

# Care&Culture

Crafting brand  
through marketing  
and talent  
acquisition.

Brand  
Building  
for the  
New Age

## Healthier healthcare marketing.



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Aloysius Butler & Clark



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Explore the intersection of brand, workforce and experience in Healthcare. Through research, industry insights and real-world perspectives, we get to the root of how organizations build trust, attract talent and deliver on their promises in an increasingly transparent environment.

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&C**

# The Brand You Build Is the Organization You Run

**For years, organizations have treated brand as something you build and workforce as something you manage.**

Brand lived in marketing. Workforce lived in HR. One shaped perception. The other handled operations. It was a clean division, and for a long time, it worked well enough. But it doesn't anymore. Because in today's environment, your brand is not defined by what you say. It's defined by what people experience—and increasingly, by what they see others experience. That shift has collapsed the distance between brand and workforce in a way many organizations haven't fully caught up to.

Whether intentional or not, those two things now function as one system.

## Brands Don't Break in the Market First

Most organizations still believe brand problems show up externally—weak awareness, unclear positioning, underperforming campaigns. The instinct is to respond in kind: Refine the message, increase investment, sharpen the strategy. But that's not where brand breakdown actually begins.

Brands don't fail in the market first. They fail internally and then the market catches up. They fail when the story being told outside of the organization begins to diverge from the experience of working inside of it. They fail when leadership expectations, operational realities and cultural signals begin to contradict one another. And for a long time, those contradictions were easier to reconcile.

Messaging could smooth them over. Brand could operate as a layer applied on top of the business rather than a reflection of it. That is no longer the case.

Today, those internal dynamics are visible. Constantly, publicly and at scale. They show up in reviews, in conversations, in social content, in the tone of a job posting and in the way people experience the organization in real time. The market doesn't just hear your brand anymore. It tests it.

## This Isn't a Coordination Problem

Most organizations recognize some version of this tension and respond by trying to better align marketing and recruitment. Get the teams talking. Coordinate messaging. Close the gap. And while that's directionally right, it misses the bigger issue.

This is not due to a lack of coordination between two functions. It's the result of a model that was built for a different environment. A model where brand could be shaped independently from the internal realities of the organization. In that model, marketing could project confidence while recruitment managed urgency. The organization could tell different stories to different audiences without immediate consequence.

That model breaks down when transparency increases and audiences begin evaluating the organization as a whole. Candidates behave like consumers. Consumers behave like insiders. Both are asking the same question: Is this organization what it says it is?

And increasingly, they are answering that question based on signals that sit outside of traditional marketing entirely.

## Marketing Doesn't Fix the Gap ... It Reveals It

When organizations feel pressure, the instinct is still to invest in marketing. Clarify the message. Launch a new campaign. Reinforce what makes the organization strong. But marketing doesn't resolve the gap between what is promised and what is experienced. It makes that gap more visible.

If your external narrative signals stability while your workforce signals strain, people notice. If your campaigns project confidence while your employee experience tells a different story, people feel it. Most organizations don't have a marketing problem or a recruitment problem. They have an alignment problem that they ask marketing to compensate for.

And the more you invest in marketing without addressing it, the faster you scale the issue.

## Workforce Is Infrastructure

The organizations that are adapting to this shift are not simply improving coordination. They are redefining what brand is. They recognize that workforce is not a support function. It is core infrastructure. It determines whether growth is possible, whether experience is consistent and whether the organization feels credible from the outside. Vacancy constrains performance. Burnout shapes delivery. Turnover signals instability.

Workforce health and brand health are not parallel metrics. They are the same system. When they are managed separately, both weaken. When they are aligned, something shifts. Messaging becomes more grounded. Recruitment becomes more effective. Employees reinforce the brand because it reflects what they actually experience.

## Alignment Is an Operating Model

Alignment is often treated as a moment—a workshop, a set of guidelines, a periodic effort between teams.

But in reality, it's an operating model.

It shows up in how decisions are made. Marketing understands workforce realities before making promises. Recruitment reflects the brand, not just immediate need. Leadership evaluates brand, workforce and experience as one connected system.

When that happens, the organization stops telling different stories depending on the audience or the pressure of the moment. It starts telling one coherent story—grounded in truth and reinforced everywhere. Because whether intentional or not, every organization is already telling one. The only question is whether that story holds together.

