs Training and Development	.226	.045	Yes
	Employee preference Hybrid Office Vs Training and Development	-.290	.013	Yes
Company 2 - Bank Firm	Consumer preference Employee benefits Vs High Compensation	-.032	.401	No
	Employee preference Employee benefits Vs High Compensation	.258	.015	Yes
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability Vs Training and Development	-.032	.401	No
	Employee preference Sustainability Vs Training and Development	-.161	.067	No
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer preference Training and Development Vs High Compensation	-.097	.224	No
	Employee preference Training and Development Vs High Compensation	-.097	.224	No
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer preference Sustainability Vs Employee benefits	-.129	.080	No
	Employee preference Sustainability Vs Employee benefits	.258	.022	Yes

Table 2 - Comparison Analysis of Mean Differences

Chapter 5. Discussion

In this chapter, we will discuss our findings from the survey and analysis up against the existing research from the literature review. Moreover, we will focus on presenting possible reasonings behind the interactions and come up with opportunities and suggestions based on our findings. It is important to understand that our findings should not be interpreted as casual as this is an interaction study, but rather work as inspiration to how firms can operate to respond to the ever-increasing customer demand. As this paper is concerned with brand equity, findings can be used by practitioners that wants to assist their firm when developing a great employer brand along with having a higher chance of attracting more consumers. The idea behind the study performed in this thesis is to emphasize which employer branding initiatives that have the highest positive performance effect on brand equity.

5.1 Takeaways

One of the key findings from our analysis is that employers should focus on the human aspects of work. The trend is that employees and consumers value initiatives that require social and interpersonal connections with colleagues and managers. Of course, higher compensation, financial benefits, and other perks are tempting initiatives, but it is rather important that firms are putting efforts into making their employees feeling valued by the organization. Such as integrating training and development opportunities for employees as a part of the culture. A key reason for this could be that employees want it to be potential for advancement in the firm. However, this is not only important when attracting top candidates, but findings from our research suggest that consumers value and choose firms that are innovative and offer a clear path for success. As follows, we will discuss the effect that the specific initiatives mentioned have in conjunction with the stated hypotheses and research from literature review.

5.1.1 Hybrid Office and Work-Life Balance

As the post pandemic reopening after Covid-19 advances, companies worldwide are reconsidering the traditional workday. Accordingly, we found it particularly interesting to see if consumers, employees, and practitioners within the field of HR and marketing value different employer branding initiatives related to workplace considerations in the wake of the pandemic. Thus, based on existing literature we formed the following hypotheses: *“Firms using hybrid-office will have more positive spillover effects for brand equity among consumers than offering fully remote or fully at office.”* and *“Firms that encourage employees to have a good work-life balance will generate positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity among consumers.”* As mentioned in the literature review, Nicholas Bloom, a Stanford professor specialized in the field of remote work, suggests that working from home two days a week is ideal to acquire work-life balance (Bloom, 2020). However, there are research suggesting that physical presence might be required on team-building activities and specific projects (Ro, 2020). Additionally, employees are at risk of being inefficient if their home isn't well suited for a home office.

From the different analysis we have performed, we see that employees value flexibility to a certain degree, however, to increase brand equity there are other initiatives that should be prioritized as initiatives related to flexibility do not provide dual effect. We wanted to dig deeper into which initiatives that have the greatest dual effect on brand equity, thus we see from the first A/B test that there are only 23.3% of the respondents that choose hybrid office as the most important employer branding initiative when choosing from a consumer- and employee perspective (see Appendix 3). Nonetheless, it is important to add that this does not mean that employees do not value flexibility or other initiatives related to work-life balance. As one can see from the different statistical analyses, employees appreciate such initiatives, however, they value other initiatives more.

Interestingly, a McKinsey report with insight on employee responses to home-office and work life during Covid-19 found that as many as 80% of the participants enjoy working from home (Brodie Boland et al., 2020). Thus, it is not surprising that practitioners believe that employees are tempted by initiatives that facilitate for flexibility and the opportunity to be able to work from home, however, this is not the case considering the results of this study. Interestingly, neither employees nor consumers seem to value home office and flexibility over other employer branding initiatives. These findings implies that practitioners could take advantage of investing into other employer branding initiatives rather than initiatives related to workplace considerations. Fascinatingly, the most significant difference among all the A/B tests occur in A/B test 1, when practitioners predicted what employees value hybrid office over training and development opportunities.

According to our analysis, the practitioners are far off with their assumption when testing for initiatives related to the workplace. In a McKinsey report from 2020, the authors questions if working from home only succeeds because it is viewed as temporary, but not permanent (Brodie Boland et al., 2020). Thus, branding your organization as one that offers flexibility to employees might not have the desired impact and dual effect on brand equity which most practitioners believe.

5.1.2 Non-Financial Employee Benefits vs Salaries

From the literature review, we identified two hypotheses related to the topic of non-financial employee benefits and financial compensation in employer branding. The first hypothesis states as follows: “*Employees are valuing firms that offer a high compensation more than consumers do*”, and the second: “*Firms that are investing into non-financial employee benefits will have more positive spillover effects to brand equity than firms using the same resources on higher wages*”. As a part of researching the different structures firms can use to

compensate employees, we found it particularly interesting to understand what effect such initiatives have on a firm's brand equity and business performance.

Interestingly, the descriptive statistics tell us that the practitioners tend to opt for the economic and transactional responses when predicting what initiatives that employees choose. However, based on our finding employees are far more likely to prioritize initiatives which is concerned with the interpersonal such as specific non-financial employee benefits. As found by Longenecker et al., (2017), firms will benefit if they are able to choose the correct compensation structure to give employees financial incentives for increased motivation and productivity. In line with research from Taylor (2019), our results indicate that a strong workplace culture is more valued by employees than a higher compensation. As this study only gathered data Norwegian participants where the average monthly earnings are particularly high at 50,000 NOK for 2021 (Statista, 2022), there are reasons to believe that the high average earnings explain why employees and consumers find interpersonal benefits and culture more important. This is also in accordance with the studies which have found that having a higher income increases happiness only up to a certain level (Kahneman & Deaton, 2010). An underlying reason for this could be that a firm's culture and values which are highly valued by both consumers and employees can be easier visible by offering non-financial employee benefits.

Noticeably, when performing the descriptive statistics of the employee responses to the ranking scales, it shows that offering high compensation is the second to last important initiative when respondents are being asked to pick between job offers from employers. Surprisingly, high compensation is ranked above non-financial employee benefits when consumers are being asked to rank different initiatives based on its importance when purchasing a product/service. This is in contradiction with the mean rates gathered from the A/B test which tested for non-financial employee benefits against high compensation. An explanatory reason

behind this could be that some consumers may associate high compensation with higher quality products/services. This is because firms can adjust the beliefs and assumptions from consumers of what quality means. Research from Tellis (1986) found that since consumers do not have perfect information about what makes a product of high quality, price signaling can play a fundamental role in how consumers perceive a product and their willingness to pay. Leading us to think that stating your firm as one that offer high compensation to employees as a marketing strategy can perhaps be used as a price signal affecting consumers perception of a product/service. As previous research suggests that consumers are thought that prices and quality are proportionally correlated, consumers can actively assume that higher compensation will lead to an increase in price which again will reflect in the quality of the product/service. (Tellis, 1986).

