THESISES OF THE DOCTORAL (PhD) DISSERTATION

CREATION AND APPLICATION OF AN EMPLOYER BRANDING PERSONALITY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Ketrin Szikszai-Németh

Supervisor:

Dr. habil. Adrián Szilárd Nagy

UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN

Károly Ihrig Doctoral School of Management and Business

Debrecen

2023

1. INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPICS AND OBJECTIVE

When choosing my research topic, I was guided by my dedicated interest in the subject and practice of personal branding. In my work, I have worked in this area many times by creating campaign strategies and building brands. Our family business deals with marketing, and one of the newest segments where we operate is employer branding.

Since the concept of brand personality was already familiar to me, i.e. that we endow brands with human qualities, a question came up in my mind: how all of this could turn out in employer branding. Initially, I tried to explore the concept of employer branding personality and the practice of creating it during the search of the relevant literature.

Then it occurred to me that it might be worthwhile to use specific personal branding strategies during the creation and external communication of the employer branding personality. Since the process of building a personal brand is also based on branding strategies in the ordinary sense, it is just much narrower than that, this idea cannot be called completely new, but during the exploration of the literature, I did not find any of this approach that would apply this solution in practice.

The advantage of large multinational companies in terms of recruitment is that it is much easier for potential employees to gather information about a company with a significantly larger number of employees than a smaller company. Also, since the "Administrative and service support" sector has the largest number of vacant positions after the manufacturing industry (KSH, 2023), I chose DataExpert, an SME that employs in this sector in Hungary. I started this type of communication on social media with them on a test basis, under the auspices of our commissioned marketing agency, as part of our employer branding activities. All of this was based on a series of in-depth interviews and surveys with the involvement of the HR department, which highlighted how current employees see DataExpert's employer brand and its personality.

In this way, I did not simply communicate the values suggested by the literature and professionals to the target audience, but rather built the company's employer brand on a real and authentic assessment. Along these lines, by conveying the appropriate values and also monitoring the internal operation, I think that in the long term, this consistent external and internal communication and self-representation can create a favorable synergy in the life of the company, concerning their employer branding process.

Background

A company can only be as good as its employees (HOPPE et al., 2022). One of the biggest challenges of today's organizations is therefore the recruitment and retention of the right workforce. If one of them can find and retain qualified employees, it can gain a distinct competitive advantage over its competitors. In today's environment, building an appropriate corporate reputation is essential. One of the fundamental goals of building an employer brand is the creation of an attractive employer brand and its presentation to external and internal stakeholders of the organization. Companies are paying more and more attention to building their employer brand, and with the advent of social media, they have found a completely new platform for this. Investing in social media aimed at strengthening the employer brand is no longer the privilege of large companies.

Advertisements and endless brand-building processes are useless if the given company does not stand out from the competition. Under increasing pressure, the cardinal question is how well they can differentiate the given company, brand, or employer from its rivals. The creation of brand personalities, i.e. the endowment of brands with human qualities and personality traits, is an important tool for companies in distinguishing themselves from competitors and building relationships with consumers. Brand identity creation in the digital world is proving to be more and more widespread and useful.

However, in order to develop a strong employer brand image externally, a good internal relationship between employees and the employer brand is essential. Furthermore, credibility is a primary consideration in communication with external stakeholders, so companies must pay special attention to incorporating the opinions of current employees into their branding strategy. As individuals often endow brands with human personality traits when asked, this is no different when they view employer brands.

Based on all of this, it seems promising to create an employer branding personality and present it to the stakeholders on social media.

Aim and objectives

During my research, I started from two basic assumptions. On the one hand, in the increasingly competitive situation on the labor market, one of the best tools in the hands of companies is employer branding (TANWAR and KUMAR, 2019). For this very reason, companies pay more and more attention to building their employer brand, i.e. to the set of distinctive associations linked to the company's name by employees (current or future). However, despite the fact that this type of branding is considered an effective strategy for attracting professionals (BACKHAUS and TIKOO, 2004), the recruitment literature still does not provide clear practical advice for fighting the battle for talent in the modern labor market.

On the other hand, building a brand in a unique way can only be in accordance with the given age and situation, so in our time, creating a brand personality based on personal relationships can prove to be an excellent method (WEISS, 2014). Management must also recognize the importance of personal branding and involve it in strategic decision-making processes (POTGIETER and DOUBELL, 2020), as consumers clearly value brands with human characteristics (EISEND and STOKBURGER-SAUER, 2013) and their symbolic content also influences them in their decision-making process (SUNG et al., 2015). It has already been established that brand personality, or the set of human qualities associated with a brand name, can represent how customers relate to a specific brand (KELLER and RICHEY, 2006; MCCRACKEN 1993). However, it was only later formulated by the researchers that job seekers also attribute personality traits to the employer that are "subjective, abstract and intangible properties" of the organization (LIEVENS et al, 2007, p. 48).

The generation entering the labor market primarily wants self-realisation, wants to be creative and are characterized by an innovative spirit and a constant desire to learn. Social media is an excellent tool for reaching this age group and the digital brand personality created on these platforms increases brand engagement on social media (BERNRITTER et al., 2016).

Based on all of this, **the aim** of the thesis is to emphasize the possibilities inherent in the creation and revelation of the employer branding personality during the employer branding activity, referring to previous international practice and experiences.

The main hypothesis of the research is that the methods in which the employer branding personality appears - during the recruitment process in social media - can be used more effectively than the traditional methods of employer branding.

Research objectives:

O1. To examine whether the number of impressions is higher for job advertisements that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job advertisements.

O2. Find out if click-through rates are higher for job ads that emphasize employer branding personality than for traditional job ads.

O3. To substantiate whether personal brand building strategies can be effectively applied when creating and revealing the employer branding personality.

O4. To prove that it can be more effective to emphasize the "creative, innovative, exciting" qualities than the "positive, reliable, conscious" characteristics in the case of the employer branding personality.

O5. To prove that there is a correlation between the number of clicks by gender and the type of job advertisement.

O6. To examine whether there is a correlation between the number of clicks by age group and the type of job advertisement.

The hypotheses of the research:

I based my first two hypotheses on the fact that, according to TANWAR and KUMAR (2019), building an employer brand is one of the best tools for companies if they want to prevail on the labor market. Furthermore, the job seekers present here attribute personality traits to the employer, which are "subjective, abstract and intangible properties" of the organization (LIEVENS et al, 2007, p. 48). Also BERNRITTER et al. (2016) found that a digital brand personality created on social media platforms increases social media brand engagement.

H1. The number of impressions is higher for job ads that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job ads.

H2. The number of click-throughs is higher for job ads that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job ads.

WEISS (2014) highlighted that creating a brand personality based on personal relationships can be profitable, and consumers clearly value brands with human qualities (EISEND and STOKBURGER-SAUER, 2013), and their symbolic content also influences them in their decision-making process (SUNG et al. , 2015). Based on these, I created my third hypothesis.

H3. Personal branding strategies can be effectively applied when creating and revealing the employer branding personality.