## This Is The Work

A brand is no longer what you say about your organization. It's what your organization makes true—every day, through the people delivering it. That's the shift.

And once you see brand that way, you stop asking how to improve marketing or speed up hiring. You start asking a different question entirely: Is the organization we're running capable of delivering the brand we're promoting?



By Alex Wittchen  
Managing Director, Strategy

# Healthcare Leaders Have Been Clear About What's Keeping Them Up at Night— And We're Listening

**If you've spent any time with Kaufman Hall's 2025 Health System Performance Outlook, one thing is obvious: Healthcare leaders are carrying a lot right now.**

Workforce shortages. Rising costs. Capacity issues. Margin pressure. Patient access. Culture fatigue. All of these, on top of an uncertain environment, are causing a lot of frustration.

In reading the Kaufman Hall report, there was no single point that stood out to me. It was the consistent message that this is a system of connected problems. And that's exactly why, at AB&C, we're spending so much time bringing our Marketing and Recruitment teams closer together.

**This Isn't a Marketing Problem. And It Isn't a Recruitment Problem.**

The report backs up what we hear regularly from CEOs, CMOs and HR leaders: We can't treat brand challenges and workforce challenges separately anymore.

If you can't staff a service line, access suffers. When access suffers, patient experience suffers. When patient experience suffers, reputation suffers. And when reputation suffers, recruitment gets harder. Breaking this cycle requires thinking differently, and no single department can do it alone. Yet in many organizations, marketing and recruitment still operate separately, often with different goals, messages and priorities.

That disconnect isn't just frustrating, it's expensive.

**Why We're Focused on Marketing and Recruitment—Together**

At AB&C, we've worked in healthcare long enough to see this coming. Our Recruitment team has spent years helping organizations attract and retain talent, and our Marketing team has spent just as long building brands, driving volume and strengthening reputation. Healthcare leaders can't afford these fragmented strategies anymore. Marketing and recruitment can't compete for attention or budget—they have to work together.

When marketing understands workforce realities, messaging becomes more credible. When recruitment understands brand strategy, hiring becomes more effective. And when both teams share insight, organizations get clarity.

If you're thinking about how to gain clarity and set your organization up for success in 2026 and beyond, we'd love to talk about what alignment could look like for you.



**By Maria Mongelli**  
Managing Director, Healthcare



## When Marketing and Recruitment Compete, Your Brand Loses

### Most healthcare organizations don't intend for recruitment and marketing to compete.

It just happens. Separate budgets. Separate agencies. Separate strategies. Separate metrics.

Marketing is measured on patient growth, awareness and reputation. Recruitment is measured on speed, volume and time to fill. Both teams are under pressure. Both are trying to deliver results. And both are often operating without any clear idea of what the other is doing.

### The result isn't just inefficiency, it's fragmentation.

When recruitment and marketing operate independently, organizations spend more to achieve less. Campaigns run in parallel instead of in sync. Language, tone and positioning are inconsistent and audiences—patients and candidates—are left to figure it all out.

There are significant financial impacts, too. Systems duplicate spend across platforms, vendors and media buys. Strategically, they miss opportunities to negotiate the best rates and value-adds. And reputationally, they send mixed messages about programs, culture and stability.

Patients don't separate employer brand from patient brand anymore. Candidates don't either. Both are evaluating the same organization through the same lens and deciding if they want to be a part of it.

When recruitment and marketing compete for attention, ownership or resources, the results are often unclear. Alignment doesn't require merging teams or eliminating departments. It means consistent communication, shared context, shared strategy and shared accountability. It means marketing understands workforce constraints before launching growth campaigns. It means recruitment understands brand promise before pushing urgent hiring messages.

The healthcare systems with the strongest performance right now aren't necessarily spending more—they're aligning better. They're treating workforce strategy as brand strategy and brand strategy as a priority.

When recruitment and marketing compete, the brand can get weak and muddled. When they work together, the brand becomes clearer. Messaging becomes stronger. Spend becomes smarter. And performance improves.



By **Maria Mongelli**  
Managing Director, Healthcare



## When Your Marketing Sounds Confident but Your Recruitment Sounds Desperate

Healthcare marketers have gotten really good at sounding confident. They talk about growth, innovation, access, new physicians and expansion. They launch campaigns that differentiate their organization, promote new programs and project stability. From the outside, their story looks solid.

