



## Career-washing? Unpacking employer brand promises on social media platforms

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**Career-washing? Unpacking employer brand promises on social media platforms**

**Abstract**

**Research paper**

**Purpose:** This paper explores how a global fashion retailer uses a social media platform to build an appeal via a process of online employer branding.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The study involved a narrative and thematic analysis of posts of a global fashion retailer on LinkedIn. We sampled organisational posts and the responses they received over a six-month period.

**Findings:** The organisation uses carefully curated success stories of ‘ideal’ existing employees to build an appeal based on the values of growth and belonging. While varied, the responses of platform users tend to be limited to brief contributions, questioning the success of the organisation’s attempts at creating an appeal.

**Originality:** We theorise the appeal of the employer brand through the concept of the ‘employer brand promise’. Further we show how, on social networks, this promise attempts to create value through meaningful engagement. We conclude by observing how the employer brand promise can act as a form of career-washing, where there is a significant dis-connect between the promise offered and the reality of retail work on the ground.

**Practical implications:** To avoid career-washing, employer brands should engage with the networked nature of platforms, fostering authentic conversations with users rather than using platforms merely as a billboard to post content.

**Research implication:** We argue that employer branding literature needs a new conceptual toolbox, which better reflects the mediated, affective and networked nature of platforms.

**Keywords:** Employer branding, employer brand promise, social media, retail work

## Introduction

Retail work and retail careers are currently facing a significant crisis (Lund *et al.*, 2021). This paper examines how a global fashion retailer attempts to use a social media platform to attract new employees in a context where the attraction of a retail career is at an all-time low. In the context of this special issue on ‘Understanding Prosumer Behaviour in the Platform Ecosystem’, we make two key interventions into existing debates. First, within the platform ecosystem we argue that brands play a larger role than hitherto recognised in linking internal and external organisational stakeholders. Second, in relation to prosumption, we argue for a fuller theorisation of the forms of value produced in social networks and importantly the ways in which organisations try to capture this value in their attempts to build an employer brand. As such, rather than focusing solely on the ‘content’ of posts made by the organisation, our interest is on ‘how’ the organisation makes use of the specific social and networked capabilities of social media to build their employer brand.

There is still much work to do to examine the role of branding within the nexus of relationships between the organisation and its myriad stakeholders in the platform ecosystem. In this paper, we argue for a more fluid and networked theorisation of brands in the context of employment, one which opens out to include a range of stakeholders (both existing and potential employees and others in the network). In this respect, we think there is potential for much greater cross-fertilisation between the fields of marketing and management studies. Marketing scholars have largely focused attention on the *externalities* of organisations, exploring the ways in which consumers relate to brands, and the way in which brands facilitate communal relations and sharing between consumers (i.e. Schau *et al.*, 2009; Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). Management scholars have identified how brands might operate to facilitate relations *internally* to organisations, with the aim of exploring how existing and potential employees’ commitment and efforts might be directed and managed, and as such how brands operate in a human resource management sense as a form of soft control (Brannan *et al.*, 2011). However, our specific entry point is twofold, first, to explore how in creating an

1  
2 appeal the organisation leverages existing employees *internal* to the organisation, and second, how  
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4 this appeal intersects with, and relies on, a networked form of communication which bridges and  
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6 blurs the *internal-external* divide for its effectiveness. We further theorise the operation of this  
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8 appeal via the concept of the employer brand promise. We also contribute to the scant literature on  
9  
10 the role of social media in employee recruitment, particularly in the context of employer branding.  
11  
12 As consumer research has shown, social media offers great opportunities for the social production  
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14 of brand value (i.e. Schau *et al.*, 2009; Alhashem *et al.*, 2021). However, employer branding  
15  
16 literature has been focused on its impact on corporate reputation (Sivertzen *et al.*, 2013), its role as  
17  
18 source of information for jobseekers (Kissel and Büttgen, 2015; Carpentier *et al.*, 2019) or its  
19  
20 moderating effect (Tanwar and Kumar, 2019).  
21  
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23

24  
25 Turning to our second key argument, that in the context of theories of prosumption, we need a  
26  
27 fuller theorisation of the forms of value produced in social networks and their links to branding.  
28  
29 We observe that the concept of prosumption is still rather unclear particularly regarding how it  
30  
31 relates to a whole family of terminologies including for example, co-creation (Prahalad and  
32  
33 Ramaswamy, 2004); collaborative capitalism, which relies on the concepts of value co-creation  
34  
35 and service dominant logic (Cova *et al.*, 2011) and co-production (Hunt *et al.*, 2012). Rather than  
36  
37 pick our way through this conceptual fuzziness (for help with this see Cova and Dalli, 2009; Ritzer,  
38  
39 2014; Alhashem *et al.*, 2021) instead we observe how and why the term ‘prosumption’ is  
40  
41 particularly useful in the context of the platform ecosystem. Following Ritzer (2014) we think that  
42  
43 it is the fusing of both consumption and production within this term that is enabling, and we agree  
44  
45 that prosumption is ever present (i.e. that it is not possible *ever* to separate out production and  
46  
47 consumption but rather we see a continuum of prosumption). We also make a plea to return to our  
48  
49 understanding of value - its mode of production but also its forms within prosumption to include  
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51 in particular differences between use-value and exchange-value (see Humphrey and Grayson,  
52  
53 2008; Arvidsson, 2011). Returning to our context of a social network and its use by an organisation  
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55 to build their employer brand; we can see that for those individuals within the social network their  
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1 participation may provide some use value (i.e. building social relationships) but it is also possible  
2 that at times their participation may have exchange value (see Gandini, 2016). The same may occur  
3  
4 for the organisation, the social network plays a role in communicating with a wider audience but  
5  
6 also, and importantly in this paper, the organisation harnesses these social relationships, including  
7  
8 those relationships *between individuals* in the network, to build an employer brand. It is then  
9  
10 potentially the branding process that serves to extract exchange value from these social networks.  
11  
12 In making this (relatively complex) move, we draw inspiration from the work of Arvidsson (2011)  
13  
14 who posits that the social production of value relies on affective relationships among individuals.  
15  
16 Marketing scholars have explored how social media facilitates collaborative forms of value  
17  
18 creation, often unsupervised by the brand, which create value both for users and the community  
19  
20 (Schau *et al.*, 2009; Alhashem *et al.*, 2021). Social media has also been explored as a working tool  
21  
22 that individuals use in attempts to progress their careers, building their personal brand via the  
23  
24 management of social and professional relationships (Gandini, 2016). However, to our knowledge  
25  
26 no work has yet explored how organisations might exploit social networks in order to build their  
27  
28 (employer) brand.  
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39 This study of employer branding in retail is timely. The quality of retail work has been under  
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41 question for some time in the UK, with relatively low wages, zero hours contracts and poor working  
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43 conditions cited as key reasons for a high staff turnover (Low Pay Commission, 2018; Wilson,  
44  
45 2012), which was sitting at 38% a year in 2019 (Office of National Statistics, 2019). Evidence of  
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47 widespread employee discontent can be found in online platforms like Indeed or Glassdoor, where  
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49 individuals anonymously review their employment experience. The recent global Covid pandemic  
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51 has intensified these pre-existing challenges by placing a spotlight on both the content of this work,  
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53 and its future as a viable career. A significant increase in e-commerce sales during the pandemic  
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55 has resulted in bricks and mortar store closures and thousands of redundancies. In total 288,291  
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57 jobs were lost in retail between 2020 and 2021 (Centre for Retail Research, 2022). Pressures within  
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the industry have also prompted an unprecedented number of resignations from senior managers (Amed *et al.*, 2022). Data suggests a decline in the demand for these low-wage jobs and experts recommend a shift to higher wage brackets, that will require workers to upskill (Lund *et al.*, 2021). The fashion industry as a whole has also become less attractive due to its resistance to change and limited engagement with sustainability (Amed *et al.*, 2022). This challenging context is particularly ripe to explore how retail organisations attempt to build an appeal to prospective employees.