Notably, research from Tavassoli et al. (2014), found that having a strong brand will help recruiting top talents, while reducing the compensation that new recruits are willing to accept. In line with this, result from the descriptive statistics gives us a good indication that that firms should consider their brand as an entity when making financial decisions as both consumers and employees value non-financial employee benefits over high compensation.

The effects from the pandemic could perhaps have changed what employees and consumers expects from firms. Recent research from Naina Dhingra et al., (2021), stresses the importance of understanding the needs of employees to not lose out on talent. During the pandemic years, firms have taken many different approaches to facilitate for employees, some succeeding more than others. As most employers would like to be perceived as a good place to work, results from our research indicate that offering non-financial employee benefits could influence the firm's overall performance and strengthen brand perceptions among consumers. We have therefore sufficient evidence to support both hypotheses (*Hypotheses 3 and 4*) to the corresponding topic, meaning that firms should focus on adopting non-financial

employee benefits that are representing the values of the organization with fitting marketing strategies to achieve the greatest dual effect of brand equity.

5.1.3 Sustainability, More Than Just a Buzzword?

Prior to our research on different employer branding initiatives, we found it particularly interesting to see whether different sustainability efforts would have a positive effect on brand equity among both consumers and employees.

Implementing green practices is an increasing trend among firms (Sun & Wang, 2019). An exploratory study examining consumer perceptions published in the *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* (Pookulangara & Shephard, 2013), found that consumers prefer to purchase products and/or services from companies that has a on integrating sustainable practices. Responding to the formulated hypothesis belonging to the topic of sustainability in employer branding, it is of interest to understand whether employees value such initiatives in addition to consumers.

Additionally, in the 2000s many firms have expressed the importance of sustainability as a key part of their business. For instance, the founder and Vice President of Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard and Rick Ridgeway, along with sustainability consultants Jib Ellison expressed that “Sustainability will simply be how business is done.” (Chouinard et al., 2011). To a certain degree they have been proven right as ethical consumerism is an increasing movement. However, a more detailed examination of the impact this employer branding initiative has, suggest that that the movement has been overvalued. Focusing on sustainability has a great effect on attracting consumers but is not particularly valued by employees.

From the gathered data and the different analysis that has been implemented to the study, it is evident that consumers are finding sustainability at work more attractive than employees. From the different Chi Square tests, sustainability is the

employer branding initiative that is most dependent on whether the respondent chose from a customer or employee perspective. Firms that are attracting candidates capitalizing on their sustainable workplace can achieve a positive effect on attracting consumers, however, as predicted in the hypothesis related to this area, it is not as valued by employees. Sustainability is the initiative that offers the least dual effect in conjunction to increasing brand equity.

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that it is not uncommon for respondents to bias their response to an answer that is regarded as morally right. Thus, social desirability bias has been viewed as a factor that might distort the effect in questions regarding sustainability. However, on the other hand, evidence also indicates that social desirability bias is not as prominent. (Vesely & Klöckner, 2020). Consequently, this raises the question as to if consumers stated that they place high value on sustainability initiatives due to social desirability bias, or if they truly do value this.

5.1.4 Training and Development for Success

As a part of our research and in accordance with our hypothesis, we wanted to understand whether making investments into training and development opportunities for employees will make firms experience positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity. The descriptive statistics shows that offering training and development opportunities is the most attractive initiative when considering average sample responses from both consumers and employees from the A/B tests. In comparison to all the other employer branding initiatives examined, offering training and development opportunities to employees is the initiative which has the highest probability of generating the most dual brand equity effect for firms. Results from the Likert scale also indicate that the full sample consider firms that offer training and development opportunities to be particularly attractive as the belonging statement has the highest average agreement rate. The findings are also consistent with the ranking responses results from the full sample

size. Particularly for consumers, training and development is the initiative that is most important when choosing a product/service in comparison to the other initiatives which is tested for. Among employees, it is only non-financial employee benefits that has a higher average importance rate.

What might come as a surprise is that training and development is particularly valued by consumers when purchasing a product/service. As proven from the crosstab analyses, the practitioners believe that training and development opportunities are more effective among employees, but the crosstab analysis from the first survey proved that training and development has the highest average response rate (26.6%) among both consumers and employees.

There can be several reasons to why training and development is as important as our findings suggests. As most of the studies examined in the literature review conclude that training and development positively affects business results, it is important to understand the hidden influence it has on consumers. An explanatory factor for the great consumer influence from training and development can be its linkage with organizational innovation, which is explained by Sjoerd Beugelsdijk, (2008). Additionally, as results from Sung & Choi (2014) suggests that training and development leads the way for the firm's overall culture, our findings strengthen the belief that offering training and development opportunities to employees is more than just securing that the workers have the skills and competence to complete their tasks.

At last, this analysis clearly shows that practitioners might reconsider some of their current branding efforts as training and development has a significantly larger attractiveness effect on consumers than what responses from the practitioners suggests.

5.2 Evaluation of Hypotheses

Evaluation of Hypotheses		
Hypotheses	Supported?	Reasoning
H1: Firms using hybrid-office will have more positive spillover effects for brand equity among consumers than offering fully remote or fully at office.	No	Descriptive statistics indicate that there are other initiatives that should be prioritized. Additionally, chi-square score shows that there is a moderate difference between the attractiveness from a consumer and employee perspective, meaning that there are no guarantees that offering hybrid office will lead to an increase in brand equity among consumers.
H2: Firms that encourage employees to have a good work-life balance will generate positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity among consumers.	Partially	There are few evidences from the A/B tests suggesting that work-life balance will increase positive spillover effects to brand equity, however, the mean scores from the likert scale and ranking scales indicate that the initiative is moderately valued by both consumers and employees.
H3: Employees are valuing firms that offer high compensation more than consumers do.	Yes	Results from the A/B tests including chi-square scores suggests that there is a strong significant dependency between being a consumer or an employee when choosing high compensation as the preferred initiative, meaning that that employees are more likely to value firms that offer high compensation than consumers.
H4: Firms that are investing into non-financial employee benefits will have more positive spillover effects to brand equity than firms using the same resources on higher wages.	Yes	The cross-tab analysis performed in the first survey shows average response rates involving non-financial employee benefits to be much larger than the ones including high compensation. In addition, high compensation is outperformed by other initiatives that are not related to financials. Comparatively, non-financial employee benefits scores relatively well against other initiatives. Overall, there are strong indications that firms are better of investing in non-financial employee benefits when increasing brand equity.
H5: Investing in sustainable practices will increase attitudes of brand equity rather than it will increase well-being among employees.	Yes	Evidences from the study suggests that consumers are finding sustainability practises at work more attractive than employees. Comparatively, results indicate that employees value sustainable practises to a very low extent, meaning that firms are more likely to increase brand equity by implementing sustainability at work. However, it can have a neutral or negative impact on employee well-being.
H6: Firms that make investments in training and development opportunities for employees will overall benefit from the positive spillover effects in terms of brand equity.	Yes	According to all statistics performed, offering training and development opportunities to employees is the initiative which has the highest probability of generating the most dual brand equity effect for firms. Both consumers and employees value this initiative to a great extent, meaning that there are reasons to conclude that marketing the firm as one which offers training and development opportunities will lead to a significant dual effect in terms of brand equity.