Then someone sees their recruitment messaging:

- ☹️ “Urgently hiring.”
- ☹️ “Immediate need.”
- ☹️ “Sign-on bonus.”
- ☹️ “Short staffed.”

And suddenly, the story is very different.

This is one of the most common and overlooked brand problems in healthcare right now. Service-line and brand marketing communicate strength, while recruitment messaging, under pressure to fill roles, often communicates urgency and desperation. Alone, both approaches make sense. Together, they chip away at credibility.

Recruitment content isn't hidden anymore. Job postings, recruiter outreach, career pages, social posts and employee reviews are all out in the open. They show up in search results next to patient campaigns. They get shared on social. They're seen by patients, families and members of the community, not just people looking for jobs. And when recruitment sounds frantic and marketing sounds polished, people are left to draw their own conclusions.

This isn't about pretending staffing challenges don't exist. Healthcare leaders know how real nursing and physician shortages are. The issue is that, when recruitment operates without any connection to brand strategy, urgency becomes the default tone. Pressure becomes the narrative. And over time, that narrative starts to define the organization more than any campaign ever could.

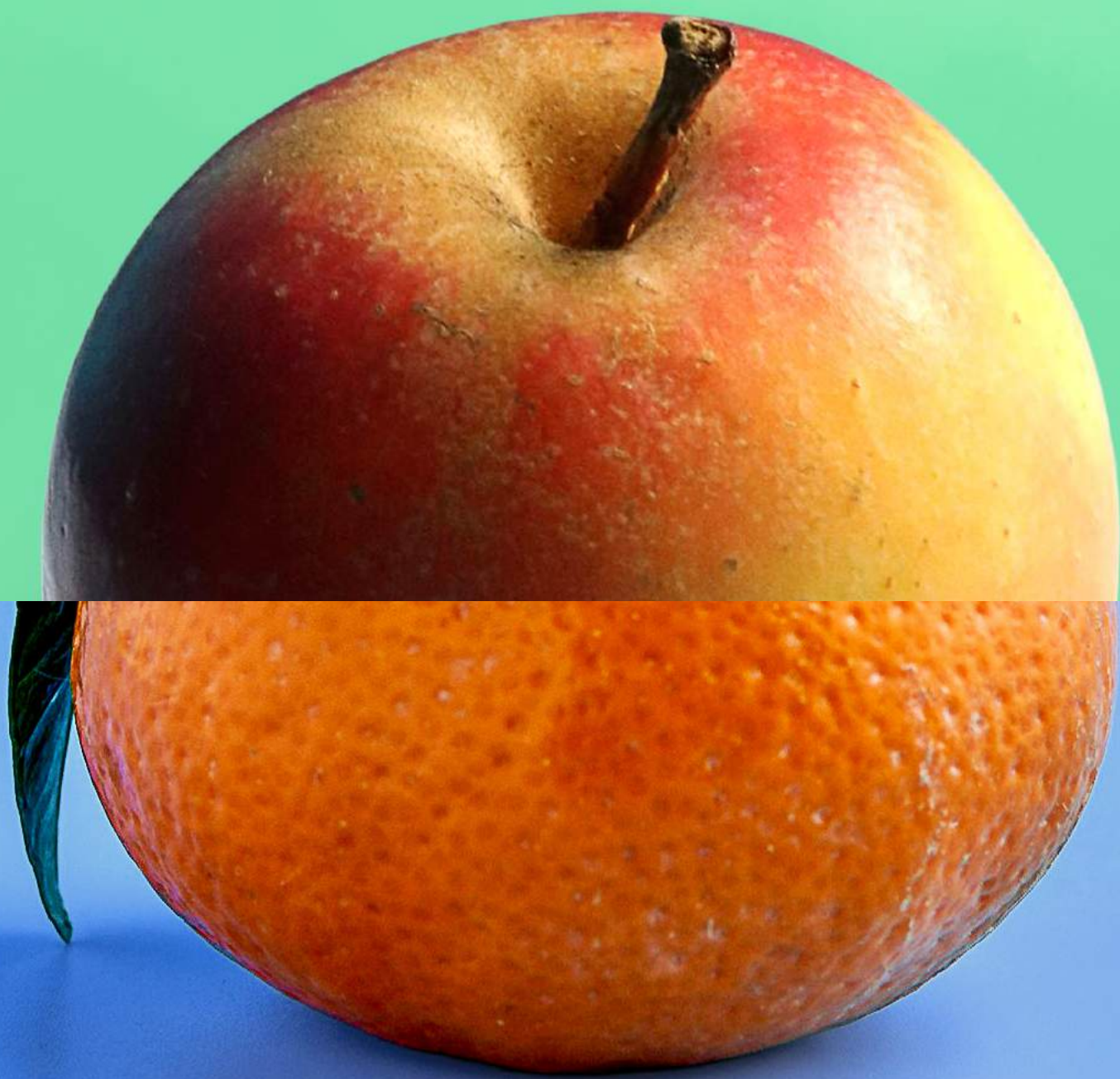
The strongest healthcare brands don't ignore workforce challenges—but they don't let them become the brand, either. They make sure marketing and recruitment are grounded in the same reality.