This paper explores how employer branding creates an appeal on social media, specifically LinkedIn, a professional networking platform, with the aim of attracting and retaining employees. We begin with an overview of our key conceptual tools from the fields of marketing and management studies, charting existing work on employer branding and brand interactions in the platform ecosystem. The methodology presents an in-depth schematic profile of our dataset of LinkedIn posts bringing out their complexities in terms of their content, voice and frequency. The findings explore the content of the organisation's posts identifying four narratives intended to create an appeal, and the overarching themes of growth and belonging that inform them. This is followed by an analysis of other users' engagements in the form of comments to these posts. In the ensuing discussion and conclusion, we develop the concept of the employer brand promise to better understand the nature of this appeal. We explore how organisations harness existing employees in using them to 'speak on behalf of the brand' as well as exploiting their personal social networks to proliferate the brand promise and lend it authenticity. We then offer a critique of employer branding in our observation that the employer brand promises, particularly in the retail sector, can easily become empty promises and we develop the concept of career-washing to further theorise this dynamic.

## Literature review

### *Employer branding*

Whereas marketing scholars have been working with concepts of the brand and branding since at least the 1960s, their application in the employment context is comparatively recent. The employer brand was first conceptualised by Ambler and Barrow (1996) as 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company' (p.187). By extension, employer branding has been defined as the branding efforts made by an organisation to attract and retain talent (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). At the heart of these attempts to attract employees is the promotion and communication of the organisation as a 'desirable place to work' (Lloyd, 2002), in fact not only desirable, but significantly better than other potential competitor organisations (Ewing *et al.*, 2002).

Of particular interest is the dual role of employer branding, with most studies identifying that it acts both internally (to retain talent) but also externally (to attract new talent). There are a range of views about how this twin purpose is achieved. The first stream of literature is concerned with identifying and communicating a series of 'employer value propositions' (Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Dabirian *et al.*, 2017; Dabirian *et al.*, 2019) or 'dimensions of attractiveness' (Berthon *et al.*, 2005) that may be salient in attracting or 'enticing' (Dabirian *et al.*, 2019) potential employees and motivating existing ones. This view tends to see the employer brand (and its associated communication) as owned and managed within the organisation. It tends to simplify the complex network of relations involved in the building of an employer brand. In doing so, it overstates the ability of the organisation to somehow control the process representing it as a linear, top down transmission of messages from head office management to shopfloor employee (Urde, 2003).

A second stream of literature often referred to as 'employee branding' (Miles and Mangold, 2004) takes a more networked and co-creative view of brand meaning, opening out the range of stakeholders involved. Here, existing employees are seen as vital in communicating the employer

brand, acting as ‘carriers’ of the employer brand. In this view, employees should be encouraged to ‘live the brand’ (Ind, 2001) and this is achieved by incorporating the brand values in every aspect of their employment experience (Mosley, 2007). The ultimate aim is that employees then somehow internalise the brand image and/or values and reproduce them in their interactions with consumers, variously termed as ‘brand citizenship’ (Piehler *et al.*, 2016) or ‘delivering the brand promise’ (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007). Within this literature, we start to see a recognition of the mutual and co-created nature of the employer brand. A good example here is Dean *et al.*’s (2016) depiction of an ‘experiential brand meaning cycle’ encompassing management, employees and customers in co-creating brand meaning. They nicely conceptualise the experience and interaction-based co-creation of employer brand meaning, and acknowledge the role of existing employees as both ‘readers and authors’ of this meaning. However, in the same way as the literature on ‘employer value propositions’ discussed above, they also suffer from an overly agentic view of the organisation as somehow internally ‘owning’ and producing brand meaning which is then communicated to external audiences.

Therefore, a theorisation of employer branding as prosumed in a platform ecosystem is yet to emerge. This is surprising for three reasons. First, the widely cited rationale for employer branding is the inclusion of both internal (existing employees) and external (potential employees) in the process of employer brand building. Second, the relatively well-established theorisation of the dynamics of co-creation (and specifically value co-creation) within service ecosystems (i.e. Frow *et al.*, 2014). Third, the increasing blurring of boundaries of externalities and internalities of organisations brought about by the rise of networked communications.

