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# Talent Attraction Guide 2023

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[rosslyndavid.co.uk](http://rosslyndavid.co.uk)

## Preamble...

In 2018, I had been placing marketers as a recruiter in a recruitment agency for 3 years, and I'd come to realise 2 things: I really enjoyed it and, given the chance, I thought I could improve how it's done.

Day 1. 1st June 2018. No live roles, no clients, no candidates and no brand/reputation. This meant when that first business gave us a chance, I simply had one singular project to work on. Now to fix the 'zero candidates' element...

I couldn't really afford job adverts, so I embarked on a mission to go to whole-of-market and seek out the BEST and most appropriate people I could find, based on the brief I'd been given...Headhunting.

Not only did I find this method more effective in terms of the talent it generated, I also found myself talking to candidates for twice as long as I would have in my old life, as I had the time to do so. No KPI's, no 'telephony sessions', just real proper conversations. This led to stronger and more detailed introductions, more meaningful placements and happier clients. I'd quickly realised, after 5 or 6 successful projects in a row, that working on fewer projects allowed me to get under the skin of the roles more and spending more time interviewing candidates. My fill ratio was a lot higher; roles were getting filled and no candidates were getting ghosted, with dropout rates significantly reduced... everyone was winning.

Fast forward 4 years, 9 months, and 25 days (at time of publishing) and we've developed a watertight 6 step method that guarantees to either find you the right marketing person or give you the live insight and data from the market as to what is stopping this from happening, with suggested adjustments.

Consultative, methodical, knowledgeable and – above all – honest.

Welcome to Rosslyn David – The Marketing Headhunters.



*A. Nichols*

**Adam Nichols**

Founder | Director

“ Polls show that nearly **80% of job seekers won't apply for a role if the salary isn't advertised.** ”

'Competitive' just isn't going to cut it in today's market, so getting your salary benchmarking right is critical if you want a speedy and successful hire.

*So, what do you do?*

You reach for a Salary Survey.

**STOP!** This is more useful...

It's not that we don't agree with the principle of Salary Surveys.

It's just that salaries within Marketing are more nuanced than can easily be captured in broad brush (we've also seen our fair share of those that are fudged and fiddled, but that's a story for another day).

Moreover, candidates are looking for so much more than just the cash element.

In this guide we'll use the **4 Ps** of Marketing and our own experiences to help you navigate the minefield of hiring your next Marketer.

**Product | Price | Place | Promotion**

Because, after all, good recruitment is in fact, good marketing.

# Contents..

A lot of businesses get recruitment wrong by moving too fast. They have a vacancy and skip the first 3 Ps, moving straight to 'Promotion'.

Understandable, but it's a quick fix.

## Quick Fix (kwik ficks)

*noun* INFORMAL

an easy remedy or solution, especially a temporary one which fails to address underlying problems.

Never the right option, is it?

### *This is what you should be doing...*

**Product** The role you're trying to fill Page **05**

**Price** The salary / package on offer Page **08**

**Place** Office / Hybrid / Remote Page **10**

**Promotion** Taking the opportunity to market Page **12**

Keep in mind, this isn't exhaustive, and there will be crossover!

# Product

When hiring, you have 2 'Products' you're selling to prospective candidates:

- Your company
- The role

In either case, your 'product' will only appeal to candidates if it fulfils their wants/needs.

To hire smoothly and successfully, you need to identify what makes your offering different or special.

What sets your business and the vacancy apart from other roles like it on the market?

How can you attract candidates and beat the competition?

The key to this P in recruitment is determining what it is that makes both your business and the role unique or special.

## Your Company

If you've been operating for any significant amount of time, this is probably already well defined. You have your service proposition, your values, your brand and your culture.

You would expect these to evolve as the business grows, so don't let old collateral or content let you down.

Once these are defined, you need to shout about them!

## Why?

Because the first thing ANY consumer does is research what they're buying. Or in this case, applying for. Some people might not research, but the best ones definitely do.

Where are candidates looking?

- Your website
- Your careers page
- Your LinkedIn (Your employee's LinkedIn)
- Google reviews
- Glassdoor
- Crunchbase
- Companies House

These all feed into your 'Employer Branding' and if one of these channels is letting you down, it could be the critical factor that stops the top talent from applying.

So, what can you do to maximise each of these areas?

## Website

This is your shop window to the business. The first impression. Candidates will be making a snap judgement on what they see in the same way any consumer does.