THOMAS and JENIFER (2016) developed an employer branding personality (EBP) scale based on nine primary dimensions. They suggested that organizations should focus on these nine dimensions when creating their employer

branding personality, as they all significantly influence its perception and provide real value to the organization's stakeholders. Based on the differences between these dimensions, I created my fourth hypothesis.

H4. In the case of the employer branding personality, it may be more effective to emphasize the "creative, innovative, exciting" characteristics than the "positive, reliable, conscious" characteristics.

Saeed et al. (2022) found in his research that the appeal of the brand personality is more effective if it targets women (NIKHASHEMI and VALAEI, 2018) and/or elderly consumers (BEKK et al., 2017). I started from these statements distinguishing genders and age groups when creating my fifth and sixth hypotheses.

H5. There is a correlation between the number of clicks by gender and the type of job advertisement.

H6. There is a correlation between the number of clicks by age group and the type of job advertisement.

Based on the above thoughts, in order to achieve my research goal in my current research:

- I **examine** the concepts and interpretations found in the literature

- I **place** the employer branding personality among the relevant scientific fields

- I **outline** the branding strategies suggested by the literature in relation to the employer branding personality

- I **analyze** the preferences of current and potential employees of an SME

- I **create** a strategy for the recruitment activities of the given SME on social media, which already includes the company's employer branding personality

- and based on the results, I **make recommendations** for a method thanks to which companies can achieve better results during their employer branding activities.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Impoundment of the research

By size

The advantages between large companies and small and medium-sized companies are quite different in terms of recruitment.

Larger companies may have the advantage, for example, of a greater reputation and a stronger brand, which may prove more attractive to candidates. Also, it is generally characteristic that they can provide higher wages and better benefits, as well as more opportunities for career development and international experiences (COLLINS and HAN, 2014). Furthermore, large multinational companies often have larger recruitment budgets that allow them to advertise their vacancies more widely (ZUTSHI et al., 2012).

At the same time, small and medium-sized companies also have advantages in terms of recruitment. They are often more flexible, which allows them to quickly adapt to changes in the labor market. In addition, they usually offer a more favorable working environment and more personalized career plans, which can be attractive to employees (SZABÓ and NEMÉNYI, 2012). Furthermore, small and medium-sized companies usually have more direct contact with their employees, which allows them to build a closer relationship with them (SÁNCHEZ and LAGO, 2014).

Overall, individual benefits are highly dependent on company size, industry, and other factors, so there is no clear answer as to who is "better off."

However, large multinational companies typically have a greater reputation and stronger brand equity, as well as a larger budget for recruitment, while small and medium-sized companies tend to have more direct contact with employees. That is why I decided that it is worth choosing a subject for testing from the SME sector.

By sector

According to the KSH (2023) survey, in almost every quarter since 2018, the most vacant positions are in the "Administrative and service support activity" category, after the manufacturing industry. Thus, I think it is worthwhile to conduct the survey in this sector, as this is where the results of the research could be most useful.

This is how I chose DataExpert, an SME recruiting in this sector in Hungary. We started this type of communication in social media on a pilot basis with them - under the auspices of our appointed marketing agency as part of our employer branding activity. All of this was based on a series of in-depth interviews and surveys conducted with the involvement of the HR department, which highlighted how current employees see DataExpert's employer brand and its personality.

By release platform

WIESE et al. (2020) highlighted that already in 2017, approximately one third of the world's population used a social network at least once a month (EMARKETER, 2017). Facebook alone has 2.4 billion users (BALOZIAN and CURDY, 2023). Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that Facebook is the world's first social networking service (SNS) and a tool that has become an integral part of consumers' lives. Social media offers many marketing opportunities (FINK et al., 2019), such as advertising, which is an increasingly attractive way to promote brands (LEE and HONG,

2016), as companies can advertise here in a more targeted and personalized way. It is therefore not surprising that brands spend an increasing amount of their advertising budget on social media (KNOLL, 2016).

Based on a study by CONE (2008), 93% of companies believe in the need to be present on social media, and 85% consider it the most effective way to reach their customers. Also, it has been established that the use of social media for HR functions helps to build the employer brand and helps to attract the right talent to the company (COLLINS and STEVENS, 2002; DAVISON et al., 2011). Facebook is the most used social media platform for businesses (CHAFFEY and ELLIS-CHADWICK, 2019). HAZZAM (2022) highlighted the importance of the fact that researchers typically examined Twitter and Facebook among the social media platforms, especially for the Y-generation, and did not take into account the changed habits and needs of the Z-generation. However, nowadays it is especially worthwhile for companies to be present on Instagram and address this age group there, since in 2022 there were already 1.44 billion users (JIN et al., 2023). Also, this platform has other unique features, thanks to which users can perceive the messages displayed there in a completely different way.

This is how I decided to use Facebook and Instagram as the platform of my research within social media, thus reaching as many people as possible and collecting data.

Methods used during the own research

GROW et al. (2022) highlighted that Facebook's advertising platform can provide multifactorial information about its users' characteristics (e.g., gender, age, and interests) for targeted ads. A number of researchers advocate the use of these data in social science research (e.g. ALBUREZ-GUTIERREZ et al., 2019; ALEXANDER et al., 2019; PÖTZSCHKE and BRAUN, 2017; RIBEIRO et al., 2020). One reason for this is that traditional probability sampling methods, such as address sampling and random dialing, are becoming increasingly costly, while response rates and coverage are declining in many segments of the population (STERN et al., 2014). Against this background, social media and big data - and especially Facebook's advertising platform - are an attractive addition to traditional methods. They offer a potentially cheaper and more timely alternative (AMAYA et al., 2020) and enable sampling of geographic or demographic subpopulations that would otherwise be difficult to reach (ZHANG et al., 2020).

GROW et al. (2022) found that in at least two of the three areas he examined, 99% authentic and accurate data can be found on Facebook, but for example even in the worst performing category (respondents' place of residence in reality / based on Facebook data) between 91-98% there was agreement in each region. Based on these results, according to the researchers, Facebook's advertising platform can be effectively used to conduct social science research.

Paid search advertising now accounts for more than 50% of e-tailer advertising spend (DAI and LUCA, 2017). In paid search advertising, keywords serve as an essential bridge between e-tailers and search users (YANG et al., 2016). Thus, many studies have examined the impact of keyword features on impressions, click-through rates, conversions, and product sales. Most of these studies focused on the external characteristics of keywords. These external characteristics include keyword frequency, length, cost, rank, popularity, and specificity (WANG et al., 2019; YANG et al., 2016). Other studies have examined the specific information conveyed by keywords, such as brand name, merchant name, and location, which are referred to as intrinsic characteristics of keywords (JANSEN et al., 2011; KIM et al., 2012). Brand information is so important in keyword advertising that almost all previous research has discussed its impact. Nevertheless, the results of these studies are contradictory. For example, many studies have

shown that brand keywords are positively related to impressions (KIM et al., 2012), click-through rates (DU et al., 2017; RUTZ et al., 2012), conversion rates (SIMONOV et al., 2018), return visits (RUTZ et al., 2011) and orders (SPILKER-ATTIG and BRETTEL, 2010). WOLK and THEYSOHN (2007) also found a positive relationship between the brand information of paid content and the number of website visitors. Other studies have shown that brand keywords have a negative impact on searches (YANG and GHOSE, 2010), click-through rates (GHOSE and YANG, 2009; IM et al., 2016) and conversion rates (GHOSE and YANG, 2009).