To explore how the employer brand operates in networked communications, we look into the practices of an organisation to build an appeal on social media. However, we make a call for more precision in understanding the appealing nature of the employer brand, that we consider is missing in previous conceptualisations as seen above. The mechanism we think has the most explanatory power in this context is that of the ‘brand promise’, which has been defined as a statement of ‘the

nature of the reciprocal relationship between the brand and its audience' (Swystun, 2006, p. 99). The brand promise is broadcasted through external communications, that set the expectations of customers and differentiate the organisation from competitors (Hoffman *et al.*, 2009). This concept has been applied to date within the services marketing literature at the employee-customer interface, where employees are viewed as central to delivering a brand promise to customers, (Berry, 2000; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Piehler *et al.*, 2016). In the context of employment, Brannan *et al.* (2015) explore how front-line employees in a call centre might internalise brand promises of a better future career in their identity work to help them cope with work they find mundane and unfulfilling. However, there are limited studies on the way in which an employer brand promise might function to attract new employees.

### *Brands in the platform ecosystem*

Social media platforms merge internal and external communication in what has been termed a 'participatory culture', facilitating a two-way conversation between customers and organisations, but also among individuals (Boyd and Ellison, 2008; Schau *et al.*, 2009). The popularisation of these platforms in the early 2000s has drawn the attention of researchers in many fields within the broader area of marketing, as in consumer research (e.g. Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001; Eden, 2017), branding (e.g. Gandini, 2016; Schembri and Latimer, 2016), interactive marketing (e.g. Gensler *et al.*, 2013; Bao and Wang, 2021), marketing communications (e.g. Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014; Kissel and Buttgen, 2015) or advertising (e.g. Muntinga *et al.*, 2011; Voorvelt *et al.*, 2018).

This participatory culture encourages the production of content and interaction from multiple actors, beyond the brand-consumer dyad (Muñiz and Schau, 2011). Commentators have observed how organisational control over the brand-related content and the value creation process is significantly reduced as a wider range of actors have a stake in its development (Fournier and Lee, 2009; Gensler *et al.*, 2013). This new form of value has been conceptualised as social value and is socially produced by community members rather than managed by the organisation (Alhashem *et al.*, 2021).

1  
2 Social media platforms share certain characteristics: they are web-based platforms that operate  
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4 around profiles and they connect users and importantly facilitate the ‘public display of connections’  
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6 (Boyd and Ellison, 2008, p. 213). Many scholars have identified how these platforms nurture value  
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8 creation in brand communities (i.e. Schau *et al.*, 2009; Muñoz and Schau, 2011; Ind *et al.*, 2013).  
9  
10 Schau *et al.* (2009) identify practices that ‘foster the exchange of collectively defined and valorized  
11  
12 resources’ (p. 35), and thus create value for the individuals, the community and the brand (Schau  
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14 *et al.*, 2009). Brand communities encourage individual’s emotional attachment to the brand (Zhou  
15  
16 *et al.*, 2012), which has been identified as antecedent of collective brand-related behaviours  
17  
18 (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006). Social networking practices collectively produce the code of  
19  
20 conduct of the community and function in the sphere of the emotions (Schau *et al.*, 2009). These  
21  
22 practices have a clear focus on creating and maintaining meaningful relationships among the  
23  
24 members (Schau *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, interpersonal interactions have a key role in cementing  
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26 social bonds within the community (Fournier and Lee, 2009), which is magnified by the networked  
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28 nature of social media.  
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34 Platforms differ in format and design, and thus, content and user engagement will vary across  
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36 platforms (Smith *et al.*, 2012; Voorveld *et al.*, 2018). Social media engagement is defined in terms  
37  
38 of user interactions with the media (Khan, 2017; Chang *et al.*, 2019). Here, user engagement  
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40 depends largely on attraction and appeal, hence, social media content has to be interesting, relatable  
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42 and useful to the community and the platform users in order to encourage interaction and word-of-  
43  
44 mouth (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010; Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014). Consequently, organisations need to  
45  
46 curate their content and tailor it to their audience as well as to the platform (Kietzmann *et al.*, 2011).  
47  
48 Research has also explored the role of certain individuals within communities that ‘evangelise’  
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50 (Schau *et al.*, 2009; Muniz and Schau, 2011) and voluntarily work as brand ambassadors promoting  
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52 the brand outside the community (Fournier and Lee, 2009). In some cases, employees that identify  
53  
54 with the brand might act as ambassadors on their personal social media (van Zoonen *et al.*, 2018).  
55  
56 In the employer branding literature, these individuals have been conceptualised as brand champions  
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(Ind, 2001) and they ‘communicate the brand idea to colleagues; encourage involvement; make recommendations to the centre on brand issues; set and measure targets, and share best practice’ (Ind, 2001, p.112).

We argue that employer branding requires further exploration in a networked environment, particularly as the ownership of the brand is increasingly shared, moving towards the periphery of the organisation’s control. In the findings below, we address this issue of reduced control via the concept of ‘the appeal’, we explore how the organisation merely attempts to build ‘an appeal’ in the hope that prospective employees might find it attractive and relatable.

## Methodology

In this study, we collected data from LinkedIn, an employment-related social media platform. First, we collected the posts made by an international fashion retailer over a period of 6 months. Second, we collected the comments and reactions to those posts made by LinkedIn users. Below, we explore the characteristics of LinkedIn and present the data sample and the inclusion criteria used. This is followed by an explanation of the methods used for the data analysis.

### *Data collection*

#### *The platform: LinkedIn*

LinkedIn is an employment-related social media platform that prides itself on being ‘the world’s largest professional network’ with over 756 million members [1]. It is a profile-based platform (Voorveld *et al.*, 2018), facilitating the creation of corporate and individual profiles. Unlike other social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn has the reputation of a social media platform aimed at professional success rather than private networking (Gandini, 2016). Corporate profiles are customisable and can include different sections such as an overview, job vacancies and a section called ‘life’. The profile of the organisation studied here has the following options: home, about, posts, jobs, life, people and videos. For the present study, data collection focused on the section

1  
2 ‘posts’. This section works like a feed of updates where the organisations can post polls, images  
3  
4 and text and users can interact with it in various ways (like, comment, share and send). Each of  
5  
6 these interactions with the content is published by default in the feed of those who have interacted  
7  
8 to some extent with it. Moreover, these users will receive a notification each time there is a new  
9  
10 interaction. To stop those notifications, the user will have to manually deactivate them.  
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12  
13 Research on LinkedIn has recently gained more attention; however, it is still scarce in marketing  
14  
15 journals. Studies to date have covered usage (i.e. Hutchins, 2016; Carmack and Heiss, 2018; van  
16  
17 Zoonen *et al.*, 2018; Davis *et al.*, 2020; Johnson and Leo, 2020), self-branding (i.e. Gandini, 2016;  
18  
19 McCabe, 2017; Tobback, 2019), visual self-presentation (Tifferet and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2018),  
20  
21 relationships (i.e. Quinton and Wilson, 2016; Banerji and Reimer, 2019) and motivations (i.e. Cho  
22  
23 and Lam, 2021). As yet the use of the platform as a form of employer branding has not been  
24  
25 explored.  
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#### 28 29 *Data sample*

