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Restructuring Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's Employer Branding Process

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Master in Management

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September, 2023

BUSINESS
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Abstract

The ability to attract, engage and retain exceptional talent has emerged as a critical determinant of an organization's success and resilience in this dynamic and unpredictable organizational environment.

To make this possible, investing in employer branding is highly important, as it is a crucial tool for companies to stand out in the face of competition and attract and retain highly skilled professionals who align with the organizational values.

This project aims to restructure the employer branding process of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal, since the implementation of these practices has not been consistent. To address this situation, a literature review was conducted, covering key concepts like employer branding, its benefits, and its impact on talent acquisition and retention.

Furthermore, an internal analysis was carried out, involving interviews, a questionnaire analysis and a SWOT analysis. These steps helped identify the main objectives of the new employer branding process: (1) increasing the company's attractiveness as an employer brand in Portugal, (2) enhancing presence at national events and job fairs and (3) increase the digital presence and share content related to the organizational culture.

To achieve these objectives, specific actions were meticulously defined, outlining their timelines, logistics, costs and required tools for successful implementation.

Keywords: Employer Branding; Talent Attraction and Retention; Human Resources; SWOT analysis.

JEL Classification System: J24, O15.

Resumo

A capacidade de atrair, envolver e reter talento tornou-se um fator crítico de sucesso e de resiliência para uma organização, neste ambiente organizacional dinâmico e imprevisível.

Para tornar isto possível, investir no *employer branding* é de extrema importância, pois é uma ferramenta crucial para as empresas se destacarem face à concorrência e atrair e reter profissionais altamente qualificados que estejam alinhados com os valores organizacionais.

Este projeto tem como objetivo reestruturar o processo de *employer branding* da Rituals Cosmetics Portugal, uma vez que a implementação destas práticas não tem sido consistente. Para abordar esta situação, foi realizada uma revisão de literatura sobre conceitos fundamentais, como o *employer branding*, as suas vantagens e a sua influência na atração e retenção de talento.

Além disso, foi realizada uma análise interna que incluiu entrevistas, a análise de um questionário e uma análise SWOT, permitindo a identificação dos principais objetivos do novo processo de *employer branding*: (1) aumentar a atratividade da empresa como marca empregadora em Portugal, (2) aumentar a presença em eventos e feiras de emprego nacionais e (3) aumentar a presença digital e partilhar conteúdo relacionado com a cultura organizacional.

Para alcançar estes objetivos, ações específicas foram meticulosamente definidas, delineando os prazos, logística, custos e ferramentas necessárias para uma implementação bem-sucedida.

Palavras-Chave: *Employer Branding*; Atração e Retenção de Talento; Recursos Humanos; Análise SWOT.

Sistema de Classificação JEL: J24, O15.

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CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

Organizations have faced challenges over the past ten years from a variety of sources, including complex emerging market players that are growing and developing quickly, concurrent crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as disruptive innovation from technological advancements that is now accelerated by digitalization and artificial intelligence (Zhang-Zhang *et al.*, 2022).

These organizational changes have consequently affected the management of human resources, bringing significant challenges for the future of organizations. The value of human capital to each company has become widely recognized and, to overcome the current challenges and guaranteeing the attraction and retention of the internal talent, companies are investing in their employer branding.

The concept of employer branding, initially introduced by Ambler and Barrow (1996), refers to the knowledge and perceptions individuals hold regarding a company as an employer. Over time, it has become evident that there exists a strong correlation between employer branding and employee performance: when employees hold a positive attitude towards an organization, they tend to exhibit dedication and high performance, ultimately resulting in improved overall outcomes (Huang & Liu, 2010).

Considering the importance of a strong and consistent employer branding process, Rituals Cosmetics requested the author, during its professional internship in the Human Resources department of the company, to restructure the employer branding process in Portugal.

Rituals Cosmetics is a cosmetic brand that specializes in creating high-quality skincare, body care and home products, inspired by ancient Eastern traditions. The brand's philosophy is to turn daily routines into meaningful moments, encouraging individuals to find peace and mindfulness in their busy lives.

Founded in 2000 by Raymond Cloosterman, Rituals Cosmetics has gained global recognition for its unique approach to its products. The company also maintains a structured employer branding strategy that operates on a global scale. However, the implementation of these employer branding strategies in Portugal has not been consistent and the company believes that this inconsistency has negatively influenced the attraction and retention of employees in Portugal, both for the stores and the office.

Thus, with the implementation of this employer branding strategy, the brand is expected to become more attractive as an employer in Portugal, not only attracting capable and efficient talent but also retaining those who are already working within the company.