YANG et al. (2020) research, brand keywords (keywords that include brand names) help increase product sales when it comes to big brands and target consumers know the brand well. However, for smaller sellers or sellers of smaller brands, branded keywords can reduce sales. A good bidding strategy for such sellers is to avoid brand keywords and focus on keywords that reflect the benefits and value of the products.

Research program

In order to examine the hypotheses and fulfill my objectives, during my research I followed the schedule below:

1. After the secondary data collection, I organized the researched literature and then processed it. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, I first dealt with the topics of human resource management and marketing management. Later, I focused on overlaps such as between brand personality and personal brand. From this, what is meant by the term employer branding personality was formulated. I presented how employer branding works in a new environment such as social media.

2. In order to base my own empirical investigation, it was necessary to evaluate and analyze the results of internal surveys and in-depth interviews at the chosen company. For this, I collected the data with the help of the company's HR department and an external organizational development partner. It is important to mention that, taking into account the company's data storage limitations, I only received the results of the various evaluations for processing. Based on this, they could not share with me the further details of the surveys that took place in 2022/2023 (the detailed process of the survey, the characteristics of the examined sample).

3. Based on the internal test results and the literature recommendations, I set up a strategy according to which the testing could begin. During Facebook campaigns aimed at recruitment, I tested the presence of the employer branding personality in the posts. I posted the ads for the same amount of time, with the same targeting, and for the same amount of money, the difference between them was that one type of ads lacked the presence of the employer branding personality, while the other group emphasized the employer branding personality. After the test, I analyzed and evaluated the data obtained.

Based on the analyzed data, suggestions were formulated with which small and medium-sized enterprises can recruit more effectively in social media.

In order to establish the foundation of my research, I took into account the relevant proposals and methodological theories of the research-methodological literature.

Presentation of the analyzed data

Assessing the preferences of current employees

I examined DataExpert as a case study, the issue of representativeness was not relevant in my case, since the intended population cannot be clearly defined. Furthermore, the company's HR staff tried to assess the entire staff of DataExpert, but unfortunately they did not have the full opportunity to do so. Thus, in some cases, current employees may have been left out of the survey.

Performance evaluation:

I worked with a total of 420 reviews. These were formulated by the employees about themselves and each other. During the survey to examine the presence of various skills and abilities, I identified the following characteristics (variables):

- **responsibility:** "Takes on a task that he/she can complete." "He/she admits when he/she makes a mistake." "In his/her absence, he/she arranges for a suitable replacement." "He/she knows exactly what his/her personal task is and he/she does it to the fullest."
- **comfort zone:** "As soon as he/she perceives a development or development opportunity, he/she makes a proposal for its implementation." "He/she is ready to act in every situation, you can count on his/her cooperation." "His/her goals are clear and he/she cooperates with others while achieving them." "In the event of a conflict, he/she initiates its resolution." "In his/her creed, it can be felt that he/she himself/herself is responsible for his/her life and achievements." "During a less busy period, he/she offers his/hers support to others."
- **problem solving:** "Consciously prepares for meetings, taking several aspects into account." "Instead of finding a fault, he/she focuses on finding a solution." "For more important decisions, he/she develops several solution proposals." "He/she quickly reinvents himself/herself in a new situation. He/she always thinks carefully about new ideas first."
- **communication:** "Supports open, honest discussions. He/she is confident in his/her knowledge and stands up for his/her opinion." “He/she honestly says what he/she thinks.” "Uses the appropriate communication channel and tools even in the case of subordinates and superiors." "He/she presents his/her position as one of many." "He/she can communicate his ideas clearly to others." "He/she can express his ideas in a matter-of-fact way." "He/she uses cultured means of communication." “He/she knows when to listen.”
- **relationship building:** "Easily makes connections with unknown people." "Friendly." "He/she has an engaging style." "He/she can work well with everyone."
- **cross-working:** "He/she knows the work of other groups." "He/she knows, in the case of a task, which group is affected by the solution of the question that has arisen." "In the case of tasks, he/she is aware of the relevance of other groups." "If requested, he/she fully supports the work of the other group."
- **people management:** "The team's performance is balanced." "He/she has a sense of what style to use in what situation to achieve his goal." "He/she knows the goals of his/her colleagues." "He/she knows how to motivate his/her employees." "He/she develops and teaches its employees." "Let's do it together" is his/her principle. "He/she asks rather than instructs." “He/she praises and supports.” "He/she leads by example." "In the event of a problem, he/she looks for the cause of the error and not the person who is at fault."

Organizational culture survey:

The organizational culture survey was completed by 56 people from the company, in which they gave answers to questions related to the organizational culture. The survey aimed to assess satisfaction with the following characteristics (variables) with the following questions:

- **well-being:** on a scale of 1-10, where do you position your well-being in everyday work?
- **existence:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent are you satisfied with your existential position?
- **inputs:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent are you satisfied with the available inputs?
- **development system:** on a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the system for the development of employees?
- **career path frameworks**: on a scale of 1-10, to what extent are you satisfied with the career path framework in the company?
- **motivation:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you feel motivated?
- **credible direct manager:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent are you satisfied with the credibility of your direct manager?
- **professionalism:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you feel - in your own interpretation system - that DataExpert is a professional company?

The answers to the following questions were analyzed individually:

- **preferences of current employees in terms of motivation:** Among the motivational tools available in your own interpretation system, what is the best way to motivate you?
- **work-related reports:** on a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you feel compelled to talk about your work to friends and relatives on weekdays?

HR discussions:

I also analyzed extracts of 23 HR discussions before creating DataExpert's EBP. These were unstructured descriptive notes, but I was able to gain a lot of information from them that I could not have obtained otherwise.

Assessing the preferences of potential employees

<u>Names, concepts:</u>

- **Ad name:** name and type of ad
- **Reach:** the number of accounts or people reached
- **Impressions:** total number of impressions
- **Frequency:** value calculated from "reach" and "impressions", i.e. how many times the given content appeared on average to a person
- **Result type:** set goal (in this case, the application for the job advertisement)
- **Results:** number of achievement of the set goal
- **Amount spent:** amount spent (in this case HUF 7,000 was set for each ad type for easier comparability)
- **Cost per 1000 impressions** (CPM): cost of a thousand impressions (Amount spent / 1000 impressions)

- **Link clicks:** the number of clicks on the link embedded in the ad (in this case it took you to the recruiting sub-page of the DataExpert website)
- **Cost per link click (CPC):** unit cost of clicks (Amount spent / Link clicks)
- **Link click through rate (CTR):** click-through rate calculated from "impressions" and "link clicks" (Link clicks / Impressions)
- **Reporting starts, reporting ends:** start and end of campaigns (in this case everywhere until 30.04.2023-14.05.2023)

Table 3: Presentation of the sample

Ad name	Reach	Impressions	Link clicks	Results
EBP-1	3906	8671	94	2
EBP-2	3829	8018	99	2
EBP-3	3790	8363	142	1
EBP TOTAL	11525	25052	335	5
NONEBP-1	3944	7879	87	0
NONEBP-2	4967	9007	234	1
NONEBP-3	4272	9219	143	1
NONEBP TOTAL	13183	26105	464	2

Source: own editing (2023)

Note: EBP-1, EBP-2, EBP-3 type posts: which focus on the employer branding personality. NONEBP-1, NONEBP-2, NONEBP-3 posts: which were created using traditional employer branding tools, do not emphasize the employer branding personality.