Is it fresh? Is it modern? Is it easy to navigate? Does it have good user experience? Does the company look dynamic?

## Careers Page

The amount of content here will be determined largely by the size of your business but, regardless, it needs to be easy to navigate.

The best careers pages have a clear call-to-action that says 'Live roles' or 'Current positions'. Job seekers shouldn't have to go hunting for it.

As for employer branding, pages to consider include a DE&I policy, benefits, career development and employee testimonials.

## LinkedIn Page

As powerful as your website, but often forgotten. Make sure it's up to date. Ensure you're putting out content.

Better still if this includes work-life/careers content at your company.

If you haven't already, get familiar with the Insights page and what it can give away about your business.

So, if your job adverts boast significant growth in the last 2 years and your insights tab shows you're losing employees hand over fist, it's there for all to see.

## Google Reviews

No one has to go looking for these. Google any business...they're right there.

Keep close to it. Interact. Respond. Address concerns. Request reviews from customers etc that you know will support the business.

Same applies to the other review platforms.

## Glassdoor

Much like Google (and the other review platforms) but from the eyes of your employees rather than customers.

As a rule, people are more vocal about bad experiences than good ones, so ensure current staff are happy and any leavers go through a proper exit interview process. Value their feedback, even if they're leaving.

This will happen more organically if you have embedded development, coaching and management practices within the business.

## Crunchbase

...And other third party websites. There's very little you can do to directly control what information is available to job seekers on 3rd party platforms.

For example, "Crunchbase has more than 4,000 global investment firms that **submit monthly portfolio updates to Crunchbase**. This relationship ensures Crunchbase has first-hand access to the most up-to-date information."

You should keep an eye on what information is out there and ensure it's accurate.

## Companies House

What can you do about this one? Very little. Your financial information is what it is.

Just have an awareness that some candidates, particularly at the senior end, will be thorough on their research. They may have questions around business performance, and when it comes to interview, you need to be prepared to discuss them.

## The Role

Now, how attractive a role is, is intrinsically linked to what's in it for the candidate.

You could have the coolest, most engaging role in the world but if you're not paying enough or offering a subpar benefits package, you're going to struggle to hire against the competition.

But we've saved this for 'Price' (Page 8) and focussed on the role as the 'Product' in this guide.

It starts with defining the role. Which starts with understanding the skills gap in your team.

Before you shove that skills gap into a role description for a new job, (or even if it's a replacement/backfill) there are a few things you need to do;

- Define the skill gap
- Consider the short-, mid- and long-term needs
- Consult the current team
- Consult the wider team
- Consider freelancers
- Consider agency support

It's a waste of everyone's time going to market with a role that can be satisfied elsewhere or isn't needed in the first place.

It's also a waste of time going to market with a role that isn't attractive, or worse, doesn't exist in the market.

## Unattractive Roles

Swiss army knives, the kind where the list of requirements is longer than your arm, will put candidates off.

You'll lose candidacy if it looks like you're trying to exploit new hires by squeezing 2 roles in to 1.

Overworked and underpaid is the phrase.

The expectations of your role should be realistic.

## Roles that don't exist

Some skill set mixes just won't be found in one person.

So that advert you're thinking of running for an SEO Graphic Designer...don't.

Your role is defined, it addresses your skill gap and it exists in the market.

Now you have to take it to market. We'll cover this in 'Promotion' (page 12), talking job ads vs job descriptions, ATL vs BTL recruitment practices, job boards, recruitment agencies and more.

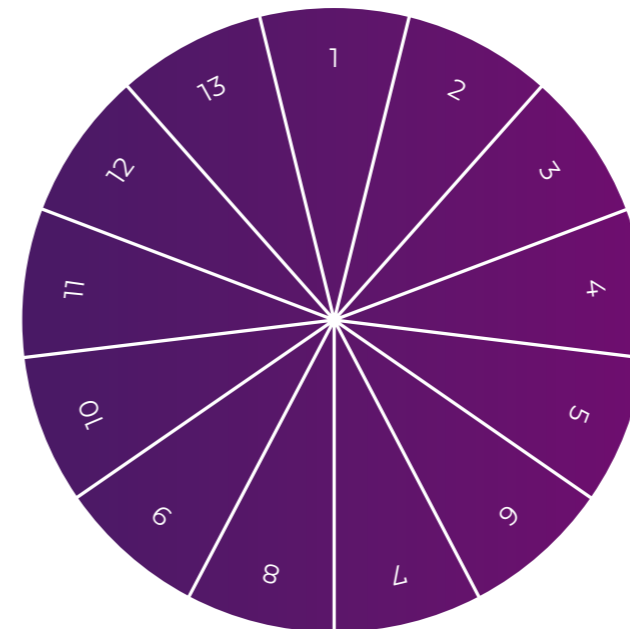
## Price

In this instance we're going to treat 'Price' as the overall package offered against the role. The right 'price' drives up the number of interested candidates and applicants to your company and the role.