Table 3 - Evaluation of Hypotheses

As this paper include research about different areas of employer branding, multiple hypotheses are formulated and evaluated. Consequently, a combination of statistical methods was used to understand the influence which different employer branding initiatives have on brand equity. It is beneficial for our study to mix multiple hypothesis measures when evaluating each hypothesis individually as brand equity considers several organizational factors which again influence the added value that firms, employees, and consumers experience. However, conducting multiple comparisons increases the likelihood that some findings will be false positives, clouding real discoveries (Menyhart et al., 2021).

Therefore, to keep consistency, this study considers the hypothesis measure scores from the analysis setup (see Figure 5), the number of performed statistical tests, and the sampling size when drawing conclusions. In the cases where the p-value is smaller than the confidence threshold, the null hypothesis can only be rejected with a certain confidence, but this rejection does not “prove” that the alternative hypothesis is correct. Contrarily, when we have large p-values above the confidence threshold, the null hypothesis is not supported, although it does not mean that the null hypothesis can be guaranteed to be “true”. Therefore, a mix between quantitative measures and a qualitative approach of evaluating each individual hypothesis is taken, as the performed statistics together provides us sufficient evidence to support or reject the alternative hypothesis. A reasoning for the decision around each individual hypothesis is presented in Table 3.

5.3 Limitations

A/B testing can provide valuable insights when testing for variations of a concept, but it requires the right approach. In advance of distributing the final survey, we feared that the respondents would struggle with adapting to the role as both consumer and employee. However, we wrote fictitious narratives to help the participants adapt to the different scenarios and roles they had to familiarize themselves with. Furthermore, without a well-organized and planned approach to the testing, results can be misleading. After deciding which elements in employer branding to study, we decided to not systematically test all the various initiatives in the A/B tests against each other’s, meaning that various initiatives can only be measured against the specific initiative in which they are tested for. E.g., as we only tested high compensation against non-financial employee benefits and training and development, we do not have sufficient data to tell whether this initiative would be considered less or more attractive than e.g., offering hybrid office to employees. Thus, this study only tells us which initiatives the respondents prefer the most based on their role as a consumer or an employee,

however it does not tell us what they do not opt for. The reasoning behind the decision of not systematically testing every initiative against each other's was that we wanted to keep the survey short and simple as the A/B tests consist of a substantial number of elements that can be heavy to read for the participants.

Additionally, we did not place much value on personal characteristics from the respondents. According to (Galotti, 2004), it is important to consider behavior and characteristics of the respondents, and to understand the mechanisms behind consumer and employee responses. Nevertheless, this may lead to further research on the topic. Furthermore, a limitation to the study may be social desirability bias as mentioned in the discussion (Grimm, 2010). It is possible that consumers stated that they value environmental initiatives as this is ethically relevant, and to achieve an improved social impression of oneself (Vesely & Klöckner, 2020). Consequently, this brings into question how reliable research on environmental behavior is amongst consumers, and specifically sustainable employer branding initiatives.

Finally, as our study only collected data using a quantitative methodological approach, we find research shortcoming as a natural consequence. By supplementing the research with qualitative methods that consist of more in-depth explanations and causal relationships may provide valuable insights. Among the benefits behind a qualitative approach to the methodology is that it brings more flexibility and a better explanation around settings, attitudes, and context-related issues. There are reasons to believe that using different methodological approach and samples, might reveal results that are beyond our findings and could assist existing literature.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to bring new insights that could lead to a better understanding of the dual effect to brand equity that firms can experience from developing a great employer brand. Developing a great employer brand should therefore be a long-term goal. What is important is to create, maintain, and enhance a brand based on long-term strategic initiatives. By investigating preferences towards different employer branding initiatives from both a consumer and employee perspective, we wanted to understand how HR and marketing activities can go hand in hand cost efficiently to achieve business success. From constructing an online survey, gathering almost hundred and ninety responses, results gave us numerous interesting findings.

Based on the research question, and insights gathered from the concept development and testing stage, results suggest that most consumers and employees in the target segments respond positively to firms that are offering employees a clear career path with training and development opportunities being arranged as a part of the firms' culture.

There is statistical support to accept all the formulated hypotheses except Hypothesis 1, that considers how hybrid office will generate more positive spillover effects to brand equity than offering fully remote or fully at office. From the performed statistics there are evidence showing that there are other initiatives than offering hybrid-office that should be prioritized when firms are considering using it as a strategic tool to increase brand equity. The comparison analysis shows that practitioners are particularly overvaluing the effect of hybrid-office and the flexibility that comes with it when the goal is to achieve increased brand equity. The statistics shows a clear significant difference between practitioner responses and the actual responses from consumers and employees when measuring the attractiveness of hybrid office. This is perhaps not a surprise as

previous research indicate that there are very large differences across companies in what the practitioners know about best practices in HR (Rynes et al., 2002). As expected, sustainability has a greater attractiveness among consumers, but is not effective to use by employers when attracting candidates.

To conclude, managers and practitioners in the borderline between HR and marketing can use insights from this study as a starting point for managerial implications to elaborate on what business strategies their firms should adopt in the future to stay relevant, become excellent employees, and secure positive word of mouth. The findings are also relevant to understand how target segments respond to different initiatives. When evaluating the different employer branding strategies, firms should consider the degree of dual effect it has on attracting employees and consumers, and how it will affect performance. The comparison analysis in this study suggests that there are certain misconceptions between consumer and employee responses to what HR and marketing practitioners assume is best practice. As a result, this study lays the foundation to question whether the practitioners will recognize these misconceptions and act upon them or not.