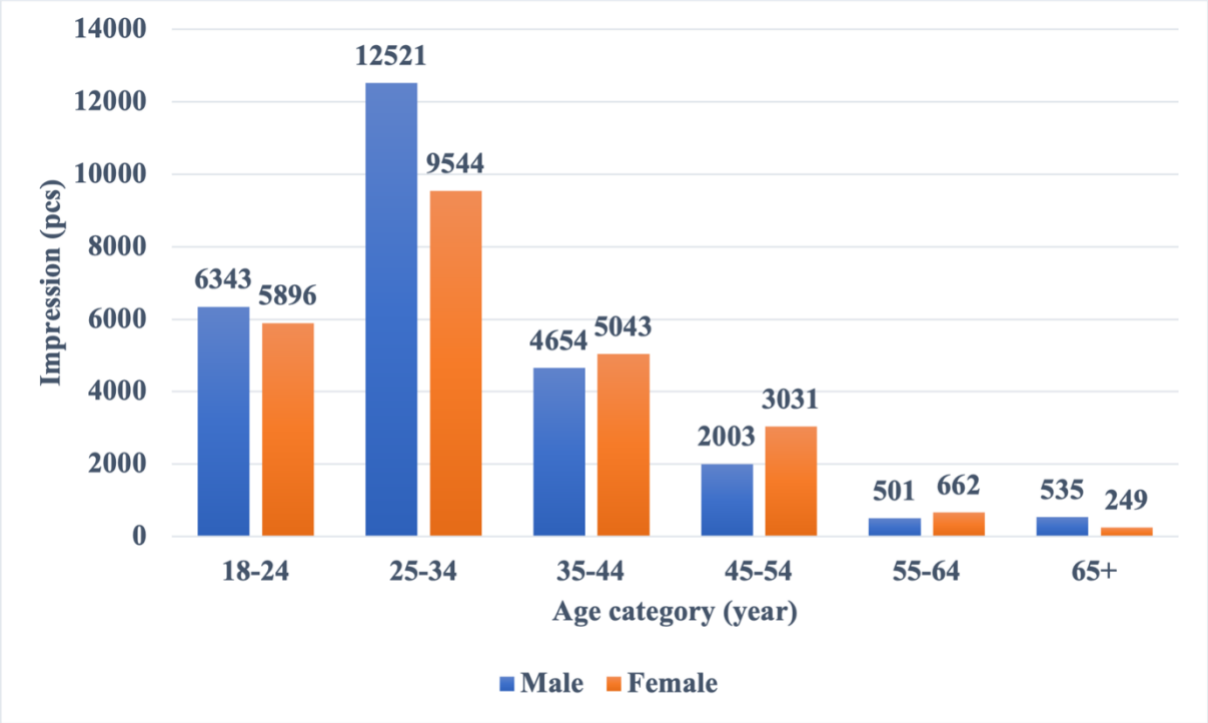

Figure 3: Total number of advertisements by gender and age

Source: own editing (2023)

There were not too many options when setting up targeting due to Facebook policy; age and gender cannot be narrowed down in job advertisements in order to avoid discrimination, so both genders and ages over 18 were targeted. It was not possible to narrow these ads based on the scope of interest either, only the area could deviate from the fixed settings, so it was limited to Debrecen +30 km.

According to DataExpert's request, the posts were intended to address young talents, i.e. those newly entering the labor market, the 18-24 and 25-34 age groups. The designated goal was the receipt of applications for job advertisements.

Statistical methodology

During my statistical analyses, I calculated descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, ratios) and also performed hypothesis tests (Spearman's rank correlation, χ^2 test).

Spearman's rank correlation is a non-parametric correlation analysis type. It examines the association between two variables. In the case of the method, the measurement level of the examined variables is at least ordinal. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is interpreted as follows:

- between 0.0-0.3 there is no correlation between the variables,
- between 0.3-0.5 there is a weak correlation between the variables,
- between 0.5-0.7 there is a medium strength correlation,
- there is a strong correlation between 0.7-1.0 (ROSENTHAL and ROSNOW, 2008).

The χ^2-test is a non-parametric statistical procedure that examines a significant correlation between nominal and ordinal measurement level variables. The test starts from an empirical frequency table, which is compared with a conditional (hypothetical) frequency table (the latter represents the independence of the two variables). If the test is significant, then there is a significant difference between the empirical and conditional frequency tables, so there is a correlation between the variables (JOHNSON and BHATTACHARYYA, 2019).

During the hypothesis tests, I set the risk of first species at 10% (α=10%).

3. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE DISSERTATION

The main hypothesis of the research is that those methods - during the recruitment process in social media - in which the employer branding personality appears, can be used more effectively than the traditional methods of employer branding.

I will answer my hypothesis using the data presented in Table 20.

Table 20: Summary table

	EBP-1	EBP-2	EBP-3	NONEBP-1	NONEBP-2	NONEBP-3
Characteristics	positive, reliable, conscious	quality, diverse, career-oriented	creative, innovative, exciting	required qualification, field of activity	organization position, job description	general characteristics of the organization, necessary skills
Impressions	8671	8018	8363	7879	9007	9219
Reach	3906	3829	3790	3944	4967	4272
Link clicks	94	99	142	87	234	143
CTR	1,08	1,23	1,7	1,1	2,6	1,55
Correlation - gender	No correlation	Female: more common	Male: more common	Female: more common	Male: more common	No correlation
Correlation – age group	No correlation	45-54: less common	No correlation	18-24: less common 45-54: more common	18-24: less common	18-24: less common
Results	2 (male, 18-24)	2 (female, 25-34)	1 (male, 18-24)	0	1 (male, 25-34)	1 (male, 25-34)

Source: own editing (2023)

The number of impressions, and the click-through rate are also lower in the ads containing EBP, however, the goal achievement is much higher than the NONEBP ads. This also means that although more people clicked through to the website as a result of advertisements without EBP, they were not from the really narrowly defined target audience who would have been really suitable to submit the application. The reason for this may be that, for example, those who clicked through noticed that they did not meet the conditions, based on the description, they no longer liked the job. Thus, even though the click-through rate for EBP ads is lower, they really addressed the relevant target audience and brought in applicants more effectively. Thus, it can be said that it was more cost-effective to use such advertisements, since these campaigns were able to secure more applicants for the same amount of money. In summary, it can be concluded that the EBP ads performed better, since there were fewer significant correlations between the examined variables, so they proved to be more balanced in terms of distribution, and the real results and applications also came in as a result of these posts.