30  
31 The organisation explored in this paper is an international fast fashion retailer with an active  
32  
33 presence across social media channels but in particular LinkedIn. Here, we use the pseudonym  
34  
35 ‘Boga’ to represent this organisation. Boga employs over 16,000 individuals and it is present in  
36  
37 more than 100 countries with over 2,000 stores. Its concept combines quality, design and a unified  
38  
39 brand image. The company offers a wide range of products for women, men, children and home.  
40  
41 Though, its main business line is womenswear, which targets modern urban women. Boga shares  
42  
43 many similarities with other high street retailers in the fast fashion sector, including challenges  
44  
45 with mundane and highly pressured shopfloor work brought about by the increasing pressure to  
46  
47 meet sales targets, high staff turnover and zero hours contracts. Given the challenging environment  
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49 it operates in it offers a useful example to explore its employer branding practices. Also, given its  
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51 size and global reach it can also be seen as a reasonably representative example of wider trends in  
52  
53 the sector.  
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56  
57 We collected a series of 97 posts made by Boga on LinkedIn from November 2020 to April 2021.  
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For the present study, we selected a set of posts where managers are featured producing a sample of 39 posts. We focused on managers because they dominated the posts, particularly where the brand was explicitly featured. This reflects the literature which identifies managers as key in communicating the brand and acting as role models of brand orientation within the organisation (de Chernatony *et al.*, 2006; Wieseke *et al.*, 2009). Together these posts received 1,382 comments and responses. Table one includes a summary of our thematic analysis of the posts, along with some illustrative examples. It illustrates that posts tended to be focused on celebrating the brand's growth and success with 26 (67%) of posts falling into this category. The remainder of the posts celebrated individual career successes via promotions or presented general positive experiences of working for the company

[INSERT TABLE I HERE: Profile of sample company posts and associated responses]

### *Social media ethics*

Social media data raises many questions about ethics, key issues include the traceability of data using search engines and access to personal data or sensitive content (Kozinets, 2020). Academic research on recruitment has already looked at LinkedIn posts (i.e. Zide *et al.*, 2014). Although to view any profile on LinkedIn you need to have a personal account, the corporate profile referred to in this study is a public one, there is no need to 'follow' the organisation to view the profile content. The research design and methods were scrutinised and approved by an ethics committee from the authors' host university. Following Kozinets (2020), the dataset presented here has been anonymised to protect the identity of the organisation, the employees and the platform users. We also cloaked the data (Kozinets, 2020) opting for minor changes to the syntax of the original quotes to avoid identification of the original posts.

### *Data analysis*

The study includes two different analyses: narrative and thematic, the latter of which applied to both posts and comments. First, we undertook an analysis of the content, tone and type of post and the responses to these, to give us an overall picture of the dataset (table one). This stage also

involved identifying ‘narratives’ or ‘storying’ within the posts (Charmaz, 2006), such as the ‘celebration’ of career success or the ‘documenting’ of new initiatives by the brand. By coding the data line-by-line, we identified a frequent repetition of terms in the posts that guided our definition of narratives (Charmaz, 2006). Narratives are stories that condition our understanding of the reality around us and they serve as a learning tool (Shankar and Goulding, 2001) and as a building block of organisational culture (Gabriel, 2015) as well as to immerse consumers in the brand universe (Mills and Robson, 2020; Escalas, 2004). Narratives may entail an emotional response from the consumer (Mazzocco *et al.*, 2010) and may also add credibility and hedonic value (Kim *et al.*, 2017). This storying or narrative element is important as it is what enables and supports the building and communicating of the appeals that we identified in the second stage of thematic analysis. We applied a thematic analysis to the posts identifying two key sets of value driven appeals. The identification of these appeals followed an iterative process of collecting a first dataset, through which we formulated provisional themes; then we collected more data until we reached theoretical saturation; finally, we confirmed the emerging interpretation (Parmentier and Fischer, 2014; Spiggle, 1994). The themes were discussed and shared among the authors, anchoring the interpretation on a shared framework guided by literature. The reactions and comments to the posts were also analysed thematically in the same way.

### **Findings: Building an appeal**

Before discussing our findings, it is important to outline the very specific nature of our data. Because we are looking at a corporate LinkedIn profile, all of the posts are owned and created by the organisation. However, as shown in table one the posts use three narrative voices, which are different yet overlapping. In the discussion below, we explore the narratives used by the organisation and the two underpinning themes of growth and of belonging that are presented to create an appeal. We then move to look at how the individuals from the community respond to this appeal through their responses to these posts.

### *The Appeal of Growth: Learning and developing together*

We found that the appeal of growth underpinned the vast majority of the narratives within the posts. Personal and collective growth were mutually reinforced and interlinked. Below, we analyse how growth emerges across narratives (table 1).

#### *Documenting positive experiences of working for Boga.*

Here, existing managers were presented as brand champions recounting their positive experiences of the employer brand. The narrative voice 'I' was used in this set of posts, which encourages the audience to identify with the manager being featured (Sanders and van Krieken, 2018). The brand was often depicted as an enabler of growth offering challenges and opportunities to employees. These posts also signalled the importance of the team in offering unconditional support:

*"Boga has offered me the opportunity to grow professionally and personally. They have given me an ongoing challenge in a stimulating international environment, which encourages me to improve and give my best in my daily life."*  
(Domenico)

*"I like being able to help stores with anything they need and, to some extent, I feel close to my early stages in the company."* (Giulia)

Managers also express a sense of fulfilment in passing on their experience to others in the organisation, thus functioning as brand ambassadors (Piehler *et al.*, 2016; Morhart *et al.*, 2009). They frequently identify their growth with an often-indefinite reference to other employees who share a similar trajectory within the organisation. As in the following quote where two employees have shared part of their journey:

