

RMPENTERPRISE

AGENCY OR IN-HOUSE?

**WHY YOU SHOULD
OUTSOURCE YOUR
BRAND AMBASSADORS**

Students love meeting employers on campus. More than they love lecture-free mornings and 50p pints. 96% of students that responded to a RateMyPlacement survey said they wanted to meet potential employers in person, on campus.

But this in turn creates a problem for employers. Graduate recruitment teams tend to be small, and they can't be on campus every day, especially if they are targeting multiple universities and looking to reach a diverse audience.

Enter the Brand Ambassador (BA). BAs bridge the gap between students and employers. They are micro-influencers on campus, building brand awareness among their peers in places that employers can't reach.

Students trust their peers - it's the underlying reason why BAs are successful, and why **88%** of students encourage employers to use them.

And here is where organisations encounter the next problem. Organising and managing a BA campaign is bloody difficult. It's a challenge in terms of resources, logistics and knowhow. So, what to do?

There are two options. Employers will either outsource the campaign to an agency, or try and manage it in-house. Those that take it in-house do so because:

- 1. It looks easier to manage it in-house.**
- 2. It's cheaper. (Or at least appears to be.)**
- 3. They want oversight over every detail.**
- 4. The agency is the middleman. They cut him out.**

At first glance, those are good reasons. If you want something done properly, do it yourself. However, for every pro, there is a rather large con. Running a BA campaign in-house brings with it real challenges.

Read on to discover why your organisation should outsource your BAs...

1 DEMONSTRATING ROI

Being able to demonstrate ROI is key to analysing the success (or failure) of an on-campus campaign. To demonstrate the return on each penny and pound you need to be able to answer the following questions:

1. How many students interacted with your brand?
2. How many students learned about your opportunities?
3. How many of them applied?
4. How many were hired?

Once you've got the data, you can work out the cost of each interaction or application.

Getting this data is tricky. To procure it, every single activity carried out by BAs has to be tracked, measured and reported on.

This means setting up tracking links at every digital touch point. Data capture software and a reporting platform are also needed. Little hint, it's expensive to set this up and not to mention time-consuming.

These processes also have to be tested to ensure that activities are tracked, measured and reported on accurately. Otherwise, there's little point in it all.

An agency which specialises in delivering on-campus campaigns will already have these processes in place. Replicating this in-house is costly and fiddly.

They'll handle the reporting too. Agencies tend to give weekly updates on important metrics and create visual reports for you to share with internal stakeholders. It saves you doing the analysis.

Let an agency demonstrate the ROI of your campaign, so you don't have to.



2 MANAGING PAYROLL

Managing the payroll for BAs is a little bit like juggling hedgehogs. It's tricky. Not to mention perilous.

It's just so different to handling the pay of regular employees. And for this reason, it takes significantly more time to manage it. Let's break it down:

RIGHT TO WORK

Before a BA can work for your organisation, you have to check they have the Right to Work in the UK. International students need Tier 4 visas to do so, and your team will have to check this documentation in person.

EVIDENCE OF WORK

Are your BAs working their agreed hours? You'll need evidence to validate their time sheets. This includes screenshots of social media posts and photos of them promoting your brand out on campus.

FLUCTUATING HOURS

BAs work on zero-hour contracts. Their hours fluctuate from month-to-month. This means you'll have to manage their pay manually, entering the specific hours of each student into a payroll system each month. It's time consuming.



THE MISSING £2.50

Students don't earn a salary. Most will leave university with a debt that exceeds £50,000. Every penny and pound makes a difference to them. They will complain - and quite rightly too - if they're not paid the £2.50 for the extra fifteen minutes they recorded on their timesheet.

The fluctuating nature of BA hours, and having to manage it manually means that the odd 0.25 hours can go missing. And students will complain. Dealing with pay enquiries the back and forth of the missing £2.50 is not the best use of your time.

All of this together creates a problem. Paying BAs on their zero hour contracts and handling pay queries could take more time than managing the payroll of the rest of the company.

Outsource your campaign to an agency, and let them handle it for you.

You could, of course, just not pay your BAs. Students aren't going to be emailing you about the missing £2.50 if you're not paying them. It's quite a clever solution for reducing pay enquiries. Or at least it would be, if it didn't have serious flaws.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

If students are working for you, you should pay them. Not doing so will deter students from low socio-economic backgrounds. They won't be able to represent your brand because they can't afford to!

COMPETITORS PAY BAs

BAs should be bought into your brand. That's the reason why should want to be an ambassador of your company. But the hard truth is your competitors will be offering very similar opportunities that are paid. Students will choose them over you if you're not paying them.

3 MANAGING BRAND AMBASSADORS

Keeping BAs engaged and motivated is the key to a successful campaign. A keep-warm strategy is a must.

On average, each BA will work on your campaign for around 12-16 hours a month. The hours are scattered across the month: a lecture shout out here, a social media post there, and that's in

between classes, societies and other shenanigans.

A keep-warm strategy is designed to focus a student's divided attention on your campaign.

So what does a keep-warm strategy look like? Regular catch-ups are important, however the occasional check-in call is not enough to keep a student motivated from the beginning of the campaign, right though until the end.

Agencies are the engagement experts. They organise competitions, leaderboards, prize giveaways and even award ceremonies to incentivise students across multiple campaigns.