When marketing understands what's really happening on the recruitment side, it stops overpromising. When recruitment understands the brand, it stops unintentionally signaling instability. The result isn't spin or polish, it's one honest, coherent story instead of two competing ones. That consistency then helps the entire organization move ahead.



By **Nikki Laska**  
Accounts Director, Healthcare

What's  
real  
inside  
resonates  
outside.



When  
employees  
feel it,  
patients  
trust it.

A strong brand is built in the connection between what you say  
and what people experience, between marketing and recruitment.

[abccreative.com](http://abccreative.com)

**ALOYSIUS  
BUTLER  
& CLARK**

# The Employee Experience Is Visible to Patients Whether You Intend It or Not



By Shawn Kessler  
Managing Director, Recruitment

Healthcare organizations spend significant time and capital shaping their brand. Experience design, reputation management, loyalty strategies and growth initiatives sit high atop leadership agendas.

But here's the reality: Even the best thought-out marketing plans, product launches and point-of-care designs can be undone if your employee experience culture is out of sync.

I can think of few other industries where the consumer gets to witness work culture as they do in healthcare. A hospitalized patient has a front-row seat to the way your teams work together. A visitor in your clinic waiting to get blood drawn overhears conversations in the corridors. Even delivery vendors can sense your employees' contentment—or lack thereof—while they're grabbing a sandwich from the hospital café. Each of these interactions has tremendous power to influence brand perception more permanently than any marketing campaign.

That's because how your employees experience their work reflects the truth of your brand. While marketing can help an organization frame an identity, it's up to leadership to turn the promise into reality. And leaders can't delegate culture—they must model and inspire it.

## Patients Trust Employees More Than Institutions

People trust people more than organizations. In healthcare, brand perceptions are formed in care settings, not marketing narratives.

It's important to remember that patients may not publicly react to your tagline, but they'll privately evaluate their visit and share their opinions on trusted sites like Healthgrades. Those reviews are highly visible and largely dependent on the point-of-care experience—the nurse who listens, the physician who explains, the tech who reassures and any staff member who communicates clearly.

The professionals and clinical staff within a health system don't just represent your brand, they are your brand. According to the Edelman Trust Barometer, employees are among the most credible voices associated with an organization, often more trusted than executives or advertising. When a healthcare organization is trying to sell something as personal and meaningful as care, wellness or health, it's the frontline staff who fulfill the brand's promise and make the value proposition credible. Maintaining a positive and productive work culture can be the most cost-effective and powerful way for a health system to consistently deliver a brand promise.

What's more, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality links staff burnout to lower patient satisfaction and compromised safety outcomes. And according to the National Academy of Medicine, clinician burnout is an issue affecting more than half of healthcare professionals. This means discontent is probably brewing inside most health systems today, and it is affecting the service, the experience and the effectiveness of care being delivered.

Healthcare executives and marketing teams can't expect patients to understand the staffing shortages, operational mandates or complex inner workings of their industry. But they should fully recognize that patients will understand the way a health system treats them. These are the moments that make or break a brand.

## You Can't Market Your Way Out of a Broken Culture

When healthcare organizations experience reputation challenges, the instinct is often to invest in more marketing. New campaigns. New messaging. New positioning. But marketing doesn't fix a broken culture. It amplifies it.

The rise of AI-based search engines and generative platforms has accelerated this reality. Today, prospective patients, candidates and community members increasingly rely on AI-powered search summaries to understand healthcare organizations before they ever visit a website. These systems synthesize information from reviews, media coverage, employee feedback and public commentary, revealing patterns rather than isolated messages. According to Pew Research Center, a growing share of users encounter AI-generated summaries in search results, influencing how they interpret information.