Chapter 7. Final Remarks

Finally, as this study examined which employer branding initiatives employees and consumers value, and what practitioners within the field of HR and marketing believe, we find it of importance to emphasize that the purpose of the study is to discuss how firms can increase brand equity. The study is meant as a supplement to the literature in the field of HR and marketing, as there is limited innovative research on the topic. By acknowledging that marketing and HR can go hand in hand, companies can achieve a dual effect on their employer branding initiatives and thus increase brand equity.

7.1 Suggestions for Future Research

The findings from this thesis have generated several interesting findings that could lead to future research to master the integration between HR and marketing. Our results suggest that there are knowledge gaps between what current practitioners in HR and marketing believe that consumers and employees are valuing.

The study shows that training and development activities can be used as a strategic tool to boost brand equity when targeting both employees and consumers. Thus, future research can examine which specific activities within the field of training and development that are most valued by both consumers and employees. Our research only considers training and development as a fundamental initiative in employer branding. E.g., future research can explore how training and development opportunities can be integrated with sustainability efforts, such as the effect that sustainable development programs might have on business performance.

As this study contains a sample with many different personal characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds, future research on how employer branding initiatives perform in different industries and among different age groups is relevant. For instance, we recommend future research to focus on sustainability, and how it could be applied to attract consumers, but specifically examine which industries and age groups where sustainability practices have the greatest dual effect to brand equity. Perhaps, in specific industries there could be employees that consider sustainability practices at work to be of significant value.

There is also room to supplement the results from the thesis with a larger set of independent variables. In the conducted study, we focused particularly on consumers and employees, where there could be room for more proportionate shares between the groups. For instance, future research can include more

stakeholders such as owners, competitors, suppliers, investors, and governments in addition to consumers and employees. By comparing the different employer branding initiatives with more sub-groups, a more nuanced picture of the population could appear. Thus, future research on all stakeholders that are directly involved in a firm's brand equity may bring valuable information.

As numerous firms have transformed their work environment in support of remote working, we would recommend future research to dive deeper into this topic and examine the effect hybrid office has on employee-well-being in different industries. Results from our study shows that employees and consumers value hybrid-office, but only to a certain degree. The research from this thesis indicates that offering hybrid office does not have the indented brand equity effect and that practitioners were not accurately predicting responses from consumer and employees. This field of research could be examined further with a larger sample belonging to multiple industries. E.g., hybrid office may be more valued among employees that have a complicated living situation that requires more flexibility.

Finally, results from this thesis indicate that employer branding is a business area with enormous potential. Firms that are mastering the specific initiatives that both attract consumers and employees can achieve success and added value. Findings contribute to Keller's research on the topic of brand equity which states: "a brand is not built by accident but is the product of carefully accomplishing a series of logically linked steps with consumers" (Keller, 2013). As the world is constantly evolving, and there is limited research on the integration between HR and marketing, our discoveries lay the foundation for future research involving innovative methods to increase brand awareness and equity. Lastly, the thesis provides an opportunity to research how misconceptions from practitioners can be dealt with to master the integration between HR and marketing.

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Appendices

Test Results

Appendix 1: Frequency A/B test from First Survey.

Frequency Table - A/B Test - Consumer and Employee responses					
Profile	Consumer or Employee	Option	N	Frequency	Percent
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Option A - Hybrid Office	189	70	43.4
		Option B - Training and development	189	119	56.6
	Employee	Option A - Hybrid Office	189	83	37.0
		Option B - Training and development	189	106	63.0
Company 2 - Bank firm	Consumer	Option A - Employee Benefits	189	142	75.1
		Option B - High Compensation	189	47	24.9
	Employee	Option A - Employee Benefits	189	118	62.4
		Option B - High Compensation	189	71	37.6
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer	Option A - Sustainability	189	111	58.7
		Option B - Training and development	189	78	41.3
	Employee	Option A - Sustainability	189	53	28.0
		Option B - Training and development	189	136	72.0
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Option A - Training and development	189	138	73.0
		Option B - High Compensation	189	51	27.0
	Employee	Option A - Training and development	189	93	49.2
		Option B - High Compensation	189	96	50.8
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer	Option A - Sustainability	189	159	84.1
		Option B - Employee Benefits	189	30	15.9
	Employee	Option A - Sustainability	189	77	40.7
		Option B - Employee Benefits	189	112	50.3

Appendix 2: Paired sample statistics from First Survey.

Paired Sample Statistics - Consumer and Employee Data				Results			
"Which Employer Branding initiatives is valued from being in a position as a consumer and employee?"				Consumer and Employee responses			
Profile	Respondent	Option	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean	
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Hybrid Office (1) Training and development (2)	189	1.63	.484	.035	
	Employee	Hybrid Office (1) Training and development (2)	189	1.56	.498	.036	
Company 2 - Bank firm	Consumer	Employee Benefits (1) = High Compensation (2)	189	1.24	.433	.032	
	Employee	Employee Benefits (1) = High Compensation (2)	189	1.38	.486	.035	
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer	Sustainability (1) Training and development (2)	189	1.41	.494	.036	
	Employee	Sustainability (1) Training and development (2)	189	1.72	.450	.033	
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Training and development (1) = High compensation (2)	189	1.27	.445	.032	
	Employee	Training and development (1) = High compensation (2)	189	1.51	.501	.036	
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer	Sustainability (1) = Employee benefits (2)	189	1.16	.366	.027	
	Employee	Sustainability (1) = Employee benefits (2)	189	1.59	.493	.036	

Paired Sample Statistics - Consumer and Employee Data								
Paired Differences								
Profile	Respondent	Mean difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		Significance	
					Lower	Upper	t	One-sided p
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Pair 1							
	Consumer response Vs Employee response	.069	.584	.042	-.015	.153	1.619	.054
Company 2 - Bank Firm	Pair 2							
	Consumer response Vs Employee response	-.127	.597	.043	-.213	-.041	-2.925	.002
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Pair 3							
	Consumer response Vs Employee response	-.307	.584	.043	-.391	-.223	-7.219	<.001
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Pair 4							
	Consumer response Vs Employee response	-.238	.637	.046	-.329	-.147	-5.139	<.001
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Pair 5							
	Consumer response Vs Employee response	-.434	.576	.042	-.517	-.351	-10.351	<.001