Based on these, I keep my main hypothesis.

The **hypotheses** of the research:

1. The number of impressions is higher for job advertisements emphasizing the employer branding personality than for traditional job advertisements.

Regarding my first hypothesis, I decided on the basis of the data in Figures 9 and 10.

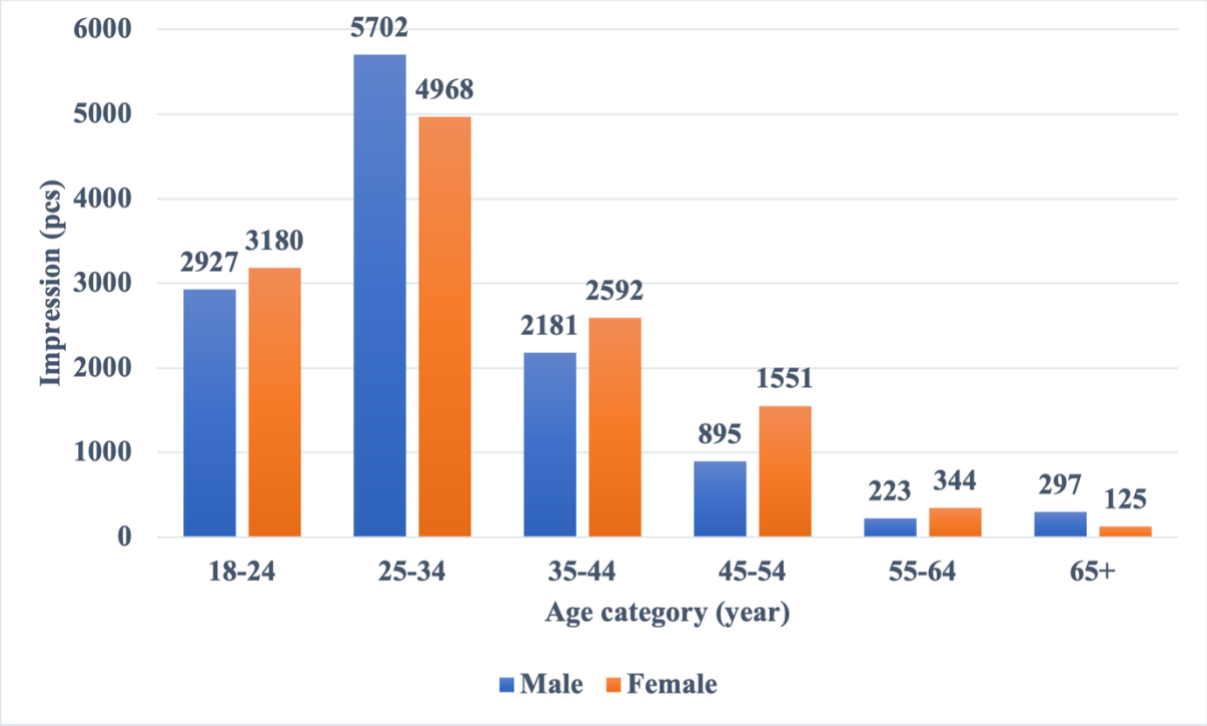

Figure 9: Number of impressions by gender and age for EBP type ads

Source: own editing (2023)

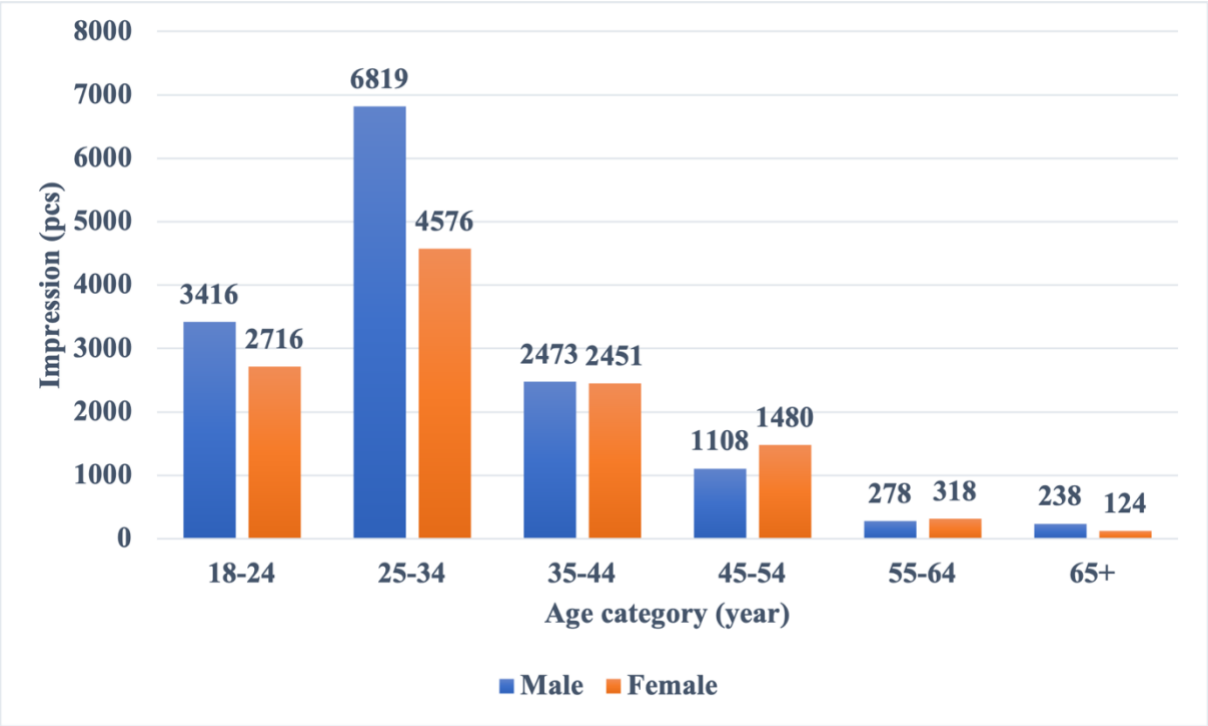

Figure 10: Number of impressions by gender and age for NONEBP type ads

Source: own editing (2023)

Ads of the NONEBP type appeared more often among users, and their distribution differed in the relevant age group. Among the 18-24-year olds, EBP-type ads appeared more often in women than in men, the opposite was true for NONEBP-type ads. Also, in the 25-34 age group, the ratio of appearances between genders was significantly more balanced for EBP type ads than for NONEBP posts.

Based on these, I reject my first hypothesis.