If you're underpaying, you won't attract the appropriate talent. If you're overpaying it could hit the P&L pretty hard - this is business, after all. But you can't just pluck a number out of thin air. It must correlate with others in the wider market.

In any case, there are several factors that can affect what you may need to pay for a marketing hire, which is why a broad-brush Salary Survey is of little use to you.

Factors that can effect the salary needed include:



- 1 Location
- 2 Seniority
- 3 Industry
- 4 Industry subsector
- 5 Marketing channel
- 6 Marketing channel niche
- 7 Competitors
- 8 MarTech experience
- 9 Leadership experience
- 10 Target region (UK/EMEA/World)
- 11 Target audience size
- 12 Target audience/stakeholders
- 13 Wider package

Even considering just these 13 factors for nuance, that equates to **8,191** variations of salary for 'the same' role.

## For example

A PPC Manager in a Leicester based Marketing Agency who works with 15x SME clients with small monthly budgets, specialising in Adwords alone will command a different salary to a Paid Media Manager in a London based agency who works with 1 core Enterprise level account managing significant budgets and experience in DV360.

OR

A Cornwall based Marketing Manager in a Not-for-Profit, servicing a local geographic patch who is hands-on across all channels, responsible for 1 direct report, will command a different salary to a Cambridge based Marketing Manager in a Deep Tech business, who has a global audience managing a team of 6, to support high value/low volume product sales.

Salary is always the most critical factor to get right. With the best will in the world, no one is going to be able to pay their rent or mortgage and bills with a cycle-to-work scheme or a duvet day.

But this is where it gets *REALLY* tricky.

Salary is just one of many facets that can make up your total offering and you're also being eyed up against your competitors, and candidates' current employers for...

### Cultural considerations

- Remote working
- Hybrid working
- Flexible working
- Annual leave
- Parental leave (Maternity/Paternity)
- Lifestyle leave (Weddings/Birthdays/Bereavement/Home moves)

(Bean bags, beer fridges and fruit bowls won't separate you from the crowd. Doesn't mean you shouldn't offer them, but don't lead with them in your benefits package)

### Financial Benefits

- Bonus/Commission
- Car Allowance
- Pension
- LTIP/Shares
- Life Assurance
- Income Protection
- Personal Insurances
- Reward Schemes

### Health & Wellbeing

- Private Healthcare
- Dental Cover
- Eyecare
- Employee Assistance
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Gym Membership

This isn't exhaustive, and we know that it's not possible for every business to offer every one of these, but the better the package the more attractive you will be in the wider market, (obviously) and the more flexibility you may be afforded on salary.

**“In today's world, flexible / hybrid working is often the first question I'm asked by candidates. Even ahead of salary. This demonstrates a shift in mindset and the value placed on time and work-life balance”**



James Woodward,  
Marketing Headhunter

So where on earth do you start?

You phone us and use our extensive exposure to this sort of thing.

## Place

Place is where the role can be based. In relatable Marketing terms, the offices are the equivalent of a physical store and remote working is much like an eCommerce website. The more accessible your business is, the more talent you'll attract.

The goal is to determine the size of your talent pool based on your location and ascertain how best to attract the talent you're seeking.

A good starting point is to drop a pin on a map and draw a radius of c.25 miles. In our experience, this is roughly the maximum distance most job seekers are likely to be prepared to travel 5 days a week. (25 miles, as the crow flies, generally averages 1 hour commute).

There are multiple tools available for this online but one we use regularly is

<https://www.freemaptools.com/>

Once you've plotted this radius, there are several factors to consider;

- 1. Major towns/cities within your 'patch'.** This will link to the number of hiring businesses you're competing against for the same talent. Also, talent living the 'wrong' side of those towns/cities is less likely to commute to you to avoid battling heavier traffic.
- 2. Commutability.** With no major roads, the commute to your offices will likely be a bad one. Slow-moving, single-track roads will deter many job seekers from a role. Throw in a lack of bus or train routes and it worsens still further.