Appendix 3: Cross tab analysis First Survey

Cross tab analysis - Consumer and Employee Data - Response Percentage Rate				
Company 1 - Consultancy firm				
		Employee response		
		Option A - Hybrid Office	Option B - Training and development	Percentage of total:
Consumer response	Option A - Hybrid Office	23.3%	13.8%	37.1%
	Option B - Training and development	20.6%	42.3%	62.9%
	Percentage of total:	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%
Company 2 - Bank firm				
		Employee response		
		Option A - Employee Benefits	Option B - High Compensation	Percentage of total:
Consumer response	Option A - Employee Benefits	50.3%	24.8%	75.1%
	Option B - High Compensation	12.2%	12.7%	24.9%
	Percentage of total:	62.4%	37.6%	100.0%
Company 3 - Car manufacturer				
		Employee response		
		Option A - Sustainability	Option B - Training and development	Percentage of total:
Consumer response	Option A - Sustainability	21.7%	37.0%	57.7%
	Option B - Training and development	6.30%	35.0%	41.3%
	Percentage of total:	28.0%	72.0%	100.0%
Company 4 - Consultancy firm				
		Employee response		
		Option A - Training and development	Option B - High Compensation	Percentage of total:
Consumer response	Option A - Training and development	38.1%	34.9%	73.0%
	Option B - High Compensation	11.1%	15.9%	27.0%
	Percentage of total:	49.2%	50.8%	100.0%
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer				
		Employee response		
		Option A - Sustainability	Option B - Employee Benefits	Percentage of total:
Consumer response	Option A - Sustainability	36.5%	47.6%	84.1%
	Option B - Employee Benefits	4.2%	11.7%	15.9%
	Percentage of total:	40.7%	59.3%	100.0%

Appendix 4: Analysis of Likert Scale from First Survey.

Likert Scale - Full sample size - First Survey				
Measuring agreement to claims				
1 = Totally Disagree, 7 = Totally Agree				
Claim	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
"I consider firms which offers opportunities for home office as more attractive than those who don't"	189	3.63	.945	.069
"It is important that firms encourage their employees to have a good work-life balance"	189	3.92	.834	.061
"It is important that firms I'm using services and products from are paying their employees a fair compensation"	189	4.11	.724	.053
"It is important that I get insights about the work conditions at firms I'm in contact with"	189	3.06	.963	.070
"It is seen as attractive when firms invests in training and development opportunities for their employees"	189	4.16	.762	.055
"My purchasing behavior is positively affected when firms that I'm in contact with doing sustainable activities at the workplace"	189	3.78	.851	.062
"It is more important that firms are doing sustainable activities at the workplace than producing sustainable products"	189	2.71	.964	2.71
"It is important for me that firms market themselves as a great place to work"	190	3.62	.929	.068
"I consider firms with flexible working hours as more attractive than firms having a normal work schedule"	191	2.95	.985	.072

Appendix 5: Analysis of Ranking Scale from First Survey (Consumer and Employee).

Consumer responses - First Survey "When purchasing as product/service"				
Mean placement of different employer branding initiatives				
1 = Most important, 7 = Least important				
Quality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Firm has a high reputation	189	5.20	1.938	.141
Firm offers good employee benefits	189	5.53	2.051	.149
Firm offers flexible working hours	189	4.34	2.014	.147
Firm offers a flexible place to work from	189	5.52	1.901	.138
Firm offers high compensation	189	4.74	2.437	.177
Firm has a central office location	189	4.05	2.230	.162
Firm is a practitioner of sustainability	189	4.07	1.924	.140
Firm offers training to employees	189	2.65	2.322	.169

Employee Responses "When choosing between job offers"				
Mean placement of different employer branding initiatives				
1 = Most important, 7 = Least important				
Quality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Firm has a high reputation	189	4.74	2.027	.147
Firm offers good employee benefits	189	4.84	2.228	.162
Firm offers flexible working hours	189	3.79	2.102	.153
Firm offers a flexible place to work from	189	3.24	2.107	.153
Firm offers high compensation	189	5.24	2.073	.151
Firm has a central office location	189	6.24	2.071	.151
Firm is a practitioner of sustainability	189	4.19	2.038	.148
Firm offers training to employees	189	3.72	2.231	.162

Appendix 6: Frequency Analysis of A/B test from Second Survey.

Frequency Table - A/B Test - Practitioner responses					
Profile	Consumer or Employee	Option	N	Frequency	Percent
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Option A - Hybrid Office	31	9	29.9
		Option B - Training and development	31	22	71.0
	Employee	Option A - Hybrid Office	31	21	67.7
		Option B - Training and development	31	19	32.3
Company 2 - Bank firm	Consumer	Option A - Employee Benefits	31	23	74.2
		Option B - High Compensation	31	8	25.8
	Employee	Option A - Employee Benefits	31	12	38.7
		Option B - High Compensation	31	19	61.3
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer	Option A - Sustainability	31	23	74.3
		Option B - Training and development	31	8	25.8
	Employee	Option A - Sustainability	31	11	35.5
		Option B - Training and development	31	22	64.5
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Option A - Training and development	31	23	74.2
		Option B - High Compensation	31	8	25.8
	Employee	Option A - Training and development	31	15	48.4
		Option B - High Compensation	31	16	51.6
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer	Option A - Sustainability	31	28	90.3
		Option B - Employee Benefits	31	3	9.7
	Employee	Option A - Sustainability	31	7	22.6
		Option B - Employee Benefits	31	24	77.4

Appendix 7: Paired Sample Statistics of A/B test from Second Survey.

Paired Sample Statistics - Practitioner Data				Results		
"Does consumers and employee responses differ from what practitioners think?"				Practitioner responses		
Profile	Respondent	Option	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Hybrid Office (1) Training and development (2)	31	1.71	.461	.083
	Employee	Hybrid Office (1) Training and development (2)	31	1.32	.475	.085
Company 2 - Bank firm	Consumer	Employee Benefits (1) = High Compensation (2)	31	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee	Employee Benefits (1) = High Compensation (2)	31	1.61	.495	.089
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Consumer	Sustainability (1) Training and development (2)	31	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee	Sustainability (1) Training and development (2)	31	1.65	.486	.087
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Consumer	Training and development (1) = High compensation (2)	31	1.26	.445	.080
	Employee	Training and development (1) = High compensation (2)	31	1.52	.508	.091
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer	Consumer	Sustainability (1) = Employee benefits (2)	31	1.10	.301	.054
	Employee	Sustainability (1) = Employee benefits (2)	31	1.77	.425	.076

Appendix 8: Cross tab analysis of A/B test from Second Survey.