2. The number of click-throughs is higher for job ads that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job ads.

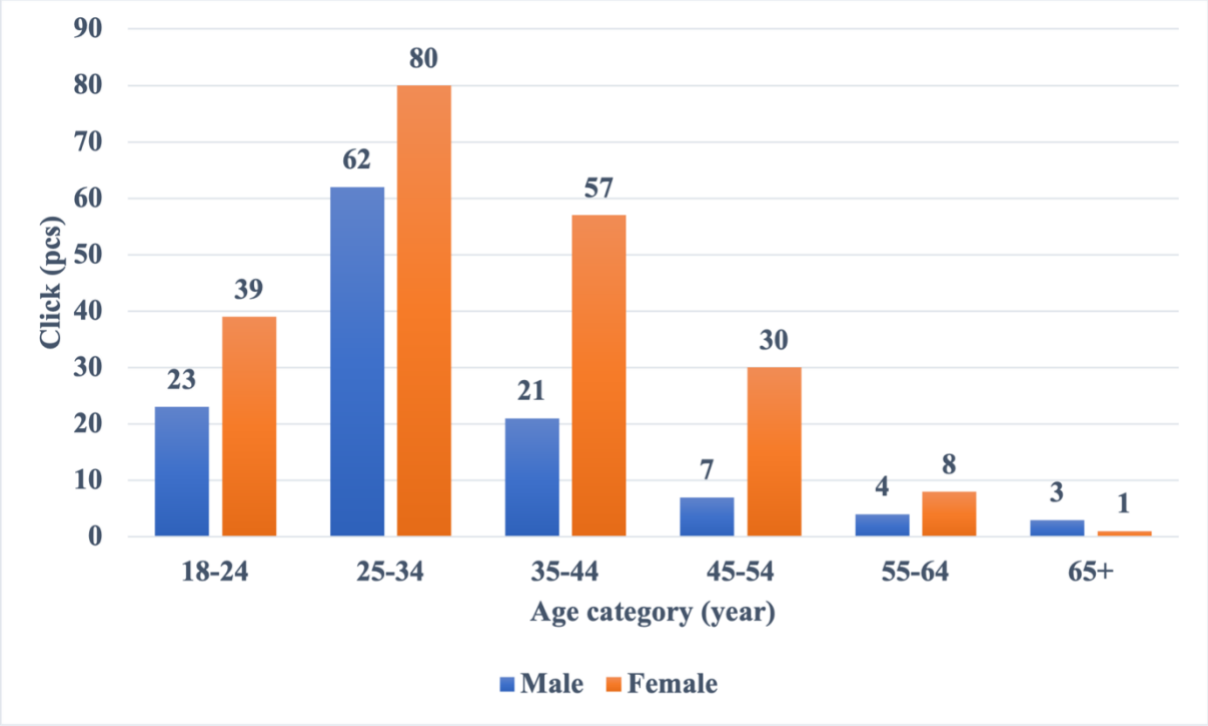

Figure 11: Number of clicks by gender and age for EBP type ads

Source: own editing (2023)

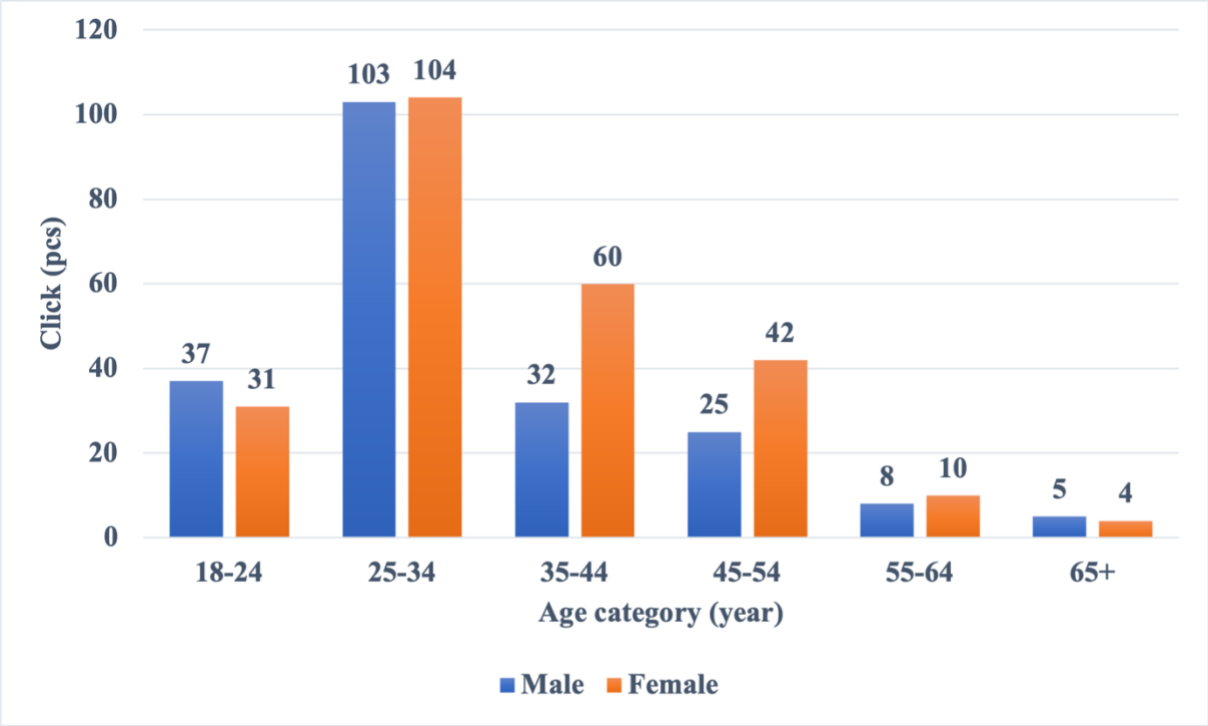

Figure 12: Number of clicks by gender and age for NONEBP type ads

Source: own editing (2023)

Regarding my second hypothesis, I decided on the basis of the data in Figures 11 and 12. NONEBP ads were also more effective in terms of click-throughs, and the gender ratio in both relevant age categories proved to be more balanced than EBP ads. For both types, however, it can be said that it is necessary to optimize the ads to target the younger age group.

Based on these, I reject my second hypothesis.

3. Personal branding strategies can be applied when creating and revealing the employer branding personality.

During the creation of DataExpert's employer branding personality, I also built on personal branding strategies. The EBP-type advertisements created in this way proved effective, as can be seen from the data in Table 20, generating more applications than the NONEBP-type entries. The applicability of personal branding strategies in the creation of EBP thus seems to be justified.

Based on these, I maintain my third hypothesis.

4. In the case of the employer branding personality, it may be more effective to emphasize the "creative, innovative, exciting" characteristics than the "positive, reliable, conscious" characteristics.

I will answer my fourth hypothesis using the data in Table 20. It can be said that it is more effective to emphasize the "positive, reliable, conscious" characteristics than the "creative, innovative, exciting" characteristics, since the former post has more applications, the number of appearances and hits is also higher, and the distribution of appearances is more even. However, it is important to note that the click-throughs and thus the CTR are higher for posts that emphasize the "creative, innovative, exciting" qualities, and applications were also received thanks to this ad.

Thus, I reject my fourth hypothesis.

5. There is a correlation between the number of clicks by gender and the type of job advertisement.

During my research, I discovered the following significant correlations between gender and the number of clicks in the case of different job advertisements:

EBP-1: I did not find a significant correlation between gender and the number of click-throughs.