At the same time, research from Edelman reinforces that people place greater trust in peer voices and employee perspectives than in corporate messaging. When AI tools aggregate those peer signals, they amplify both positive and negative narratives at scale. Reputation is no longer shaped by what you publish—it's shaped by what patients and employees consistently say about you.

If your internal experience is misaligned, marketing will only accelerate awareness of the gap between promise and reality. Trust in healthcare is fragile. It is built through consistency, and consistency is built through culture. No brand strategy can outperform a broken culture.

## The Strategic Question Leaders Must Ask

The question is not whether patients see your employee experience. The question is whether what they see reflects who you truly are and hope to be.

If your brand promise is compassion, your leaders should prioritize presence, connection and empathy in their work.

If your brand promise is excellence, then your leadership culture should emphasize setting and achieving goals, establishing best practices, and modeling those standards consistently.

If your brand promise is trust, your culture should be built around transparency, creating safety, consistently upholding promises and being accountable.

Leaders cannot delegate this alignment. They must model it and drive it across the entire team. Set expectations. Lead by example.

## What High-Performing Healthcare Organizations Do Differently

The healthcare organizations that will outperform in the next decade will not be the ones with the biggest marketing budgets. They'll be the ones with the strongest cultures.

They design the employee experience with the same rigor as the patient experience. They treat leadership behavior as a brand signal. They listen to employees as seriously as they listen to patients. They view retention as reputation management. They recognize culture as a competitive advantage.

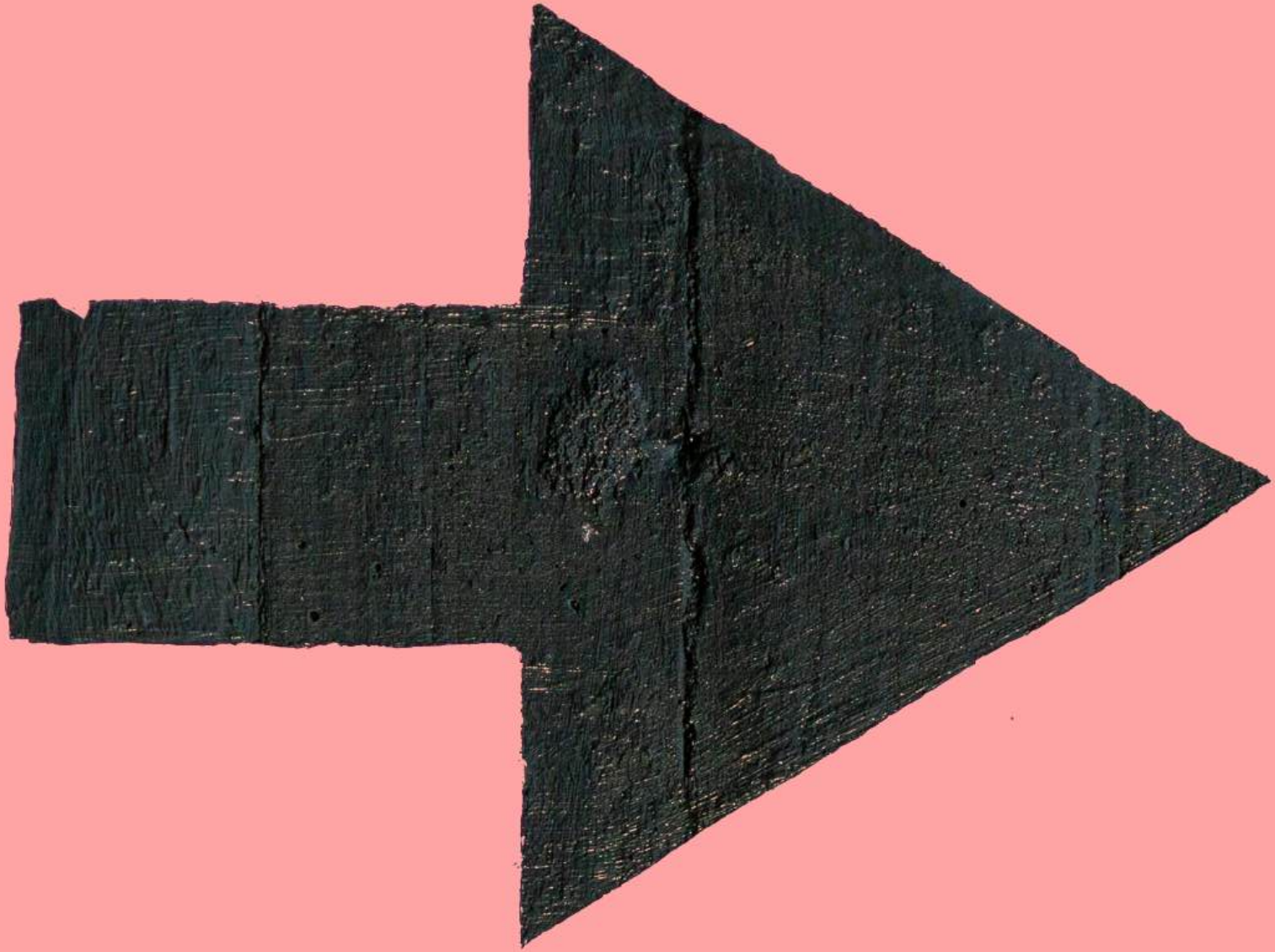
And, perhaps most importantly, they understand that sustainable performance requires sustainable people. And these people will become their strongest brand promoters and ambassadors.