Cross tab analysis - Practitioner Data - Response Percentage Rate					
Company 1 - Consultancy firm					
Practitioners response on employee behavior					
Pratitioners response on consumer behavior	Option A - Hybrid Office		Option B - Training and development	Percentage of total:	
	Option A - Hybrid Office		16.1%	12.9%	29.0%
	Option B - Training and development		51.6%	19.4%	71.0%
	Percentage of total:		67.7%	32.3%	100.0%
Company 2 - Bank firm					
Practitioners response on employee behavior					
Pratitioners response on consumerbehavior	Option A - Employee Benefits		Option B - High Compensation	Percentage of total:	
	Option A - Employee Benefits		29.0%	45.2%	74.2%
	Option B - High Compensation		9.7%	16.1%	25.8%
	Percentage of total:		38.7%	61.3%	100.0%
Company 3 - Car manufacturer					
Practitioners response on employee behavior					
Pratitioners response on consumer behavior	Option A - Sustainability		Option B - Training and development	Percentage of total:	
	Option A - Sustainability		22.6%	51.6%	74.2%
	Option B - Training and development		12.9%	12.9%	25.8%
	Percentage of total:		35.5%	64.5%	100.0%
Company 4 - Consultancy firm					
Practitioners response on employee behavior					
Pratitioners response on consumer behavior	Option A - Training and development		Option B - High Compensation	Percentage of total:	
	Option A - Training and development		35.5%	38.7%	74.2%
	Option B - High Compensation		12.9%	12.9%	25.8%
	Percentage of total:		48.4%	51.6%	100.0%
Company 5 - Furniture manufacturer					
Practitioners response on employee behavior					
Pratitioners response on consumer behavior	Option A - Sustainability		Option B - Employee Benefits	Percentage of total:	
	Option A - Sustainability		21.4%	71.0%	90.3%
	Option B - Employee Benefits		3.2%	6.5%	9.7%
	Percentage of total:		22.6%	77.4%	100.0%

Appendix 9: Comparison analysis - Paired Sample Statistics of A/B tests from First and Second Survey.

Paired Sample Statistics - Comparison Analysis									
Paired Differences									
Profile	Respondent	Mean difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Significance	
					Lower	Upper		One-sided p	Two-sided p
Company 1 - Consultancy firm	Pair 1								
	Consumer response Vs Practitioner assumption on consumer	.226	.717	.129	-.037	.489	1.754	.045	.090
Company 2 - Bank Firm	Pair 2								
	Employee Vs Practitioner assumption on employee	-.290	.693	.124	-.544	-.036	-2.334	.013	.026
Company 3 - Car manufacturer	Pair 3								
	Consumer response Vs Practitioner assumption on consumer	-.032	.706	.127	-.291	.227	-.254	.401	.801
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Pair 4								
	Employee Vs Practitioner assumption on employee	.258	.631	.113	.027	.489	2.278	.015	.030
Company 5 - Furniture manufact	Pair 5								
	Consumer response Vs Practitioner assumption on consumer	-.032	.706	.127	-.291	.227	-.254	.401	.801
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Pair 6								
	Employee Vs Practitioner assumption on employee	-.161	.583	.105	-.375	.053	-1.541	.067	.134
Company 5 - Furniture manufact	Pair 7								
	Consumer response Vs Practitioner assumption on consumer	-.097	.700	.126	-.354	.160	-.769	.224	.448
Company 4 - Consultancy firm	Pair 8								
	Employee Vs Practitioner assumption on employee	-.097	.700	.126	-.354	.160	-.769	.224	.448
Company 5 - Furniture manufact	Pair 9								
	Consumer response Vs Practitioner assumption on consumer	-.129	.499	.090	-.312	.054	-1.438	.080	.161
Company 5 - Furniture manufact	Pair 10								
	Employee Vs Practitioner assumption on employee	.258	.682	.122	.008	.508	2.108	.022	.043

Qualtrics Survey 1 – Distributed to Consumers and Employees

Appendix 10

A/B test 1

Dette er designbyrået "Walk N Talk". Byrået ønsker å markedsføre seg selv på en attraktiv måte ut mot kunder og ansatte. De står nå ovenfor et valg der byrået skal velge mellom to ulike bedriftsprofiler for å tiltrekke seg økt interesse. Alternativ A og B er representert under.



Alternativ A:
Walk N Talk er opptatt av å markedsføre hvordan de tilbyr en helt unik hybrid-hverdag til deres ansatte.



Alternativ B:
Walk N Talk er også veldig bevisste på å tilby sine ansatte kursing for å styrke den helhetlige kompetansen til bedriften.



Du jobber som selvstendig næringsdrivende og trenger kompetansen til Walk N Talk for å utvikle en ny nettside. Etter å ha blitt presentert følgende alternativer, hvilken profil anser du som mest attraktiv når du skal benytte deg av tjenestene til Walk N Talk?

A

B

Du har akkurat fullført en mastergrad i interaksjonsdesign, og er for øyeblikket på uttkikk etter en fulltidsjobb. Walk N Talk har lenge vist interesse for din kompetanse. Hvilke av følgende profiler ville påvirket deg i størst grad til å søke på stilling hos Walk N Talk?

A

B

A/B test 2

Trondheim Bank er en lokalbank som er særdeles opptatt av kompensasjonsordningene til deres ansatte. Banken er kjent for å være en arbeidsgiver med et høyt lønnsnivå, men den er også i en egen særklasse når det kommer til ansattfordeler. Trondheim Bank står derfor ovenfor et dilemma om den skal markedsføre seg som en arbeidsgiver som lønner godt eller en som tiltrekkelig for gode ansattfordeler. Markedsavdelingen har valgt å foreslå to ulike profiler til toppledelsen.

Alternativ A:

På følgende profil har Trondheim Bank valgt å fremheve ansattfordeler.

Trondheim Bank
VI ER HER FOR DEG.

Kongens gate 15
Trondheim By
www.trondheimbank.com

I Trondheim Bank er vi opptatt av å tilfottelegge slik at våre ansatte kan ha et liv utenfor jobben.

Bli med på laget.
De ansatte i Trondheim Bank er kjent for å jobbe hardt, men de blir også opptordret til å nyte livet utenfor kontoret.



Fleksibel arbeidstid og arbeidsted.

I Trondheim Bank er vi mer opptatt av at jobben blir gjort enn at de ansatte skal tvunges til å komme på kontoret i en hektisk hverdag.



Fulllønnert uke med ekstra ferie.

En uke mer ferie gir grunnlag for å innhente nye impulser og kunne lade batteriene litt ekstra. Trondheim bank er helt avhengig av utviltvite ansatte for å levere best mulig service.



Ekstra støtte til utdanning.

Å øke egen kompetanse skal lønne seg. Samtidig er vi veldig glade for at våre ansatte ønsker å utvikle seg. Derfor tilbyr Trondheim Bank støtte til utdanning samtidig som vi opprettholder lønnsnivået under utdannelsen.

Andet fornyede ansatte.

95%

Nr 2 i Norge.

Norges mest lukrative pensjon.

7G

Uavhengig av lønnen til våre ansatte.

Trondheim Bank har siden starten av 1900-tallet jobbet mot å være en av de beste arbeidstedene i Norge. Vårt motto er at gode ansattfordeler vil øke deres motivasjon for å tilby kundene våre best mulig service og produkt. Dette er en enkel oppskrift som fortsetter å fungere.

Alternativ B:

På følgende profil har Trondheim Bank valgt å fremheve den gode lønnskompensasjonen banken tilbyr.

Trondheim Bank
VI ER HER FOR DEG.

Kongens gate 15
Trondheim By
www.trondheimbank.com

Trondheim Bank kunnngjør en revolusjonerende lønnspakke til alle deres ansatte.

