

# BUILD YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

How shareable recognition stories power your employer brand

## It's a candidate's world, we're just living in it

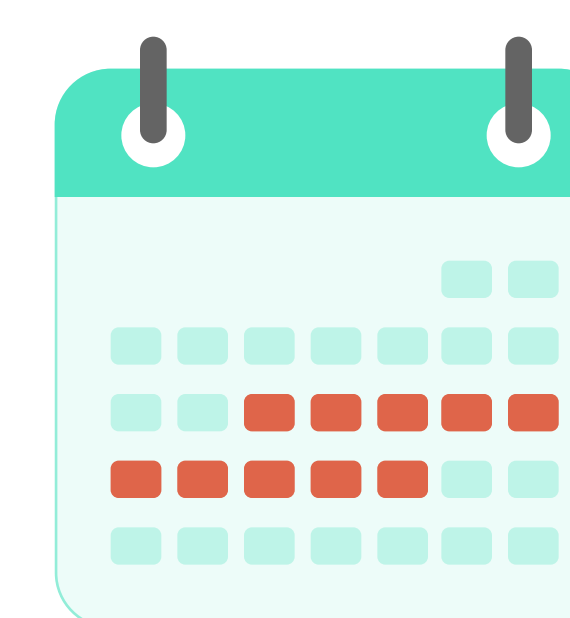
It's a tough time to be an employer: Unemployment is at an all-time low and job seekers are savvier than ever, easily gathering information about what it's like to work at a company without even having to talk to a recruiter. These developments mean that **we're currently in a candidate-driven market.**

Many employers are feeling the pressure in terms of their recruiting efforts: **73% of companies are struggling to find relevant candidates**, top candidates stay available for only 10 days before getting hired, and **the number of job openings are poised to surpass the number of unemployed workers for the first time on record**, meaning there are more job openings than we can possibly fill.

Gone are the days where employers control the conversation: Candidates now have a suite of tools at their disposal like Glassdoor and The Muse to gain insights into company culture and evaluate job opportunities independently. Social media has also become a powerful medium where employers can share their culture and employee experience feedback (their love for their team, or worst case, their office rants)—**meaning your current employees can be powerful ambassadors, when given the right tools.**



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## Why prioritize employer brand?

Employer brand refers to how companies are perceived by current and prospective employees. This goes beyond the consumer experience and really gets to the heart of what it's like to work somewhere. **Employer brand is an essential component of attracting and retaining employees, and it has taken on even greater significance in the current market where there's a shortage of qualified talent.**

Companies can build their employer brand through their online presence on sites like **glassdoor** and **themuse** and through social media like **Instagram** and **LinkedIn**, but above all by motivating employees to share their experiences through these platforms. **Employer branding is much more powerful when it comes directly from your employees.**



At this point, you may be asking yourself:  
**How can I best leverage my HR toolkit  
to build employee advocacy?**

## Sociable recognition programs

Company-wide recognition programs that offer the potential to increase buzz and excitement can be relatively easy to implement, and will build socialization both inside and outside your company.

Think about it this way: **Your best people are the ones who are being recognized, and it only make sense to give them a place in the spotlight.** Making these top performers the face of your company motivates and encourages them to stay while also setting a high bar for future candidates.



# Recognition built on shareable experiential rewards

At Blueboard, we believe that meaningful employee rewards are shareable, and we deliver this through **experiential rewards**. Employees have the ability to choose from hundreds of hand-curated experiences, from glassblowing lessons and sunset hot air balloon rides to weekend getaways with the family. There's a reward for every employee's unique interest.

**Blueboard rewards are exciting, fun, and highly shareable, especially through visually driven platforms like Instagram and Facebook.** Employees go out and about on their experience, and snap photos, take selfies or Boomerang videos that earn social currency—all of the coveted likes and comments from their family and friends. Offering rewards that are truly Instagram-worthy helps build employee advocacy.

This is a seriously effective approach to employer branding. **When your employees are so excited about the recognition they're receiving that they're motivated to use their own social platforms to talk about it, you know you're doing something right.** These stories show future candidates that your company cares about recognizing top talent and positions your company as a "Best Place to Work".