EBP-2: Clicking on this ad type is significantly more frequent among female users, while significantly less frequent among male users.

EBP-3: Clicking on this ad type is significantly less frequent among female users, while it is significantly more frequent among male users.

NONEBP-1: Clicking on this ad type is significantly more frequent among female users, while significantly less frequent among male users.

NONEBP-2: Clicking on this ad type is significantly less frequent among female users, while it is significantly more frequent among male users.

NONEBP-3: I found no significant correlation between gender and the number of click-throughs.

I maintain my fifth hypothesis based on these.

6. There is a correlation between the number of clicks by age group and the type of job advertisement.

During my investigation, I discovered the following significant correlations between age groups and the number of clicks for different job advertisements:

EBP-1: I found no significant correlation between age groups and the number of click-throughs.

EBP-2: Among users in the 45-54 age category, click-through was significantly less frequent for this type of job advertisement. This is especially beneficial, since this age group is not the target audience of the ads.

EBP-3: I found no significant correlation between age groups and the number of click-throughs.

NONEBP-1: Click-through was significantly less common among users in the 18-24 age category for this type of job advertisement. The shortcoming of this job advertisement is that it is not attractive to young people. Also, the number of click-throughs turned out to be significantly more frequent in the 45-54 age group, which is also particularly disadvantageous, since this group does not belong to the target groups.

NONEBP-2: Among users in the 18-24 age category, click-through was significantly less frequent in the case of this type of job advertisement. The shortcoming of this job advertisement is that it is not attractive to young people.

NONEBP-3: Among users in the 18-24 age category, click-through was significantly less common for this type of job advertisement. The shortcoming of this job advertisement is that it is not attractive to young people.

Based on these, I maintain my sixth hypothesis.

4. NEW AND NOVEL RESULTS OF THE DISSERTATION

The new or novel results of my research summarized:

1. I have shown that, in similar circumstances, it can be **more effective to create posts building on employer branding personality on social media than to post traditional job advertisements.**
2. I showed that the **number and rate of impressions and click-throughs can be higher in the case of traditional job advertisements than in the case of job advertisements that emphasize the employer branding personality.**
3. I proved that **personal branding strategies can be applied when creating and revealing the employer branding personality.**
4. With my results, I confirmed that **it can be more profitable to emphasize the "positive, reliable, conscious" characteristics than the "creative, innovative, exciting" characteristics in the case of employer branding personality.**
5. I highlighted that **there may be a correlation between the number of clicks by gender and age, and the type of job advertisement.**
6. **I created a method** that can be used when creating an employer brand personality, and I also **made recommendations** on the order of weighting of different personality traits, thanks to which companies can achieve better results during their employer branding activities.

5. PRACTICAL APPLICABILITY OF THE RESULTS

A company is only as good as its employees (HOPPE et al., 2022). One of the biggest challenges of today's organizations is therefore the recruitment and retention of the right workforce. Advertisements and the endless brand-building process are useless if the company does not stand out from the competition in the end. Under increasing pressure, the cardinal question is how well they can differentiate the given company, brand, or employer from its rivals. The creation of brand personalities, i.e. the endowment of brands with human qualities and personalities, is an important tool in distinguishing the brand from competitors and building relationships with consumers. Brand identity creation in the digital world is proving to be more and more widespread and useful.

During my research, I started from the two basic assumptions that, on the one hand, in the increasingly competitive situation on the labor market, one of the best tools in the hands of companies is employer branding (TANWAR and KUMAR, 2019). On the other hand, building a brand in a unique way can always be in accordance with the given time and situation, so in our time, creating a brand personality based on personal relationships can prove to be an excellent method (WEISS, 2014). Based on all this, the main objective of the research was to examine whether it might be worthwhile to create an employer branding personality during the employer branding process.

As the first step in writing the thesis, I attached definitions that I also accepted to the concepts. During the literature review, I investigated from two main aspects, on the one hand, I approached the topic from a marketing management point of view, where I processed the literature on personal branding and brand personality, and presented their differences. On the other hand, I examined the aspects of employer branding personality from a human resources management point of view, where I placed special emphasis on talent management and recruitment, as well as employer branding and its appearance on social media. After that, I explored the very incomplete literature on the employer branding personality and in this case, I paid special attention to the social media aspect as well.

In the material and method chapter, I first defined the research, according to scientific field, size, sector and publishing platform, and then I explained my applied methods and research program.

I divided my results into two separate subsections according to whether they affect the preferences of current employees or potential employees. This was necessary because credibility plays a cardinal role when creating the employer branding personality, so first I had to analyze and explore the results of the internal analyses in order to create DataExpert's EBP. I did all this based on their internal performance evaluation, climate analysis and HR conversations. After all this, taking into account these formulated personality traits and the previous job advertisements, I created three EBP-type and three NONEBP-type advertisements. There were not too many options when setting up targeting due to Facebook policy; age and gender cannot be narrowed down in job advertisements in order to avoid discrimination, so both genders were targeted withing the 18-65+ age group. It was not possible to narrow these ads based on the scope of interest either, only the area could deviate from the fixed settings, so it was limited to Debrecen +30 km. The campaigns ran between 30.04.2023-14.05.2023 on Facebook and Instagram. Basically, the posts were aimed to address young talents, i.e. those newly entering the labor market, the 18-24 and 25-34 age groups. The designated goal was the application for the job advertisements.

I explored the preferences of potential employees by examining the results of social media job advertisements aimed at them. Here I performed descriptive statistical characterization and correlation tests. In terms of the number of

impressions, despite all the regulations fortunately, the ads reached people in the relevant age groups, almost equally men and women. NONEBP type ads appeared more often among users, their distribution in the relevant age group differed. Among the 18-24-year-olds, EBP-type ads appeared more often among women than among men, while the opposite was true for NONEBP-type ads. Also, in the 25-34 age group, the ratio of appearances between genders was significantly more balanced for EBP-type ads than for NONEBP posts. In terms of link clicks, the NONEBP-type ads were also more effective, and the gender ratio in both relevant age categories proved to be more balanced than the EBP-type posts. For both types, however, it can be said that it is necessary to optimize the ads to target the younger age group.

It can be concluded that the EBP-type posts performed significantly better in terms of the originally set goal than the NONEBP-type. Ads that emphasized either positive, reliable, concious (EBP-1) or quality, diverse and career-oriented (EBP-2) attributes of DataExpert performed best. Thus, it is worth focusing on these if one wants to increase the number of applications with advertisements. It was also effective when the creative, innovative and exciting (EBP-3) attributes were emphasized, but the same applies for the NONEBP ads, where the organization's position, job description (NONEBP-2), and the general characteristics of the organization, the skills required for application (NONEBP- 3) were highlighted. No application was made as a result of the advertisement presenting the required qualifications and the company's field of activity (NONEBP-1). Thus, this is not worth emphasizing, as long as submission of the application is considered as the result.