CHAPTER 2

2. Literature Review

2.1 Human Resources Management (HRM)

2.1.1 The Evolution

The twentieth century witnessed the emergence of the Human Resources Management (HRM) movement as a result of Frederick Taylor's work in lean manufacturing. To increase economic efficiency in manufacturing jobs, Taylor developed what is now known as *Taylorism*, focusing on one of the essential components of the manufacturing process: the employees (Obedgiu, 2017).

Workforce management continued to grow in importance within organizations in the second half of the 20th century. The terms “Industrial and labor relations” started being particularly used to refer to difficulties involving collective representation and, later in the twenty-first century, organizations began viewing employees as an important asset for success (Obedgiu, 2017).

Furthermore, HRM was defined by Becker and Huselid (2006) as the attraction, retention, utilization, motivation, reward and disciplining of employees in organizations. In practice, human resources are in charge of overseeing the entire employment lifecycle and the employee experience, using employer branding to attract the best candidates and proceed with the hiring process. Additionally, managing ongoing training, rewards and development falls within the scope of HRM (Obedgiu, 2017). For this reason, it is considered to be one of the organizations’ key resources, involving training, capabilities, skills, intelligence, experiences and insights of both managers and workers. It is a concept that has grown in importance and is now recognized as a strategic tool for businesses (Chatzoglou & Chatzoudes, 2018).

Meanwhile, the study of HRM has taken a cross-functional approach and broadened its scope of analysis beyond the traditional concerns of selection, training and reward. One particular line of research, strategic human resource management, has emerged as particularly influential in this regard, categorizing organizational performance as more important than individual performance. This strategy emphasizes the role of human resource management systems in solving business problems (including positive and negative complementarities) and

achieving long-term competitive advantages that lead to above-average financial performance (Becker & Huselid, 2006).

2.1.2 A competitive advantage

Michael Porter established the notion of competitive advantage. According to Porter (1998), a firm's competitive advantage results from producing value for its consumers. According to this framework, HRM can contribute to sustainable competitive advantage by promoting the development of organizational-specific competencies and providing employees the knowledge needed to better their performance.

One of the most crucial aspects of HRM is recruitment, which contributes to the development of organizational culture and administrative standards. For every firm, having the appropriate people in the proper places has several advantages: it helps organizations maintain low staff turnover, reduces recruitment costs, increases productivity and potentially leads to a competitive advantage. It also contributes to the development of a positive work environment (Lin, 2010).

High-performing professionals are the most valuable resource for organizations. To achieve high levels of productivity and performance, foster innovation and to focus on reducing the cost of hiring new employees and retaining existing ones, it is imperative to have high levels of employee engagement (Kazimoto, 2016). Therefore, it becomes crucial for businesses to focus on staff development and retention to sustain strong corporate performance and remain highly competitive (Rai *et al.*, 2017).

The adoption of proper HRM practices shows employees that the company values their contributions as significant assets. Offering employees suitable professional development options helps them advance in their careers and motivates them to perform at their best (Huang *et al.*, 2018).

2.1.3 The new challenges

According to Pereira and Bamel (2021), the current era's highly dynamic environments, characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) have had a significant impact on the management of human resources in organizations, particularly in relation to generational issues and technological development.

2.1.3.1 Generation Z

In the last few years, we have witnessed a paradigm shift in the needs, expectations and aspirations of the younger generation, especially when it comes to professional life. This new generation, Generation Z, refers to individuals born after the year of 2000 and it is marked by its adaptability to the digital world, skills in various areas and the desire for greater flexibility in terms of working hours and location. Additionally, work is now seen as not only a source of income, but also a means of personal fulfillment (Schroth, 2019).

Numerous academics have conducted research on characterizing Generation Z and have concluded that it comprises tech-savvy individuals who consume a significant amount of online content due to social media exposure. Hence, it is crucial to understand their preferences, choices, likes and career aspirations (Vitelar, 2013).

Research also indicates that technology is prevalent not only in their personal lives, but also in their professional careers. As a generation that has experienced the global financial crisis, they prioritize financial security and are inclined towards new, innovative and challenging work. They expect firms to listen to them and follow their suggestions (Schroth, 2019). Likewise, excessive working hours, performance pressure and low rewards demotivate Generation Z professionals (Goh & Okumus, 2020).

Furthermore, they value professional advancement and continuous learning and appreciate managers who provide them opportunities for growth. Work-life balance is highly valued and it is believed that it should be reflected in the mindset of every organization in order to help employees balance their professional and personal lives (Schroth, 2019).

Therefore, to thrive in this competitive era, organizations must understand the generational needs and motivations of Generation Z and ensure their fulfillment, thereby positively impacting the company's performance.