## The Bottom Line for Healthcare Leaders

The employee experience is visible to your patients whether you intend it or not. It shows up in care quality, trust, reputation, loyalty and performance.

You do not get to decide whether patients see it. You only get to decide whether what they see reflects the organization you're trying to build.

Because when employees feel cared for, patients feel cared for. And that's not branding. That's strategy.



# The Quiet Shift in Healthcare Brand Building

## Why Authentic Storytelling Is Replacing Legacy Media

**For decades, healthcare organizations relied on a familiar and traditional formula to build their brands: print placements in local publications, billboard campaigns along commuter highways, radio spots during morning drive time. These channels established visibility in communities and reinforced the presence of trusted local institutions.**

But people are now approaching their healthcare choices in a dramatically different way.

Today, the patient journey rarely begins with a phone call or a referral. It begins with research. Patients explore symptoms, treatment options and provider reputations long before they ever step into a clinic or schedule an appointment. Research shows that 77 percent of patients look online before booking care, and increasingly their investigation includes video. More than 60 percent of people now report using video platforms to learn about health information.

This shift in behavior is subtle, but its implications for healthcare brands are profound. By the time many patients interact with a healthcare organization directly, they've already formed their perception of that brand—about whether the organization feels credible, compassionate and trustworthy—and whether they're comfortable getting care for themselves and their families.

### Reputation Now Forms Before the First Interaction

The workforce side of healthcare is undergoing the same shift. Physicians, nurses and allied professionals now research potential employers the same way consumers research products or services. Before submitting an application, candidates want to understand the culture they might be joining. They want to see evidence of collaboration, purpose and professional growth.

A job description alone rarely provides the answers they seek.

More and more, patients and clinicians are being introduced to healthcare brands in digital spaces through testimonials, reviews or nontraditional content. This is one reason forward-thinking healthcare organizations are reimagining how to accurately communicate their brand and working hard to collect authentic, positive stories and testimonials to do so.

### Trust Is Built Through Human Experience, Not a Print Ad

Healthcare, more than almost any other industry, runs on trust. Patients trust providers to protect their health, their families and their dignity during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. Clinicians trust organizations to safeguard their professional purpose, their opportunities to deliver meaningful care, and their ability to advance and grow without the fear of burnout.

Because trust is so central to these decisions, people are looking for signals that feel genuine and human. That's why testimonials and real experiences carry so much weight. Research shows that consumers trust peer stories the same way they trust personal recommendations. A patient describing their recovery, a nurse explaining teamwork inside a critical care unit, a physician reflecting on the purpose behind their work—all of these offer something traditional advertising rarely provides: proof of lived experience.

Rather than merely promote services, these stories reveal culture. They show how care actually happens. And in a matter of moments, they allow viewers to determine whether they believe what they see.

### The Next Era of Healthcare Brand Building

None of this means traditional media disappears entirely. Legacy channels still play a role in certain markets and circumstances. But the center of attention for healthcare brand building is shifting. People are forming perceptions before their first direct interaction. And their trust gains strength through authentic human stories rather than institutional messaging.

It has always been about the people who experience it:

- ✓ Patients who find hope.
- ✓ Clinicians who find purpose.
- ✓ And care teams who come together to deliver something profoundly human.