*"We recall those years with warmth and nostalgia. We were fortunate to work together in one of the most enriching stages of our professional journey. We grew with Boga during a period of fast growth, it was a big challenge and we had lots*

1  
2 *of fun with it.” (Marta and Clara)*  
3

4  
5 *“I truly feel grateful for the amazing opportunities Boga has offered me, which*  
6  
7 *have allowed me to grow and build my dream career. I treasure every memory*  
8  
9 *in every position I’ve held at Boga. I feel every single step has contributed to*  
10  
11 *who I am today both professionally and personally.” (Vanessa)*  
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14  
15 While the manager’s story is at the centre of the post, the collective emerges as a further enabler of  
16  
17 personal growth. Memories and nostalgia cement an affective bond with, and commitment to the  
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19 brand, while enticing prospective employees who wish to experience this growth in the future. The  
20  
21 personal challenges recalled by managers define the professional journey as a positive and even  
22  
23 fun experience.  
24

25  
26 *Celebrating personal career successes.* Real examples of career progression function to firmly  
27  
28 situate personal growth in relation to the employer brand. This becomes evident in the celebratory  
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30 tone used to congratulate recently promoted employees:  
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34 *“Congratulations Julien! How pleasing to see you grow while we have grown*  
35  
36 *with you.”*  
37

38  
39 *“Thank you, Ahmet, for sharing with us your passion in everything you do!*  
40  
41 *Congratulations!”*  
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43

44  
45 The focus of these posts is not on the process of promotion but on the achievement itself. Although  
46  
47 it is a celebration of individual performance, this post illustrates the mutually beneficial relationship  
48  
49 when individual and collective growth are aligned (Ambler and Barrow, 1996).  
50

51 While capturing nuanced perspectives of the same employment experience, these narratives  
52  
53 ultimately reinforce the appeal. At the same time, they contribute to establishing expectations of  
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55 employees, an important aspect given the recruitment potential of the platform. In order to succeed,  
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57 prospective candidates or employees in lower positions must commit to the brand and learn from  
58  
59 it to grow together. However, this idyllic career path fails to reflect the often-challenging working  
60

conditions of retail work and the long hours and significant mundane work required to progress within the company.

*Celebrating the brand's growth and success.* Managers also often speak directly for the brand in these posts. Here, they are positioned as accomplished leaders because of their expertise in the retail industry and in the brand. For example, this manager explains the launch of a new product line:

*“Launching this new line is a natural step for Boga, in order to offer our customers a more lifestyle product. The designs are inspired by our Nature and we have used mainly natural and sustainable fabrics for the first part of the collection, which focuses mainly on textile goods”. (Sarah)*

*“The pandemic has changed our understanding of our customer behaviour and their preferences. We need to understand more than ever that most customer journeys are inherently omnichannel”. (Veronica)*

In these narratives, managers participate in the collective growth and contribute leading the team, explaining and guiding them to achieve the strategic goals of the organisation (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005; de Chernatony *et al.*, 2006). Managers speak for the brand or their team using ‘we’ (table 1), reinforcing the sense of belonging (Chang *et al.*, 2019). In this way, the posts subtly emphasise the narrative of growth by enrolling managers variously as experts, champions, and ambassadors of the brand.

*The Appeal of Belonging: We are family*

Along with the appeal of growth, we found a strong appeal of belonging in the data. This appeal of belonging to the organisation was often very affective in tone, evident from references to the team, but also to the organisation as ‘family’:

*“I am proud to be part of this family, where I feel comfortable and can grow both professionally and personally.” (Giulia)*

1  
2       *“When I first joined Boga, I was sincerely welcomed into the Boga family and*  
3  
4       *since then I can truly say that the organisation maintains a culture of teamwork,*  
5  
6       *collaboration, and unconditional support.” (Miryam)*  
7  
8

9  
10 By calling the organisation ‘family’, managers evoke the collective as devoted to each other’s well-  
11  
12 being via mutual support. This appeal also presents a compelling picture of common identification  
13  
14 with the organisational culture (Pratt, 2000). This is stressed also by the emphasis on teamwork,  
15  
16 for which the company uses hashtags such as #BogaTogether and #TeamBoga.  
17

18  
19 Teamwork implies a commonality of goals, namely growth. In line with the communications of the  
20  
21 company, the posts often referred to teamwork in terms of ‘togetherness’, like the hashtags used.  
22  
23 The constant use of the ‘we’ narrative voice in these posts reinforces the idea of employees  
24  
25 identifying with the values of the company, participating in the positive change that it promotes  
26  
27 (Sanders and van Krieken, 2018). This implies that the employee finds meaning in actively  
28  
29 engaging with the team to overcome obstacles like the pandemic, as shown by Andreas:  
30  
31

32  
33       *"We all had a good opportunity to overcome the most challenging year in modern*  
34  
35       *history. It was a very valuable lesson to understand that the way we lived was*  
36  
37       *not working. (...) As the BOGA #Poland team and with me a part of it, we took*  
38  
39       *the very vital decision to use all these new realities as an opportunity and to*  
40  
41       *concentrate on all the good things and advantages we could get from it. The main*  
42  
43       *focus was not on how to save within the country. But on how to improve, how to*  
44  
45       *make it more efficient with fewer resources and in new conditions.” (Andreas)*  
46  
47  
48  
49

50  
51 Managers like Andreas provide a lived example to prospective employees of how working with the  
52  
53 organisation leads to meaningful and fulfilling work which has potential to effect positive change,  
54  
55 as well as a sense of belonging to the team. The constant reference to the team cements the appeal  
56  
57 of sharing growth with a collective, so nobody is left behind:  
58  
59

60       *“Individual performance is not the most important thing. We succeed as a team*

1  
2 *and we lose as a team.” (Julien)*  
3  
4

5 Julien illustrates the importance of a shared sense of purpose, or *corporate ethos* (Arvidsson, 2011,  
6 p. 269). The ethos guides the individual decisions that contribute to the collective purpose.  
7  
8 However, the productivity of the collective depends on the meaningful relations among the  
9 members (Arvidsson, 2011), which the company fosters through the sense of ‘togetherness’.  
10  
11 Stories of belonging act as ‘ideal types’ of employee-brand relations and thus serve to build the  
12 appeal of the employer brand to prospective employees. Here, narratives signal teamwork and  
13 family belonging as positive elements of working for the brand, but they also operate to build a  
14 collective corporate ‘ethos’ which serves to also continue to cement the commitment of existing  
15 employees (Piehler *et al.*, 2019).  
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### 28 *Exploring Responses to Posts: Questioning the employer brand appeal*