**3. Competitors.** A high number of competitors in your location can be both a good and a bad thing. Good; there's a higher chance of finding the talent you're after within a local area. Bad; everyone else wants it too...

**4. Water.** If half your radius map is in the North Sea you've already halved your talent pool. Same goes for rivers, lakes and estuaries.

Now that you've researched and understand your local talent pool you have a few options to consider.

### 1. Do you need this person in office 5 days per week?

This guide isn't here to tell you that you absolutely must offer some form of flexible or remote working. It wouldn't be a 'guide' then, would it... We know there are benefits that come from being in office – osmotic learning, collaboration, mental health to name a few. Only a hiring team can know how critical it is to your business to have someone in every day.

### 2. Flexible working.

Even with a 5-days per week in office requirement, flexible working can broaden your talent pool on a full time role. Rush hour alone can make a 20-minute journey take over an hour.

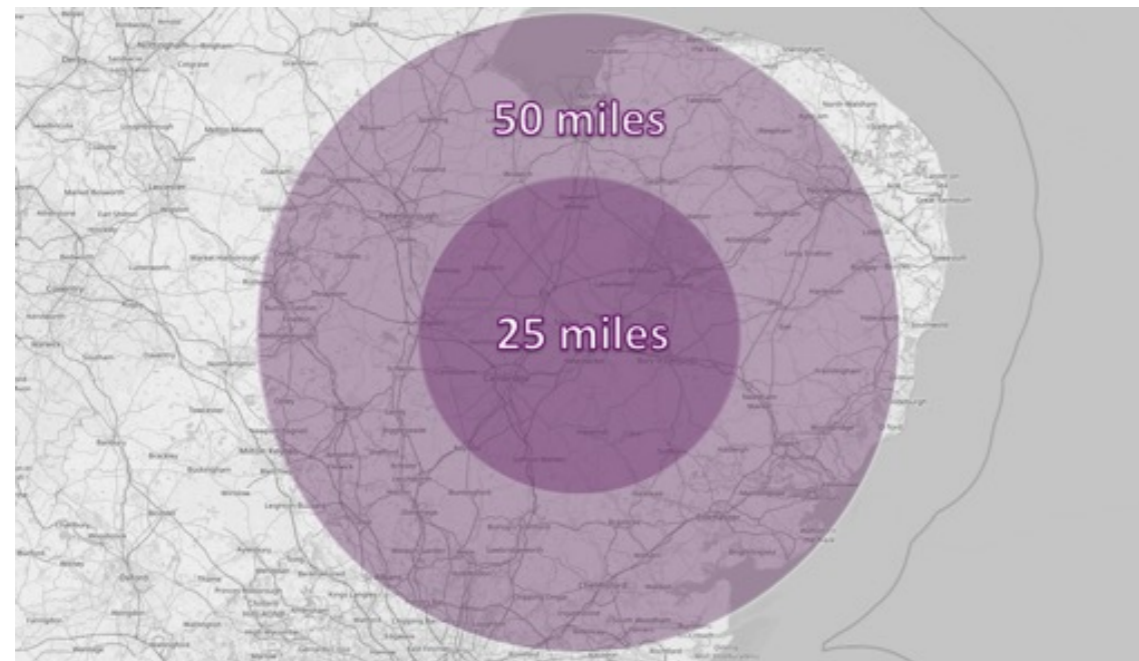
Is 9-5 essential or can you offer core hours of 10:30-15:30 (for example) with the option to flex start/finish times either side? A 7:30 start and 15:30 finish or a 10:30 start and 18:30 finish avoids rush hour whilst still accounting for full time hours in office.

How far you move on offering flexible working is up to you. At the other end of the scale is autonomous flexibility whereby the successful candidate chooses their own working pattern around agreed working hours.

### 3. Remote working.

The more days you can offer remote working, the further your talent pool reach stretches.

- At the thin end, 1 day per week probably isn't going to make much difference. Employees will be grateful of a day from home, no doubt, but 4 days travelling 1 hour each way is still 8 hours lost to commuting per week.
- You'll start to see a real benefit when you offer a 3:2 split (ideally in favour of remote: in office). Our experience is that you can generally scope up to 50 miles from office.
- This doubling of 25 to 50 miles actually increases your talent attraction from 3159 miles squared to 12639 miles squared.