2.1.3.2 Industry 4.0

According to Oztemel and Gursev (2020), Industry 4.0 is a term used to describe the ongoing transformation of traditional industries and manufacturing processes through the integration of digital technologies, such as big data and cloud manufacturing, which has transformed the current processes by integrating machine and digital production. These technological changes contribute to organizational sustainability by enabling lean production, cost reduction and the use of new technologies like big data analytics and cloud computing, thereby achieving

economic sustainability. Furthermore, they support social sustainability by ensuring environmental safety and facilitating employee upskilling (Kamble *et al.*, 2018).

The evolution of Industry 4.0 has amplified workplace digitalization, empowering technology to enhance productivity and problem-solving by providing workers with the necessary data, applications and collaboration tools to work from anywhere, at any time. Businesses are quickly adopting digital technology, and their ability to succeed will largely depend on how they define, manage, and convey the transformation (Cijan *et al.*, 2019).

However, Industry 4.0 presents specific challenges for human resources management: this technological change has impacted how people work and has made professions more complex. As a result, certain job positions may be eliminated due to Industry 4.0 and employees who don't upgrade their skills face the risk of job loss (Longo *et al.*, 2017).

According to Whysall *et al.* (2019), the rapid pace of technological advancements in Industry 4.0 has led to a significant gap between the current skills of employees and the requirements of their roles. Consequently, there is an urgent need to explore innovative and more efficient approaches to human resources development.

Additionally, this digital transition has led to a significant increase in employment (Ahammad *et al.*, 2020). The digital transformation calls for new skill sets that vary depending on the type of employment and job profiles. Therefore, organizations should invest in their employer branding to attract qualified candidates and ensure job retention (Rombaut *et al.*, 2020).

2.2 Employer Branding

Employer branding has been studied over the years and it's described as the process of establishing a unique and identifiable employer identity and a concept that sets a company apart from its competitors (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Employer branding campaigns will usually involve the explanation and management of a company's tangible and intangible employment offerings, as well as the management of components of the company's image and identity, which will be presented via sophisticated communication campaigns. Thus, employer branding is the sum of a company's efforts to convey to current and potential employees it is an attractive workplace (Lloyd *et al.*, 2002).

The literature has evolved over the years without losing its connection to marketing strategies, adopting a more contemporary approach to current human resources challenges, who are actively attempting to attract, retain and develop talent (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Employer branding, thus, refers to the process of building and growing an employer brand that is identifiable and unique (Theurer *et al.,* 2016). To ensure a positive employment experience that adds value and influences individuals, it is essential to identify the distinguishing features of the employee experience and emphasize its uniqueness in comparison to other companies (Edwards, 2010). To do so, it is essential to manage and cultivate the firm's employer image in job seekers' minds, making mental links between the business as an employer and instrumental and symbolic features job seekers may like (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016).

In addition to external employer branding efforts, many organizations have recently begun to embrace a strategy that involves internal employees actively fostering a positive company reputation among their peers. This internal perspective strives to inspire and retain staff members who embody the brand and represent their organizations appropriately with clients and potential employees (Mosley, 2007). The advantages offered by an organization have a positive influence on employees' attitudes and intentions, including attractiveness, job satisfaction and organizational loyalty to recommend the organization to others (Lievens *et al.,* 2007).

This focus on internal reputation and employee engagement is closely tied to the concept of the Employee Value Proposition (EVP). According to Doh *et al*. (2011), the EVP refers to the comprehensive package of perks, opportunities and rewards provided by a company to its employees in exchange for their expertise, know-how and experience. It encompasses various aspects of working life, such as compensation, perks, career advancement, work-life balance and organizational culture. By actively shaping and delivering a compelling EVP, organizations can enhance employee satisfaction, attract top talent and increase engagement and productivity.

The term EVP corresponds to the central message of an organization, expressing its positioning as an employer and what it has to offer to its employees, including financial and non-financial elements, such as challenging tasks, innovation, work-life balance or firm reputation, amongst others (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). This comprehensive employee value proposition serves as a critical tool in managing human resources and is widely recognized as a major influence in determining an organization's performance (Edwards, 2010).

Several researchers have examined the advantages of defining an Employer Value Proposition and, according to Bell (2005), EVP is a key differentiator for any firm that aspires to recruit, retain and cultivate talent, offering competitive advantages in the labor market.

Employer branding plays a vital role in building a strong and attractive brand for organizations and attracting candidates with the required skill set. It involves the ability of a

company to differentiate itself and promote its unique characteristics to a specific audience. By positioning the organization as an excellent place to work, employer branding helps set it apart from competitors. Companies with a strong reputation have higher-quality and more satisfied employees, which directly impacts talent acquisition (Pandita, 2021).

The positive response from employees to the employer's reputation is commonly referred to as employer brand equity and it often leads to increased organizational attractiveness (Highhouse *et al.,* 2003).