29

30 One of the key strengths of exploring the LinkedIn context is that it gives us insight into the  
31 operation of ‘relations’ between members of a grouping or community. Put more simply, it allows  
32 us to see whether the appeals that the company is curating elicit any response. Table one  
33 summarises the volume of responses to each type of post. It should also be noted that this platform  
34 exposes the professional networks held by each user (Boyd and Ellison, 2008).  
35  
36  
37  
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39  
40

41 Incorporating managers in the employer brand appeal is key in encouraging engagement with the  
42 content. While the posts focused largely on promoting the brand’s success and documenting  
43 specific initiatives (such as new products or innovative production methods), posts that celebrated  
44 and promoted *individual* career successes and positive *individual* experiences of working for the  
45 company garnered higher numbers of responses. The literature on brand community engagement  
46 (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010) tells us that individuals will only engage with content and thus potentially  
47 form relationships if it is in some way useful, desirable or relatable. Most often posts documenting  
48 individual career success sparked off a round of congratulation from other employees and  
49 individuals within manager’s networks and the subsequent responses of thanks by the featured  
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managers. Although it is interesting to note that often these responses relied on the automatic suggestions offered by the platform, which suggests a limited engagement with their content. We also noticed that some of the employees commenting have been featured in the company profile at some point. This suggests that posts serve to spark internal conversation rather than generating external recognition, possibly evidence of strengthening existing ties within a community rather than building new ones externally.

*“[emoji: hearted eyes face] Congratulations Giorgio [emoji: confetti]” (Visual Merchandiser)*

*“Thanks Ylena!” (Giorgio replies)*

*“Congrats dear Giorgio! ;)” (Regional director)*

*“Thanks Arturo!” (Giorgio replies)*

These comments belong to a post that received 233 responses. The manager that was featured in the post (Giorgio) replied to 57 responses. As seen above, these replies represent a tacit etiquette, thanking everyone who took the time to congratulate him. According to the design of LinkedIn, every time someone comments on a post, it appears in the feed of all the contacts of that person. This means that by interacting in the comments section, it is possible to significantly increase the exposure of a post amplifying its reach and impact. Each time Giorgio replied to a comment, the original post appeared in the feed of that user and their contacts. It should be noted that managers generally replied to comments coming from people within their network or current employees of the organisation. As such they appear to see the platform as largely facilitating an internal conversation. In addition, and as critics of social media point out, much of the time these ‘conversations’ take the form of mere ‘contributions’ (Dean, 2005) which build up and circulate without actually requiring any real engagement or two-way discussion from users. In summary what we can see from these responses to posts about individual employees is that users appear to be using the platform to create exposure, but that user engagement is limited.

On the other hand, posts that focused on the brand (and team/collective) generally received less responses. We found evidence of users responding negatively to these posts which they cynically perceived as a thinly disguised effort to promote the brand. When comments were made, they tended to maintain a cynical tone sometimes building on other responses to criticise the limited efforts made by the organisation in the area of sustainability:

*“Good start. Next stage “alternative to plastic in the whole supply chain?” And I couldn’t agree more with Tara: I hope part of the investment into substitute sourcing is spent on research into non-polluting biodegradables obtained through natural bi-products, rather than using trees, though ‘sustainable’. Organic waste is a mine of energy and our microbial friends are great colleagues!!” (Claudia)*

These comments usually presented counter facts about the organisation’s practices, intending to puncture their attempts to promote the brand’s sustainable values, thus revealing them as a form of greenwashing. The comments might also be seen as a form of individual ‘value signalling’, likely as a facet of users’ own identity projects. The relative silence of the organisation in responding to these critiques is also interesting. In a total of 15 cases the organisation only intervened once to justify its practices, for example:

*“Hello Andrea, thank you for contacting us. At BOGA we are conscious of the critical circumstances our industry is experiencing globally because of the COVID-19 health crisis. We are conscious that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing an unprecedented public health and economic crisis worldwide, with severe socio-economic effects on communities, staff and businesses. And Vietnam’s garment industry has been hit also by this crisis. We were informed about the circumstances at the factory and we have been working for a resolution*

1  
2 *since the beginning. (...)”*  
3  
4

5 Such interventions attempt to work in a public relations sense as brand ‘damage control’, but it was  
6  
7 clear that there was no coordinated attempt to address critical comments.  
8

9 Responses to posts also reflect other uses made of the platform, for example the post below by a  
10  
11 potential supplier:  
12  
13

14  
15 *“Hi Laura, Congratulations. To introduce ourselves, please be informed that we*  
16  
17 *have been boasting one woven factory "XYZLtd" BSCI, Sedex, Wrap and Oeko*  
18  
19 *Tex certified, mainly for the bottoms – non-denim and denim articles as such five*  
20  
21 *Tex certified, mainly for the bottoms – non-denim and denim articles as such five*  
22 *pockets, regular and fancy, formal pants, trousers, chinos, cargo, work wear,*  
23  
24 *shorts, joggers, swimwear, Bermuda, etc. ... Eager to get in touch with you to*  
25  
26 *build a long-term business relationship with you for the mutual benefit. Take care*  
27  
28 *and stay safe. Warm Regards. [contact details deleted]”*  
29  
30

31 The manager featured in this post [Laura] had a creative position in the company, and as such her  
32  
33 role was un-related to procurement. This is an example of users responding to posts, and joining a  
34  
35 conversation, purely as a form of advertisement seeing the network as a target market. Individual  
36  
37 users viewed the network in a similar way, for example as an opportunity for professional self-  
38  
39 promotion. As the two comments below illustrate, users demonstrated varying levels of  
40  
41 engagement with the existing conversation in their self-promotion:  
42  
43

44  
45 *“Hi everyone. I am Omar, I am from Egypt, I'm looking for new opportunities*  
46  
47 *as a sales assistant. In terms of work experience, I have more than 3 years of*  
48  
49 *experience working in sales. Outstanding at motivating team members with*  
50  
51 *fantastic communication skills. Thank you in advance for any connections, tips,*  
52  
53 *or opportunities you can offer.”*  
54  
55