Bli med på laget.
Som ansatt i Trondheim Bank vil du få tilgang til en gunstig lønnspakke.



5% minimum årlig lønnsøkning.

Vi ønsker å motivere alle ansatte til å yte maksimalt på arbeidsplassen flere år frem i tid. Derfor sikrer vi alle våre ansatte minimum 5% årlig lønnsøkning.



Eierskap i arbeidsplassen.

Alle ansatte fortjener eierskap til arbeidsplassen. Derfor tilbyr vi alle våre ansatte en prosentandel aksjer fra sekundært de signerer kontrakt med oss.



Signeringsbonus.

Trondheim Bank ønsker å sikre alle våre ansatte en pangstart på karrieren deres hos oss. De ansatte får derfor 10% av deres årlige lønn i signeringsbonus hos oss.

Andet fornyede ansatte.

95%

Nr 2 i Norge.

Konkurransedyktig lønn.

10%

Blant topp 50% høyest betalende arbeidsgivere i Norge.

Trondheim Bank har siden starten av 1900-tallet jobbet mot å være en av de beste arbeidstedene i Norge. Vårt motto er at å kompensere de ansatte på en rettferdig måte, vil øke deres motivasjon til å tilby våre kunder best mulig service og produkt. Dette er en enkel oppskrift som fortsetter å fungere.

Vennligst velg hvilken bedriftsprofil du opplever som mest attraktiv når du ønsker å bytte arbeidsplass til Trondheim Bank.

A

B

Vennligst velg hvilken bedriftsprofil som du opplever som mest attraktiv når du er i prosessen med å bytte bank.

A

B

A/B test 3

Broomelin er en produsent av elektriske kjøretøy. I prosessen med å bygge en merkevare ønsker Broomelin å posisjonere seg som en stabil og nytenkende bedrift. Nå står Broomelin ovenfor valget mellom følgende to bedriftsprofiler for å representere deres merkevare.

Alternativ A:
På følgende bedriftsprofil velger Broomelin å markedsføre deres bærekraftsprofil.

Alternativ B:
På følgende bedriftsprofil har Broomelin valgt å fokusere på utviklingsmulighetene for de ansatte.

Broomelin



Verden trenger flere stemmer.


Derfor benytter vi arbeidsplassen til å redusere klimaavtrykk, øke kjønnsbalansen, og redusere lønnsforskjellene.

Selv om bilene våre ikke øker klimavtrykket, er vi opptatt av å jobbe aktivt mot å ta vare på ressursene vi har på jorden.

Det hele starter på arbeidsplassen.

Les om hva vi gjør for å holde arbeidsplassen bærekraftig.

Broomelin



FREMTIDENS BILER BEHØVER FREMTIDENS KOMPETANSE

I Broomelin tilbyr vi alle våre ansatte gratis kurs og utviklingsmuligheter.

På veien mot "ekte" klimanøytrale biler kreves det mer enn bare en forståelse av bilen.

Våre ansatte er Broomelin sin motor. Derfor er det naturlig at alle ansatte får påfyll med kompetanse.

Les om hvilke kurs og utviklingsmuligheter vi tilbyr de ansatte på arbeidsplassen.

Du er i ferd med å kjøpe ny el-bil fra Broomelin. Vennligst velg hvilken profil som oppleves som mest attraktiv når du skal kjøpe ny el-bil fra Broomelin?

A

B

Som bilmekaniker ser du ikke lengre potensialet i bensin og dieselbil-industrien. Derfor er du på utkikk etter en ny arbeidsgiver som produserer el-biler. Vennligst velg hvilken profil som er mest sannsynlig til å tiltrekke deg som jobbsøker.

A

B

A/B test 4

Bogstad Consulting er et nyetablert konsultentselskap innen digital transformasjon. Konsultentselskapet ønsker å markedsføre seg som en attraktiv arbeidsgiver, men har enda ikke bestemt hvilke kvaliteter som er mest attraktive hos nye kandidater og kunder. Selskapets direktør mangler den nødvendige kundedataen for å kunne ta en god beslutning, men har foreløpig fått presentert følgende to landingssider fra markedsavdelingen.

Alternativ A:
På følgende landingsside har Bogstad Consulting valgt å fremheve sine gode kurs- og utviklingsmuligheter for å sikre at alle deres ansatte kan levere gode resultater til klienter.

Alternativ B:
På følgende landingsside har Bogstad Consulting valgt å fremheve banken sine gode kompensasjonsordninger.

Bogstad Consulting

I Bogstad Consulting er vi opptatt av å utstyre våre ansatte med den riktige kompetansen for å hjelpe deg med å snu utfordringer til forretningsmuligheter.

Vårt integrerte opplærings- og utviklingskurs for alle ansatte er en sentral del av vår strategi for å kunne håndtere alle kunder sine hendelser.

[BLI EN DEL AV BOGSTAD CONSULTING](#)

BOGSTAD CONSULTING

Detailed description: This is a landing page for Bogstad Consulting. It features an illustration of a woman in a white shirt and blue pants, holding a smartphone and looking at a bar chart. A large red arrow points upwards and to the right. The text emphasizes training and development opportunities for employees to help them overcome challenges and turn them into business opportunities. At the bottom, there is a call-to-action button and the company name.

Bogstad Consulting

I Bogstad Consulting er vi opptatt av å tilby våre klienter best mulig service.

For å intensivere våre ansatte til å levere særklassede konsulenttenester, er alle våre ansatte en del av vår unike resultatbaserte bonusordninger som kan utgi inntil 60% av grunnlønnen i bonus. I Bogstad Consulting kompenseres vi også ansatte med full lønn ved sykdom og/eller foreldrepermisjon.

[BLI EN DEL AV BOGSTAD CONSULTING](#)

BOGSTAD CONSULTING

Detailed description: This is a landing page for Bogstad Consulting. It features the same illustration as the first page. The text focuses on providing the best service to clients and offering a unique, results-based bonus scheme to employees, including full pay during illness and parental leave. At the bottom, there is a call-to-action button and the company name.

Hvilke av følgende landingssider anser du som mest attraktiv for å tiltrekke seg din
jobb kandidat i Bogstad Consulting?

A

B

Hvilke av følgende landingssider anser du som mest attraktiv om du skulle benyttet deg av
tjenestene til Bogstad Consulting?

A

B

A/B test 5

Movables er et møbelselskap som er kjent for produksjonen av innovative løsninger. Bedriften har oppnådd stor suksess med å vektlegge interne arbeidsaktiviteter som både omgår bærekraft og gode ansattfordeler. Movables kan derfor markedsføre seg godt på flere områder. Bedriften ønsker derfor å skaffe innsikt i hva kunder vurderer som attraktivt når de søker opp hvem Movables er og hva de står for.