# Experiential rewards in practice: stories from top companies

So you want to put an experiential rewards program in place? Wise decision! Here are a few best practices from current Blueboard customers to help you imagine what experiential rewards could look like at your company.



## Glaukos: Giving “Flat Tom” a well-rounded existence

Glaukos celebrates employees reaching their 5-, 10- and 15-year anniversaries with Blueboard rewards. But employees don’t celebrate solo—they bring a paper cutout of their CEO, dubbed “Flat Tom” along on their adventures. Check out the Instagram hashtag [#FlatTomsAdventure](#) and the company write-up on [The Muse](#) to find out what Flat Tom has been up to lately.



## GoPro: Making employee rewards the stuff of legends

GoPro doesn’t have to work too hard to get recipients of their GoPro Legends award to share photos, capturing amazing content is built into their company’s mission. The company simply created a branded hashtag, [#goprolegend](#), which employees use on Instagram when sharing photos of everything from hot air balloon rides to diving in the Philippines.



## Hoopla: Putting rewards front and center

Hoopla wants candidates to understand just how important employee recognition is, so they’ve featured Blueboard and their employee anniversary program as one of their benefits front and center on their [careers page](#).





# Recognition program ideas

Based on our experience, the following types of recognition programs are the most shareable (and therefore most effective at building employer brand).



## Anniversary awards

Company-wide initiatives like anniversary awards are highly shareable. Why?

**Because celebrating employee tenure creates a fulfilling and positive work environment.** Some employees aren't shy about saying they won't look for another job until they've hit a particular milestone—they're holding out for that coveted award!

With social tools like LinkedIn automatically reminding people (and everyone in their networks) when they're celebrating a work anniversary, why not give them something worth sharing, like an amazing photo of their homemade dumplings during their Blueboard cooking class experience? As employees earn rewards, social tools can turn them into even stronger brand advocates.



## Employee referral incentives

When you're hiring (and given the state of the market today, there's a good chance you are), employee referrals are the best source of prospects. According to Jobvite, referrals tend to be better qualified, have a better chance of getting hired, and stick around longer than employees who come from other third-party sources.

Why not incentivize qualified referrals with buzz-worthy Blueboard incentives? You're probably already giving out cash, so it's an easy swap. **But unlike cash bonuses, as winning employees complete their Blueboard experiences, you can share their content internally to further promote program adoption and awareness.**

**Click to watch employees go #Blueboarding after winning an employee referrals contest**



**#Blueboarding** Alaskan Adventure with Justin from Helix



Juliano from Guidewire takes flight with his **Blueboard Reward**



## Tips for creating a shareable recognition program

01

**Create a company-branded hashtag** to help spread the word, aggregate content, and encourage employee-led conversations.

02

Take a tip from Glaukos, and set up a Blueboard photo contest, offering another experiential reward to the best branded #hashtag post a few times a year.

**Contests like these help to get your employees involved, boosting program adoption and visibility.** In the case of Glaukos, all employees are eligible to share photos on their own adventures with Flat Tom, with an annual winner earning a Blueboard Ruby reward (the same level rewarded at their 10-year anniversary milestone, and includes experiences like snorkeling with whale sharks or having your own “Ferris Bueller” day adventure, so it’s a pretty exciting award).

03

**Leverage employee recognition stories on public-facing sites like your careers page, Glassdoor, and The Muse** to get candidates excited about your company’s benefits offerings and focus on employee appreciation.



*"Hearing what others are able to do with their Blueboard rewards is really exciting. I'm hoping for that 15-year award and traveling to Iceland. I'm hanging in there, I want that award!"*

*It has motivated a lot of people, imagining a long career here and experiencing what the program can offer."*

Kristine Velasco, Product Development Engineer at **GLAUKOS**



### Want to learn more about Blueboard,

and how to build your employer brand through a shareable, experiential rewards program?

[Request a demo](#) on our website  
and we'll look forward to connecting!