In an industry built on trust, these voices are the most important brand asset of all.



**By Maria Mongelli**  
Managing Director, Healthcare

# The Future of Healthcare Branding Lives at the Intersection of Marketing and Recruitment

## Why Marketing and Talent Acquisition Must Be Allies in Healthcare

**In healthcare, a strong brand has always been essential for earning community trust, but today, it carries even greater weight. A brand is no longer just a promise to patients, it's a proof point to employees. Every message, from a billboard to a benefits brochure, shapes how people perceive your organization's values, stability and leadership. When marketing and recruitment align, every dollar you spend on advertising works twice as hard—attracting both the patients you want and the workforce you need. This brand multiplier effect is what modern healthcare organizations must harness to stay competitive and keep doors open.**

In decades past, healthcare marketing was a separate discipline focused on bringing patients through the doors, while HR and talent acquisition operated in their own silo recruiting clinicians and staff. Today, that division must end. To build stronger brands, healthcare organizations must ensure that marketing and HR speak with a unified voice to both patients and potential employees. Job seekers behave like consumers, exploring your website, social channels, reviews and media coverage before they apply. If those touchpoints feel fragmented, candidates interpret it as instability. When marketing and HR create a cohesive brand experience, applicants recognize an organization that knows what it stands for and how it treats its people. A unified brand accelerates decision-making, increases offer acceptance and improves retention before an employee's first day.

Healthcare leaders know this is critical. According to a 2023 survey from the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), "workforce challenges (e.g., personnel shortages)" ranked as the top concern among hospital CEOs for the third consecutive year. Financial challenges came in a close second.

That tells us something important: Staffing isn't just an HR problem, it's a business problem. It affects quality of care, patient satisfaction and, as a result, the bottom line. When marketing and HR communicate a unified brand—one that signals both excellent patient care and a fulfilling, supportive workplace—it resonates with both patients and prospective talent.

### The Financial Stakes Are Real

A unified brand also gives health systems something they need: stability. When competing hospitals are cutting budgets, consolidating service lines or experiencing turnover, a consistent brand signals reliability. Patients, employees and candidates feel it. A strong brand helps organizations navigate workforce volatility with less disruption.

Good recruiting is expensive. According to a 2024 article from PracticeMatch, the cost to recruit a physician can range from \$180,000 to \$250,000 when you factor in search-firm fees, marketing, interviews, relocation, sign-on bonuses and incentives.

But the cost of not filling a position is often far greater. As shown on MissingPhysician.com, a vacancy can result in substantial revenue loss: The national average net physician revenue is estimated at \$2.4 million per year. The site lets organizations model their vacancy cost (lost patient revenue, reduced capacity and delayed growth), showing that even modest reductions in "time to fill" can recover millions in revenue.

This is not just "HR fluff." This is strategic value. A well-staffed, well-branded organization is more resilient, financially and operationally.

### The Brand of Care and the Brand of Culture Are One and the Same

When potential employees visit your website, review your careers page or see your social media presence, what do they experience? Do they only see patient-facing messaging? Or do they also sense a culture grounded in support, purpose, collaboration and mission?

Marketing is well positioned to shape that employer brand narrative. By working with HR and talent acquisition, marketing can translate internal values, culture, growth opportunities and community impact into a compelling story. Honest stories are what draw top clinicians and staff to stay, not just to join.

In today's healthcare landscape, a brand is built from the inside out. If an organization's internal culture doesn't align with its external messaging, patients and the workforce notice. Marketing teams have a critical role in ensuring that the brand reflects reality and amplifies it. When employees feel represented and can own the brand, they become your greatest ambassadors—more effective than any advertising campaign.

That matters now more than ever. The competitive hiring environment in healthcare has intensified. According to AMN Healthcare and others, physician recruitment today is characterized by fierce competition, high turnover driven by burnout and an urgent need for retention strategies that go beyond compensation.

By aligning recruitment with the brand and treating talent acquisition as part of the broader organizational identity, hospitals and health systems can position themselves as employers of choice.

### Why a Trusted Partner Matters—20 Years Running

For more than 20 years we, at AB&C, have seen firsthand how aligned branding and strategic recruitment can help organizations overcome workforce shortages, reduce reliance on interim staffing, close vacancies faster and strengthen culture. We know the data, the challenges and the human side of the work. And we're prepared to guide healthcare organizations through the new realities ahead.