- And fully remote? Well, the world is your oyster. Literally. It can become more a case of getting your advert under the right noses with effective and targeted Promotion.

Your Place may also have a lot of selling points you may want to shout about when promoting the vacancy.

**Got a train station in walking distance? Shout about it!**

**Got a gym on site or accessible around working hours? Shout about it!**

**Got a thriving food scene on your doorstep? You get the idea...**

Sure, potential candidates can research all this, but if they're applying to a number of roles, sometimes you have to grease the wheels.

Granted, they're not directly anything to do with your business or the role. But it will help them visualise their new life at your offices and maybe even get them excited. And what do excited job seekers do? They apply to the role...

## Promotion

### And finally...

We're at the bit you're probably most interested in. Getting your vacancy out there and in the market. Promotion.

Promotion is, in short, the advertising of your vacancy. And if we're truthful, this is what most people think of when it comes to 'Marketing'.

The goal of advertising your vacancy is to show prospective candidates why they might be interested in the role, how it could benefit their career and what's in it for them (See Price).

Whether hiring direct, or partnering with a recruitment provider, there are some common themes in running an effective recruitment campaign.

Let's kick it off with the messaging.

**Q. When is an advert not an advert?**

**A. When it's a list of demands, requirements and needs.**  
(At that point, it's become a job spec)

No-one in the history of job seeking has ever got excited about the list of things you need them to do. Moreover, if you're speaking to the right audience, most of that should be a given.

It's the same reason a TV advert for perfume isn't just a list of its chemical makeup. Or a TV advert for a car isn't its technical specifications.

The job advert is your chance to showcase all the reasons why a jobseeker might want to consider your role vs their current position vs other opportunities in the market.

To shout about all the good stuff, we've dialled in through Product, Price and Place.

Like those perfume adverts using celebrities in seductive and alluring scenarios, or cars racing through cityscapes and country roads.

If you really want to make your adverts pop, you need to be getting the Marketing department to write the copy. Not HR. Because as we mentioned at the beginning of this guide, good recruitment is in fact, good marketing.

First and foremost, you need jobseekers to see you as the destination of choice. Somewhere they want to work. Not just 'the next job'.

**Messaging nailed.**

**Now you need to get it in front of your target audience.**

There are numerous channels that can be used to reach your audience and we could write a completely separate guide on effective use of marketing channels, so we've kept this fairly top line and are talking:

## Above the line | Below the line | Through the line

**Above the line** - ATL is used when the focus is on mass media promotion to reach a large audience. Generally untargeted and you are not controlling who sees your advert. Examples of this for your vacancy include;

- Careers page
- Job boards
- Social Media

The benefit to this style of Promotion is that you will get a lot of eyes on your vacancy, which can be good for wider brand building purposes and being 'known' as an employer of choice in your region.

A downside is that a big chunk of the audience won't be relevant to your need. That won't stop them applying though, and the risk here is that you end up with 100's of inappropriate applicants to wade through. In turn, slowing your hiring process down.

This style of advertising will also predominantly only be seen by active jobseekers. An industry average is that only C.20% of Marketers are actively job seeking at any one time so with this approach you may not be reaching the best person for the job in your talent pool (See Place).

If you have an appropriate talent pool of 1000 in your region, you could be missing up to C.800 of those with an ATL approach.

**Below the line** - In contrast to ATL, below the line advertising is directed to reach a small, targeted audience. Examples of this in recruitment includes activities such as;

- Email campaigns
- LinkedIn Inmail
- Social Media groups
- Industry specific publications

There is some pre-campaign work to be done with each of these which will be required, from research to segmentation to targeting. Messaging will also be more specific; you can't just use the same content as your job ads and expect top results.

The benefit to a BTL approach is that you can be sure the audience is relevant and appropriate. So as long as you are offering something they want, the quality of your pipeline should be significantly higher than ATL.

'Headhunting' is an extension of BTL marketing for your vacancy, and where we can add the most value to your search for Talent. If you could benefit from support with this, our contact details are below

**Through the line** - The 'best of both'. ATL and BTL tactics dovetailing to work in perfect harmony.

Whilst drafting this guide it quickly became apparent it could have been a 100+ page document.

We LOVE recruitment and get very passionate about it, but how BORED you would have been!

We've done our best to trim it back to basics and keep it concise, so if there's anything within this guide you want to explore in more detail, get in touch.



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