

# EB Forecast 2011

By Michelle Boyde

Employer branding is becoming an increasingly strategic activity and those companies that do it well continue to raise the bar year on year. PwC's global survey of 1,200 CEOs released in February reported that talent management has risen above risk management and investment in their list of priorities. As Q1 gets well underway *Universum Quarterly* asked some key individuals working with EB to share their predictions for the field in 2011.

**I**n Q1 Michal Kalinowski, left his post as CEO to drive EB knowledge further as Universum's chief knowledge officer – he shares his predictions for the year ahead.

## What will make employer branding exciting in 2011?

The majority of companies now see EB from a strategic perspective, but in 2011 they are really beginning to reflect on this. As we exited the recession, investment in EB went up to secure talent quickly for the recovery. The drop in EB spending was only half the intensity of recruitment cuts. The BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) region, especially China, did extraordinarily well on an economic level. They are now en par with other markets, no longer a follower. Executives are realising that they need to be strategic in these countries in regard to talent, rather than just treating them as operational markets.

After this last recession employers do not want to go back into an annual cycle of attracting talent, they are now aiming for long term engagement. The trend is from "recruitment" to "talent relations". Now students are looking at employers when they first enrol at university, there needs to be a longer investment in talent

without such immediate feedback.

Lastly, they understand the value of alumni and looking after their regretted losses are the long term. For me what's really exciting is working closely with companies helping them set their goals and the strategic dimension of where they are going. The business plan is cascading down to employer branding strategy more than ever before.

## What will be 2011's biggest challenge for those working with employer brands?

Still, despite lots of progress, it is the internal challenge of getting internal buy in.

Also, to have courage can be hard. HR teams need to have the guts to say how

things really are when you work for them. Companies need to be presented to talent, not sold. Employers have a responsibility to give people the best foundation to make decisions, even if that decision

turns out to be this might not be for me.

Additionally, corporate communications are like mission control, they hold the brand guidelines and need to sign-off material. Now employees have access to many online channels to tell their story. HR's ability to persuade corporate communications to be more open is increasingly important – there needs to be a nuance in communications.

*"For me what's really exciting is working closely with companies helping them set their goals and the strategic dimension of where they are going."*

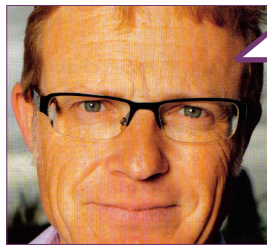
– Michal Kalinowski, Universum



**Michal Kalinowski**  
Chief Knowledge Officer,  
Universum

*“It used to be that you evaluated these things every 10 years, then five years and now it’s changing every few months. We have to decide how best to deploy our resources to cope with this.”*

– Jennifer Philpot, Ernst & Young



**Paul Maxin**  
Global Resourcing Director,  
Unilever, London, UK

**If you weren't in EB, what would you do?**

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**What will make EB exciting in 2011?**

The acquisition and development of great talent will remain as competitive as ever. We'll use our corporate brand as the platform to ensure a compelling candidate-centric employment brand that is flexible enough to adapt to local markets and cultures. The ongoing explosion of digital and social media as platforms for engagement makes this challenging and exciting in equal measure.

**2011's biggest challenge for those working with EB?**

To maintain key discriminators and to ensure that we have the right targets and know how to measure success in our target markets.

**Which employers should we keep an eye on in 2011?**

I suspect great social media brands such as Facebook and LinkedIn will be interesting as they develop their EB. Will they take on the attributes of larger corporate organisations, or remain true to their roots?



**Jennifer Philpot**  
Director Global Recruiting & Employer  
Brand, Ernst & Young, London, UK

**If you weren't in EB, what would you do?**

I would want to work with Tom Ford, the former creative director of Gucci, as his brand guru. He has such an amazing personal brand and unique style and now works in movies, with make-up and clothes – it would be great fun.

**What will make EB exciting in 2011?**

Continuing to tackle the challenges of social and mobile media including phones and I pads. We need to understand how to use them to address issues and opportunities, but also how to build the cool factor. Keeping up with it is a challenge.

**2011's biggest challenge for those working with EB?**

It's tied to what is exciting this year – really keeping up with social media and looking at the hygiene factors. What must we have, what is cool to have, what creates positive awareness, plus what should we stop doing. It used to be that you evaluated these things every 10 years, then five years and now it's changing every few months. We have to decide how best to deploy our resources to cope with this. Ten years ago marketing and recruitment worked separately, but the desire from leadership is they become more integrated. We are shifting focus from the external brand to the internal brand to balance our activities. We are spending more money and resources on our people.

**Which employers should we keep an eye on in 2011?**

There are three groups I will be watching. Firstly, our service competitors – we are a very tight pack and we tend to trial many things between us because we have the resources. Secondly, the banks – we are competing with them for top talent so I always want to know what's happening with them. And lastly, companies focused on the people aspect of their brand such as Virgin and Apple. Ernst & Young will never be as cool or style focused as these employers, but there is lots we can learn from what they are doing.





### If you weren't in EB, what would you do?

I would likely still be a human rights legal academic. I was starting my doctorate in law at Cambridge when McKinsey approached me – that was 16 years ago. If I hadn't joined McKinsey that is probably what I would be doing.

### What will make EB exciting in 2011?

The resurrection of the War for Talent - or should I say the Battle for Talent as it's still not fully back to where it was, but it's getting there and will make this year exciting. It will be challenging to distinguish your EVP from others in the market for top talent. Fortunately, the McKinsey brand itself is pretty tough to beat.

### 2011's biggest challenge for those working with EB?

In 2011 and beyond, the challenge for global employers will be to increasingly understand the talent pools from non-traditional geographic sources, paralleling the rise of the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) economies. How can we begin to access those talent pools while still drawing from the traditional Harvards and INSEADs of the world? We will need to be clever to locate and attract talent beyond our usual channels.

### Which employers should we keep an eye on in 2011?

McKinsey & Company – just watch us! You should also watch the resurgence of private banking and equity players. The financial sector as a whole is back in the talent market and the companies in this sector will be interesting to watch this year.



**Brian Rolfes**  
Partner, Director of Global Recruiting,  
McKinsey & Company, Toronto, Canada

### If you weren't in EB, what would you do?

I was always very interested in recruiting and employer branding. To enthuse and engage young people for Siemens as an employer is very fulfilling for me. Alternatively, I would follow my fascination of sports and somehow work with that.

### What will make EB exciting in 2011?

The key is to develop and implement a true global brand which is attractive in all major markets, while maintaining all the local specialties of the brand. It will be exciting to work out how to find talent in all regions where a strong employer brand will be a key lever to successfully attract and recruit talent. Therefore, EB efforts are highly interlinked with all recruiting activities – it is the backbone of your recruiting success.

### 2011's biggest challenge for those working with EB?

It is the main lever to convey a trustworthy story. It's not all about nice collaterals – it is about authentically presenting what your company really stands for and what makes you so unique. We have to develop an effective approach to ensure that the message will reach sustainably all the different target groups including those who have not considered working for us. This also requires a strategy of using all communication channels and platforms successfully.

### Which employers should we keep an eye on in 2011?

Companies who provide answers to the questions of the future. For example, how can we provide clean and sustainable energy and transport or affordable healthcare for millions of people in growing cities around the globe? Candidates are fascinated by these questions.



**Kerstin Wagner**  
Head of Global Talent Acquisition,  
Siemens, Munich, Germany