56  
57  
58 *“Hi Madeleine! Your project is great and I'd like to take part in it. Please,*  
59  
60 *contact me anytime you want and we chat.”*

What this analysis shows is the range of motivations that users have for engaging with the posts made by the organisation. Also, that these motivations often run counter to those expected, or desired by the organisation. As an attempt to create ‘an appeal’ that may be attractive to prospective employees via the platform, we have little evidence that these appeals were successful. We found that only 27 comments out of the 1,382 sampled showed an explicit interest in joining the team. These comments were more common on posts about the brand (16 comments), though some appeared on posts about managers (11 comments). This limited interaction from the platform users exemplifies the low impact of this content in terms of appeal. As suggested by previous studies on online brand communities (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010; Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014), the content needs to be useful to gain users’ engagement. Moreover, we found clear evidence of user cynicism and even critique of the organisation’s posts. Likewise, the dearth of attempts by the organisation to respond to users further demonstrates their own lack of engagement with the platform, instead using it merely to push out messages (Alhouti and Johnson, 2021).

## Discussion

In the findings section above, we explored the ways in which an organisation makes an attempt to create an appeal by promising growth and career development; and a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the collective. In exploring user responses to this appeal, we found evidence of the failure of this attempt. This failure is in part due to a misrecognition by the organisation of the platform dynamics. But we also want to explore a more macro theme which is the role of the brand promise - and its ultimate failure to deliver, that serves to further drive this lack of engagement. In the discussion below, we first lay the groundwork for an understanding how the appeals explored above of growth and belonging might be best theorised in the guise of brand promises. We then highlight through the concept of the empty promise and how mis-guided attempts at employer branding can easily lead to career-washing.

### *Theorising appeal via the employer brand 'promise'*

One of the reasons we put forward the concept of the promise to understand the nature of the appeal is its future orientation. The brand promise deliberately plays on future aspirations and expectations. For example, in services marketing, organisations have been seen to offer a 'service promise that consumers use to base their initial expectations on' (Hoffman *et al.*, 2009, p. 243). In addition, the 'brand promise' has been closely linked to employees, who have variously been seen as delivering a brand promise to customers (Berry, 2000; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Piehler *et al.*, 2016). Here, we see organisations deliberately evoking a possible 'future self' within their brand promise to motivate and retain existing employees. In our case, the appeals to potential employees are an invitation to grow, develop and self-actualise. In this sense, promises are future-oriented and create expectations in individuals. However, what is specifically interesting in our case is how this promise mobilises existing employee experiences to lend the promise authenticity.

### *Authenticating the employer brand promise through existing employees and their social networks*

Our second contribution argues that the employer brand promise emerges from social production. First, we observe how the organisation produces and authenticates the employer brand promise by portraying existing employees to 'speak on behalf of the brand', as brand ambassadors. Second, social media affordances allow the exploitation of their personal networks, amplifying the reach of the content and giving increased visibility to the employer brand promise.

Humphreys and Grayson (2008) suggest that for an activity to constitute prosumption, some form of exchange value needs to be produced (rather than solely individual use value). Here, employees' stories are instrumentalised to contribute to the production and authentication of the employer brand promise. Consumer research suggests that authenticity on social media leads to engagement (Alhouti and Johnson, 2021). Though, consumers can remain cynically distant from any perceived attempts by the organisation to 'sell' them the brand. Indeed, authenticity has been considered elsewhere to be an important element of employer brand attractiveness (Reis *et al.*, 2017). As

suggested by Duncan *et al.* (2019, p. 1461), authenticity can be seen as an honest self-presentation, which differs from impression management and surface acting, but instead offers insight into the real everyday lives of employees (Land and Taylor, 2011). In this sense, the experiences and voice of existing managers are mobilised in the organisation's posts as 'brand champions' (Ind, 2001).

To examine in more depth how this promise might serve to create and generate value for organisations, we argue that posts need to be relatable to prompt engagement and sharing across platform users' social networks (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010; Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014). To theorise this, we turn to the work of Arvidsson on ethical economy. According to Arvidsson (2011), we are witnessing a change in the production of value, which has moved from resources a company can manage directly, such as labour, to collaborative forms of social production residing within:

*'the ability to create the kinds of affectively significant relations, the ethical surplus, that are able to tie participants to a project, motivate them to keep supplying their productive input, and give a sense of meaning and purpose to their participation.'* (p. 270)

This understanding of value urges us to (re)consider the relationships built through platforms such as social media. Thus, value does not only reside in an essential image, identity or the worth of the brand, but in the ability of individuals to connect and interact *through the brand*- as a platform. In this sense, the brand is not an asset owned by the organisation, but the platform that guides those interactions (Lury, 2004). Social networking practices pertain to the world of emotions, and aim at sustaining meaningful relations (Schau *et al.*, 2009; Zhou *et al.*, 2012) only visible in the platform ecosystem (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). We observe that the organisation is attempting to provide the context for 'affectively significant relations' to thrive. The organisation realises exchange value in these individual stories via their usefulness in building the employer brand, and in doing so, existing employees are instrumentalised within the profit motive and increasingly viewed as commodifiable subjects. Meanwhile, by engaging with the brand and sustaining conversations around the content

shared, users help the employer brand promise gaining visibility and reach. Though, the lack of engagement with the content from prospect candidates exemplifies the organisation's unfamiliarity with the platform dynamics.

### *Empty Promises?: Career-washing via the employer brand promise*

Our third key contribution is to further critique the employer brand promise via the suggestion that, particularly in the retail sector, it can so often be an empty promise. As services marketers tell us, the real value of the brand promise emerges in its fulfilment (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007). From our analysis of Boga's employer brand promise, as based on the appeal of growth and belonging, we posit that the promise has potential to be deceptive as it is very unlikely to be fulfilled. We introduce the concept of *career-washing* to help us theorise how this works. This deception is based largely on a partial or fragmented view and is facilitated by the ability of the organisation to curate their message on social media platforms. As explained above, in order to entice engagement, social media content needs to be tailored to the platform and audience (Kietzmann *et al.*, 2011; Cartwright and Davies, 2022). This curation has been questioned in terms of authenticity of the self-presentation of users and brands on these platforms (i.e. Boyd and Ellison, 2008; Uski and Lampinen, 2016; Alhouti and Johnson, 2021). The key concern here is the way in which these snapshots serve to significantly embellish the nature of retail work. We have explored above how the brand promise works in the form of an attractive appeal: a fulfilling and long-lasting career. However, this appeal also *acts as a form of deflection*, deflecting the attention from the negative aspects of the employment experience by creating an illusion of career prospects that are summarised through the employer brand promise. A similar practice of deflection can be found in woke-washing (Sobande, 2020) and green-washing, known as the 'practice of promoting environmentally friendly programs to deflect attention from an organisation's environmentally unfriendly or less savoury activities' (de Freitas Netto *et al.*, 2020 p. 6). Therefore, we define *career-washing* as the use of deceptive employer branding tactics to promote career prospects,

deflecting attention from the negative aspects that the work entails.