Summarizing the performance of the ads, the number of impressions and the click-through rate are also lower in the ads containing EBP, however, they are superior to the NONEBP ads thanks to the achievement of the goals. This also means that even though more people clicked through to the website as a result of the NONEBP ads, they were not from the really narrowly defined target audience who would have been really suitable to submit an application. The reason for this may be that, for example, those who clicked through noticed that they did not meet the requirements, or they no longer liked the job based on the description. Thus, even though the click-through rate for EBP ads is lower, they really addressed the relevant target audience and brought in applicants more effectively. Therefore, it can be said that it was more cost-effective to use such advertisements, since these campaigns were able to secure more applicants for the same amount of money. Basically, the goal of a campaign can be to have a high click-through rate, or even more impressions, reach, shares, likes, and comments, but in the case of job advertisements, it is clearly the number of applications that shows how the ads are performing. Moreover, in different advertising environments, companies pay for impressions and click-throughs, and if this number is high and the goal is not met (they do not submit applications), only the costs increase without the results. In the case of EBP ads, it can be said that they performed more efficiently and cost-effectively even with fewer impressions and click-throughs.

After analyzing impressions, click-throughs and goal achievements, I thought it was important to see if there was a correlation between the individual aspects. Therefore, I examined whether there is a significant correlation between the characteristics of the respondents and their preferences by gender and age, using $\chi 2$ tests. Overall, it can be said that in both categories (EBP and NONEBP) a significant correlation between gender and link clicks can be identified for two posts each. In the case of EBP-2 and NONEBP-1 ads, clicks are significantly more frequent among female users, while significantly less frequent among male users. In the case of EBP-3 and NONEBP-2 entries, this is just the opposite, men were significantly more likely to click through, while female users were significantly less likely to click through. For these ads, it is worth looking into how to make the distribution between the genders more equal,

so that the genders can be addressed to the same extent by the given posts. Examining the relationship between age and link clicks, it can be concluded that the frequencies of NONEBP ads were particularly unfavorable, since in the case of all three posts I found that link clicks were significantly less frequent in the 18-24 age group, and there are even some (NONEBP-1), where this number proved to be significantly more frequent in the 45-54 age group. In the case of EBP ads, the distribution was more even, I only found a significant correlation for one post (EBP-2) in one age group, the 45-54 age group click-throughs turned out to be significantly less frequent, which can be said to be particularly beneficial, since this is not the targeted age group.

Summarizing the results, it can be concluded that the EBP ads performed better, since there were fewer significant correlations between the investigated variables, so they proved to be more balanced in terms of distribution, and the real results, the applications also came in as a result of these posts. In those posts where a result was shown and also a significant correlation between gender and click-through could be established, the result came out of the category of positive correlation as well. A similar conclusion can be drawn for the correlations between age and click-throughs, i.e. if the ad was effective, the given person/people did not fall out of the category of the negative correlation. This is a particularly interesting finding, because while neither the impressions, the number of link clicks, nor the CTR served as a sufficiently good predictor of how effective an ad will be, the correlation tests (from link clicks and impressions) were able to provide information several times about which category the result can come from. Thus, this requires further exploration, since the examination of these relationships can be forward-looking from the point of view of ad optimization.

In my conclusions, I summarized my main results and made a decision regarding my hypotheses, which can be summarized as follows: Those methods in which the employer branding personality appears, can be used more effectively than the traditional methods of employer branding during the recruitment process in social media (maintained), (H1) the number of impressions is higher for job ads that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job ads (rejected), (H2) the number of link clicks is higher for job ads that emphasize the employer branding personality than for traditional job ads (rejected), (H3) personal branding strategies can be used when creating and revealing the employer branding personality (maintained), (H4) in the case of employer branding personality, it can be more effective to emphasize the "creative, innovative, exciting" qualities than the "positive, reliable, conscious" qualities (rejected), (H5) there is a correlation between the number of link clicks by gender and the type of the job advertisement (maintained), (H6) there is a correlation between the number of link clicks by age group and the type of job advertisement (maintained).

The results of my thesis highlighted that it can be useful to use advertisements containing EBP during recruitment, as they can result better and more cost-effective goal achievement. However, from the point of view of increasing brand awareness, it may also be worthwhile to create posts that are more descriptive and the employer branding personality is not in the center. The latter can more cost-effectively ensure reach, impressions and click-throughs, so that job seekers can get to know the company more widely for less money.

Practical applicability of the results, future research directions:

1. In addition to the Hungarian literature, the profession has not yet dealt particularly with the issue of employer branding personality, so I think that my results could help the work of professionals, even in the form of a manual.
2. It would be worthwhile to test the results of my research at several organizations and expand the list of my conclusions based on them.
3. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to compare my experiences in different sectors and organizations of different sizes.
4. From a completely different aspect, based on the visual content of graphics shared on social media, it would be worthwhile to investigate what generates click-throughs and goal achievement.

6. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

1. Szikszai-Németh, K., & Czine, P., & Nagy, P. (2023). KÖVETŐI MAGATARTÁS VIZSGÁLATA A DEBRCENI EGYETEM HALLGATÓINAK KÖRÉBEN – FÓKUSZBAN A MAGYAR ÚSZÓK. Magyar Sporttudományi Szemle. (MEGJELENÉS ALATT)
2. Szikszai-Németh, K., & Nagy, A. S. (2020). Consumer decision making in influencer marketing. ANNALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ORADEA ECONOMIC SCIENCE, 29(2), 326–336.
3. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2020b). Personal branding in team sports marketing. ANNALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ORADEA ECONOMIC SCIENCE, 29(1st Issue / 2020 July), 416–424.
4. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2020a). Influencer Marketing – Persuasion Of The Followers. NETWORK INTELLIGENCE STUDIES, 8(16), 119–124.
5. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2020c). Personal brandingre építő marketing stratégia a sportban. In Tavaszi Szél 2019 Konferencia = Spring Wind 2019: Konferenciakötet II. (pp. 594–604).
6. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2019a). Personal branding in team sports marketing. In 1st Partium International Conference on Management. Trends in 21st Century: Book of Abstracts (p. 38).
7. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2019c). Personal brandingre építő marketing stratégia alkalmazása a sportban. In XXXIV. Országos Tudományos Diákköri Konferencia. Testnevelés- és Sporttudományi Szekció (p. 98).
8. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2019b). Personal brandingre építő marketing stratégia a sportban. In Tavaszi Szél 2019 Konferencia. Nemzetközi Multidiszciplináris Konferencia (pp. 654–654).
9. Nagy, A., Molnár, D., & Szikszai-Németh, K. (2018). A személyes márkaépítés kihívásai napjainkban. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES / MŰSZAKI ÉS MENEDZSMENT TUDOMÁNYI KÖZLEMÉNYEK, 3(4), 485–494. http://doi.org/10.21791/IJEMS.2018.4.40.
10. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2018a). PERSONAL BRANDINGRE ÉPÍTŐ MARKETING STRATÉGIA ALKALMAZÁSA A SPORTBAN. In Kari Tudományos Diákköri Konferencia : Rezümé kötet (p. 50).
11. Szikszai-Németh, K. (2018b). PERSONAL BRANDINGRE ÉPÍTŐ MARKETING STRATÉGIA ALKALMAZÁSA A SPORTBAN.