Alternativ A:

På følgende "Om Movables" profil, har Movables valgt å legge vekt på deres gode bærekraftsprofil for å øke innovasjon.



OM
MOVABLES

Movables ble grunnlagt i 2014 med en visjon om å skape fremtidens møbler. På veien har vi vært i en konstant utvikling for å optimalisere design, forretning, og produksjon. Vi tror at målrettede tiltak som omhandler bærekraft på arbeidsplassen vil gi effekt. Movables er opptatt av at tiltak som å rehabilitere våre produksjonslokaler fremfor å bygge nytt og bidra med aktiv temperaturregulering vil være viktige pådrivere mot et bedre miljø. Derfor håper vi at vår kunnskap om design, interiør, og bærekraft vil gjøre at du velger oss.

Alternativ B:

På følgende "Om Movables" profil, har Movables valgt å legge vekt på deres gode tiltrettelegging for ansatte.



Du har akkurat kjøpt ny bolig og skal kjøpe møbler for å innrede ditt nye favorittsted. Hvilke av disse "Om Movables" profilene har størst påvirkningskraft for at du skal kjøpe Movables møbler.

A

B

Du er svært interessert i interiør og design, og har lengde vært begeistret for Movables sin raske utvikling. Hvilke av disse "Om Movables" profilene anser du som mest attraktive når du skal søke jobb hos Movables?

A

B

Likert scale

Vennligst ranger disse påstandene fra svært uenig til svært enig:

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Hverken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
For meg som kunde er det viktig at bedriften jeg handler av markedsfører seg selv som en god arbeidsplass.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg anser bedrifter som tilbyr muligheter for hjemmekontor som mer attraktive enn de som ikke gjør det.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Det påvirker min kjøpsatferd positivt om jeg vet at de ansatte i en bedrift jeg benytter tjenester/produkter av har en fleksibel arbeidstid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Det er viktig for meg at bedrifter oppfordrer deres ansatte til å ha en balanse mellom jobb og fritid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Det er viktig at bedrifter jeg benytter tjenester/produkter av betaler deres ansatte en rettferdig kompensasjon.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Det er viktig at jeg får innsyn i arbeidsvilkår hos bedrifter jeg kjøper/benytter tjenester av.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personlig opplever det attraktivt at bedrifter investerer i kurs og utviklingsmuligheter for deres ansatte.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min kjøpsatferd blir påvirket positivt av at bedrifter jeg kjøper/benytter tjenester av praktiserer aktiviteter som omgår bærekraft på arbeidsplassen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Det er viktigere for meg at bedrifter praktiserer bærekraft på arbeidsplassen enn at bedrifter produserer bærekraftige produkter/tjenester.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ranking scale

Vennligst rangere de ulike alternativene ved å trykke på alternativet og flytt alternativet i ønsket rekkefølge på følgende to spørsmål.

Tenk deg at du er i en posisjon der du må velge mellom tre jobbtilbud fra ulike bedrifter. De er alle i samme bransje, så du bestemmer deg derfor for å sette opp en liste i rangert rekkefølge med kvaliteter som er viktig for deg når du skal velge din neste arbeidsplass.

- 1 Bedriften sitt omdømme.
- 2 Praktiserer bærekraft på arbeidsplassen.
- 3 Tilrettelegger for fleksibel arbeidstid.
- 4 Høy lønnskompensasjon.
- 5 Sentral beliggenhet.
- 6 Tilrettelegger for fleksibel arbeidstid (f.eks hjemmekontor)
- 7 Tilbyr gode ansattfordeler.
- 8 Muligheter for kurs og utviklingsmuligheter.

Tenk deg at du er i en posisjon der du skal kjøpe en tjeneste fra tre forskjellige bedrifter i samme bransje. Du er veldig opptatt av arbeidsvilkår, så du bestemmer deg derfor for å sette opp en liste i rangert rekkefølge med viktige forbehold når du skal velge hvilken bedrift du benytter deg av.

- 1 Høy lønnskompensasjon.
- 2 Muligheter for kurs og utviklingsmuligheter.
- 3 Tilrettelegger for fleksibel arbeidstid (f.eks hjemmekontor)
- 4 Praktiserer bærekraft på arbeidsplassen.
- 5 Tilrettelegger for fleksibel arbeidstid.
- 6 Sentral beliggenhet.
- 7 Tilbyr gode ansattfordeler.
- 8 Bedriften sitt omdømme.

Demographic questions

Hvilket kjønn er du?

Mann

Kvinne

Annet

Hva er din alder?

Hva er din høyeste fullførte utdanning?

Grunnskole

Videregående

Fagbrev

Universitet/høgskole 3-4 år

Universitet 5 år

Doktorgrad eller annen lenger utdanning

Hvor mange års arbeidserfaring har du som fulltidsansatt?

Qualtrics survey 2 – Distributed to HR- and Marketing Practitioners

Appendix 11

Hvilke av følgende fagfelt samsvarer best med din kompetanse?

HR

Markedsføring

Questions to A/B test 1

Hvilke av følgende profiler tror du ansatte som ønsker å søke på stilling hos Walk N Talk foretrekker?

A

B

Hvilke av følgende profiler tror du kunder som skal benytte seg av tjenestene til Walk N Talk foretrekker?

A

B

Questions to A/B test 2

Vennligst velg hvilken bedriftsprofil du opplever som mest attraktiv for ansatte som ønsker å bytte arbeidsplass til Trondheim Bank.

A

B

Vennligst velg hvilken bedriftsprofil som du tror appellerer mest til kunder som skal bytte bank til Trondheim Bank.

A

B

Questions to A/B test 3

En forbruker skal kjøpe ny el-bil fra Broomelin, hvilken profil tror du forbrukeren opplever som mest attraktiv når han/hun skal kjøpe ny el-bil fra Broomelin?

A

B

For en bilmekaniker som ikke lengre ser potensialet i bensin og dieselbil-industrien, hvilken av følgende bedriftsprofil tror du appellerer mest til ansatte som ønsker å bytte jobb til en produsent av elektrisk kjøretøy?

A

B

Questions to A/B test 4

Hvilke av følgende landingssider opplever du at kunder som skal benytte seg av tjenestene til Bogstad Consulting finner mest attraktiv?

A

B

Hvilke av følgende landingssider tror du flest ansatte finner attraktivt når Bogstad Consulting skal tiltrekke seg deres jobbkandidatur?

A

B

Questions to A/B test 5

For kunder som ønsker å kjøpe møbler av Movables for å innrede sitt nye favorittsted, hvilke av disse "Om Movables" profilene opplever du har størst påvirkningskraft for kjøp?

A

B

Hvilke av disse "Om Movables" profilene tror du jobbsøkende kandidater innefor interiør og design finner mest attraktivt når de skal søke jobb hos Movables?

A

B