What is also of vital importance is an understanding of the significant gap between these messages and the actual practices of the organisation (Delmas and Burbano, 2011). As we mentioned at the start of the paper, retail work is currently in crisis beset with the challenges of high turnover, relatively low wages, precariousness and poor career prospects. Career-washing can therefore also be thought of as a form of branding as hypocrisy, which occurs when branding builds images that are de-coupled from the organisation's actions (Bertilsson and Rennstam, 2018). In the platform ecosystem, social media is used to compensate, rather than highlight, the organisation's activities, and 'consumers might be invited to participate in the (rather precarious) enterprise of constructing hypocritical images of an organisation' (Bertilsson and Rennstam, 2018, p. 272). Our analysis of social media shows how hypocritical employer branding can engage a range of stakeholders, such as employees and their professional network.

## Conclusion

This paper reveals how an employer brand promise works on social media. Because authenticity is increasingly important, content necessarily revolves around the lived experiences and careers of existing employees. This content is presented in snapshots, a portrayal of inspirational 'ideal type' employment experiences, in which the universal values of growth and belonging are prominent. However, these partial and idealised portrayals do not necessarily match up to the employment experiences of the majority in a sector in the throes of an employment crisis. This process shows how employer brand promise exploits and monetises personal networks (Bertilsson and Rennstam, 2018), overlooking the importance of sustaining meaningful relationships and decoupling social media content from the practices of the industry through *career-washing*.

In terms of practical managerial implications, our analysis sheds light on the practices of employer branding on social media. Although the organisation analysed here makes efforts to curate the content tailored to the platform format (the snapshots), it fails to fully understand the affective and

1 networked nature of communication on social media platforms. The organisation still tends to use  
2 the platform as a traditional billboard, merely importing existing branding knowledge and practice  
3 into the online world. The creation of value, as ethical surplus, occurs only when such relations are  
4 able to attract positive affect from other members of the community (Arvidsson, 2011). This failure  
5 to fully grasp this context is illustrated by the limited response to branded content compared to  
6 personal stories, that bring to the fore the affective relationships of employees.  
7

8 The promotion of the employer brand promise on social media should fully understand the  
9 dynamics of platforms. The example provided shows a misunderstanding of how branding works  
10 in the platform ecosystem, as it ignores how the production of value relies on affective relations  
11 (Arvidsson, 2011), and reproduces branding as hypocrisy (Bertilsson and Rennstam, 2008). Here,  
12 we observed how affective relations were unevenly sustained by employees through their personal  
13 networks. To develop meaningful relationships, we advise brand managers to directly engage with  
14 users, opting for content creation that follows up on users' comments and conversations, and  
15 answering with a friendly yet competent tone (Carpentier *et al.*, 2019). Brand's interactivity on  
16 social media is understood as authentic when it does not censor or overlook comments that portray  
17 the brand in a negative light (Alhouti and Johnson, 2021). The question of authenticity is central,  
18 as career-washing is a form of hypocrisy (Bertilsson and Rensstam, 2008) which decouples the  
19 employer brand promise from the likely experience of prospect employees. Instead of producing  
20 content informed by recurring and standardised positive narratives, employer brands should engage  
21 with the networked nature of these platforms to foster a conversation that nurtures talent attraction  
22 and retention.  
23

24 To conclude, we argue that employer branding literature needs to shift from the traditional uni-  
25 directional form of a value proposition proposed by previous models (Ambler and Barrow, 1996;  
26 Urde, 1999, 2003; Miles and Mangold, 2004; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004) to adapt to the relational  
27 nature of social media and capture the potential of the social production of value that has become  
28 the 'new normal'.  
29  
30

## Notes

1. LinkedIn corporate profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/linkedin/>

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Career-washing: unpacking the employer brand promises on social media platforms

Table:

I. Profile of sample company posts and associated responses

No. of posts	Narrative	Narrative voice	Responses to posts	Example text of post
9	Documenting positive experiences of working for the company	"I"	Featured manager 69 Employees 51 Other users 250	Meet Joana! Store Manager in #Austria. "I started my career in Clothing Ltd. [mention] in 2005 as a cashier and two years later I was promoted to store manager. ... Every day is different and brings new challenges. The most rewarding part of our work is that we make people smile with little things. My job is my passion!" Thank you, Joana!
4	Celebrating individual career successes (promotions)	"He/She"	Featured manager 81 Employees 76 Other users 315	Ahmet joined Clothing Ltd. in 1995 as a stockroom assistant, and after all these years occupying various roles in our stores and countries, we are delighted to communicate his new role as International Retail Director for EMEA. Thank you, Ahmet, for sharing with us your passion in everything you do! Congratulations!
11	Celebrating the brand's growth and success	"we"	Featured manager 2 Employees 23 Other users 188	We continue to expand in the United States! This year we will open four new stores during the first semester: two in New Jersey, one in New York and one in Miami. "We have continuously developed our online shopping channel and invested in our brand image in the US. We needed to increase our presence in the high street, which we will accomplish with these new openings", Manuel Martin, Head of Expansion and Franchises, states.
15	Documenting specific brand initiatives		Featured manager 14 Employees 19 Other users 288 Company 6	We present our super #Denim team from our Man line. Norman Solaz, Commercial Buyer of the Jeans Department (Man): "In the Recycling Fibers project we give a second life to clothes that have been worn and deposited in our stores. ... In this way, we close the circle and return to the customer the excitement of wearing new clothes, while reducing their environmental impact." Thank you for sharing! Great initiative!

Table I Profile of sample company posts and associated responses