Of course, you're probably thinking, we could just replicate this. A few prize giveaways, hand out the odd certificate and tickety-boo, our team of students are our brand champions again.

And it could work. The danger is, if students begin to switch off, or drop out completely, your campaign will be toast.

This is where an agency can help. They'll have a pipeline of students to replace BAs that back out. Replacing BAs - particularly at such short notice - is really difficult. It's why many employers choose to work with an agency.

4 TRAINING

There are two key aspects of BA training to think about.

1. Content. What are you going to impart so that students are bought-in to your company and their role as a BA? What skills do BAs need to do their jobs effectively?

BAs need basic digital marketing skills to promote your brand.

This includes how to build a compelling social media post, knowing when to post and how to set up tracking links. These skills are crucial for BAs to become micro-influencers.

Does your team have the skills to deliver this? If not, BAs will be unprepared to represent your brand, and tracking will not be accurate. And digital marketing is just one aspect of BA training.

2. Logistics. How are you going to get them all to training?

Organising a BA training day is a logistical nightmare. Compare it with organising a children's party. On the moon.

You have to get a group of students from untold locations to the same



venue all on the same day. If one of them gets lost en route and misses the training, you'll have to do it again.

That's not to mention having to sort out expenses, resources (such as presentations and handouts), branded merchandise and lunch.

Even if you happen to have a logistical wizard in your team, organising BA training is labour-intensive. It will take your team off other important tasks.

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Training students to become BAs is tricky. It's time consuming too. Just like the other aspects of managing a campaign. The benefit of outsourcing it is that the agency will train the BAs for you.

Your company can shape and supervise a training day so that it is in line with your key objectives. The agency will do all the running around.

5 INSIGHT

Managing Brand Ambassadors, handling payroll, training - these are the monster tasks. The icebergs. The things you just can't get wrong.

But it's the little things that can transform a campaign. It's the small insights and expert tips that turn a good campaign into a spectacular campaign.

An agency can provide these small insights that have a big effect. And here's how:

CAMPUS KNOWLEDGE

Are you targeting specific universities? They'll know which spaces on campus have the biggest footfall, and when.

TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS

Agencies have relationships with key contacts and decision makers at universities. They know who to talk to, the right person to ask.

It takes years to build trusted relationships like these. Through them, your BAs (and thus your brand) can gain access to areas which you wouldn't ordinarily be able to access.

MAILING LISTS

These relationships can also provide your Brand Ambassadors with access mailing lists to promote their events.

This could be subject-based mailing lists, or all the students signed up to their careers service. This information is priceless. And universities just don't give it out to any Tom, Dick or Sally.

DIVERSITY INSIGHTS

Is your campaign targeting a specific demographic, such BAME students or females in STEM?

An agency can help you choose which campuses to target. They'll have data on the specific demographics within different campuses from their other campaigns.

That research can help you find the best campuses to target for hitting your diversity targets.



IN-HOUSE OR AGENCY?

Managing a BA campaign in-house is time and resource heavy. It's not so bad if you're putting together a small campaign. A few BAs dotted around a few campuses up north... that's doable.

Harry and Sally from the desk over there could manage it. They can motivate BAs and set up the reporting software to manage the campaign on a small scale.

But a large campaign? That's a different story. If a campaign includes BAs at say, 10+ universities, the challenges you'll face demonstrating ROI, managing payroll, managing BAs and training them will explode.

These challenges blow up with scale. The time and resources required to deliver the campaign goes up and up and up like a loose balloon. That's why it's better to outsource large campaigns.

And when you think about it, the cost of hiring extra staff, or taking an existing member of staff away from their original job to manage a large campaign is more than the cost of outsourcing it.

Compare Harry/Sally's salary with the cost of outsourcing, how does it add up?

That aside, if you run BAs in-house, you'll be micromanaging the day-to-day of the campaign. Don't do that. Focus on your wider talent attraction strategy, while an agency looks after your on-campus activity.



RMP Enterprise is the expert in early talent attraction through digital and face-to-face solutions. We are here to help! So, if you want to get your campus attraction off the ground, get in touch.

Email us at:
enquiries@rmpenterprise.co.uk

Call us on:
0203 056 7700

RMPENTERPRISE

We offer digital and face-to-face solutions to ensure employers attract the best early talent.

Over the past ten years, we have helped employers engage with millions of 14-24 year olds across a range of products and services.

★ RATEMYPLACEMENT

RateMyPlacement is the UK's leading jobs board and resource hub for university students searching for undergraduate work experience, including placements, internships and insight days.

3 million visitors a year
50,000 student-written reviews
100,000+ student database

★ ON-CAMPUSPROMOTIONS

On-Campus Promotions helps employers promote their opportunities using a multi-channel approach, including Brand Ambassadors, Campus Events and digital campaigns to engage the best talent from target universities.

Over 900 Brand Ambassadors
45 Campus and Digital campaigns

★ RATEMYAPPRENTICESHIP

Aimed at 14-18 year olds, RateMyApprenticeship.co.uk is the UK's fastest growing website for young people considering apprenticeship and school leaver opportunities.

100,000 visitors each month
15,000 reviews from apprentices
70,000+ student database

∞ RMPCONNECT

RMP Connect's innovative software enables early talent recruiters to engage and convert interested students into hires and measure the effectiveness of their attraction activities.

Create targeted communications
Make data-driven decisions
Improve ROI