### Take the First Step Toward a Healthier Brand

AB&C brings something no other agency can: a clear view of your brand from the perspectives of both the patient and the employee. This model unifies those perspectives to eliminate the gaps that slow recruitment and weaken brand impact, giving organizations greater clarity, credibility and consistency.

If you are ready to elevate your brand for both patients and employees—and build a stronger, more resilient organization—connect with AB&C today. Let's build bridges to connect your marketing, strategy and talent acquisition, while strengthening your organization for what's ahead.

And if you want to go deeper, sign up for our upcoming e-book on how artificial intelligence is transforming healthcare branding and how building a winning internal culture can give your organization a significant competitive advantage in the years to come.



By Shawn Kessler  
Managing Director, Recruitment



## Your Workforce Is Your Brand's Infrastructure

Healthcare brands do not fail in the marketplace first. They fail internally.

**In healthcare, perhaps more so than other industries, the workforce isn't brand-adjacent, it's the central component of the brand's operating system. In healthcare, it's hardworking people who fulfill every brand promise, sales message and delivery point. Yet, many systems today still underfund, underuse and underestimate the benefits of HR and talent acquisition, failing to see them as drivers of strong brands.**

Organizational brands that treat workforce strategy as an operational concern are more likely to underperform than brands that treat talent as core infrastructure.

### Brand Messaging—Are You Delivering a Promise or Fulfilling One?

In most industries, product and marketing shape the brand. It's easy to say, "My product or service can change your life," but in healthcare, you actually have to prove it through service, behaviors and results.

Most healthcare brands build an identity around attributes such as clinical excellence, reliability, compassion, responsiveness and trust. You can't simply communicate these values. You have to perform them if you want people to accept them as truth. And it's your employees who are doing that work.

This means that brand performance will always be linked to workforce performance. The correlation bears out in many ways—just think about some of the downstream effects that originate from workforce instabilities and problems:

- ✓ Low employee satisfaction translates to lower customer satisfaction.
- ✓ Less engaged and undertrained staff leads to increased clinical errors.
- ✓ Understaffed hospital units can lead to higher mortality rates.

These outcomes are not hypothetical. They are repeatedly documented, witnessed and realized across healthcare systems, especially those not interested in the correlation between workforce performance and brand performance.

### Workforce Health Is a Leading Indicator of Brand Health

Internal managers and human resources teams collect metrics that can serve as early warning signs of the overall health of a brand, yet organizational leaders frequently overlook them as operational measures. Metrics such as turnover, vacancy rates, time-to-hire, absenteeism, onboarding effectiveness and employee advocacy scores correlate with business metrics such as patient experience/satisfaction, safety outcomes, operational costs and brand preference.

Those who seek predictive insights to plan for success see the strategic value in these often overlooked HR metrics. Using these enterprise-level indicators can help leaders shape opportunities, identify strengths, overcome weaknesses and detect challenges well before they become evident to the public.

### Next-gen Brands Treat Recruitment as Essential, Not Transactional

Famed management consultant Peter Drucker once said, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." The organizations that adopt that credo see recruitment as part of the greater brand picture. They understand that marketing creates brands, but recruitment sustains them.

When system and recruitment brands meet, they deliver:

- ✓ Brand clarity with mission and vision alignment
- ✓ Deeply embedded and lived organizational values
- ✓ Strategic alignment between leadership, marketing and HR

- ✓ ROI with long-term and far-reaching organizational impact, including significantly lower cost-per-hire and reduced turnover, while sustaining stronger trust signals in their markets

Organizations should apply the same discipline to marketing for talent attraction, engagement and retention as they apply to facilities, technology and service-line expansion. And the goal for both efforts should be more than transactional—it should be deeply connected to a brand's identity and messaging strategy.

### The Strategic Reality

There are a few unfortunate realities staring back at healthcare leaders:

- ✓ Healthcare workforce constraints are structural, not temporary.
- ✓ Physician shortages, nursing supply challenges and workforce attrition are documented and accelerating.
- ✓ Organizations can't outspend, out-market or outrun these conditions.

These realities aren't creating barriers to success as much as they are forming corridors that can guide leadership towards a more aligned brand strategy. Those organizations that build alignment between patient and employer brands will be the ones who won't just plan their future, they'll define it.



By **Todd Cole**  
Brand Strategist

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