2.3 Talent Acquisition and Retention

A vital, complex and dynamic aspect of human resource management in organizations is the recruitment and selection process (Ployhart *et al.,* 2017).

In the 1970s, as a result of economic shifts that necessitated greater employee mobility and more specialized skill sets, firms began to devote more resources in identifying and attracting qualified people. According to Barney (1986), some researchers started to evaluate recruitment activities based on their ability to provide a source of sustainable competitive advantage by providing firms and their candidates with experiences that are valuable, rare and difficult to replicate.

Talent acquisition was then defined as a process that occurs over time, beginning with producing, sourcing and finding job candidates, then connecting with job applications and maintaining their status and finally influencing the employment choice of these applicants. Thus, it refers to the "comprehensive collection of actions that connect jobseekers with businesses and open positions" (Ployhart *et al.,* 2017, p. 3).

Organizations have recognized the necessity of social networking websites (SNWs) as recruiting tools to achieve innovation and sustainability while coping with the present pandemic condition and keeping up with changing global circumstances (Rehman *et al.,* 2022).

Social networking websites are no longer only a place to stay in touch with friends and family; rather, they have infiltrated the workplace in the form of social media recruiting technology, which is quickly evolving into a common method of hiring and vetting new employees (Chang *et al.,* 2022). With SNWs like Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook, recruiting managers in firms are now observing improvements in recruitment considering it a trustworthy and honest way to find talent and they are now a major factor in recruiting decisions (Chua *et al.,* 2018).

Due to the era of overskilling that we are in, organizations are seeking comprehensive strategies to attract and retain both potential and current employees. To achieve this, it is

necessary to invest in enhancing the company's image and the first step in this process should be focused on talent acquisition (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). This involves managing and cultivating the employer image in the minds of job seekers by attempting to generate mental associations between the organization and characteristics they may appreciate. These characteristics can be instrumental - such as offering competitive salaries or career growth; or symbolic – organizational values or reputation. By generating these mental associations, organizations can attract and retain talent who resonate with the desired characteristics (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016).

CHAPTER 3

3. Rituals Cosmetics

After presenting the theoretical framework of the relevant concepts for this project, a brief description of the cosmetics industry is presented, followed by the introduction of the company involved in this project – Rituals Cosmetics.

3.1 Cosmetic Industry

According to the Cosmetics Europe - The Personal Care Association: Cosmetics Industry (2021), the increasing significance of the cosmetics industry is visible from an economic perspective and its value has been estimated at €76.7 billion in retail sales in Europe in 2020.

Sustainability in the cosmetics sector is receiving more and more attention and moving toward being essential. As cosmetics become more prevalent in our daily lives, customers are more eager to buy sustainable products because ethical and environmental concerns are playing an increasingly important role in their shopping decisions (Appolloni *et al.*, 2022).

According to Statista (2022), in 2022 the three main players in this industry in a global scale were L'Oréal with revenue over 35 billion U.S. dollars, followed by Unilever with 25 billion U.S. dollars and The Estée Lauder Companies with revenue of 16 billion U.S. dollars.

3.2 Rituals Cosmetics

Rituals Cosmetics was founded in 2000 by Raymond Cloosterman and operates in the beauty sector as a retail store of skincare, body care, fragrance and home essentials.

The company's mission is to transform the consumers' everyday routines into meaningful moments, providing a standout and personalized shopping experience. Their slogan, "Happiness can be found in the smallest of things. It is our passion to turn everyday routines into more meaningful moments"[1] encapsulates this commitment.

The global organizational structure of Rituals Cosmetics is made up of the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and founder Raymond Cloosterman who directly supports the CFO (Chief Financial Officer), COO (Chief Operations Officer), CTO (Chief Technology Officer), the

[1] https://www.rituals.com/en-nl/about-rituals.html

Head of Retail and Europe, the Head of HR, as well as twelve related areas (such as training and development, sustainability and innovation, marketing and manufacturing).

The brand's philosophy served as the basis for all collections and products created by the company: to turn consumers' ordinary routines into significant moments by offering a remarkable and personalized shopping experience. As a result, due to the tremendous value placed on ancestral traditions in these cultures, every piece from the company tells a tale inspired by Asia and the Middle East.

According to Rituals' Sustainability Report 2021, the brand is present in 33 countries with 912 stores worldwide, more than 3000 shop-in-shops and over 500 travel shop-in-shops. In March 2022th, Rituals' total headcount was over 8000 employees with 1150 employees working in the head offices and 7330 employees working at the stores. Rituals Cosmetics' Sustainability Report 2021 identified a majority of women in both stores and office staff, while only 38% of the international leadership team is female.

Regardless of their gender and workplace, all Rituals' employees follow the FOAM framework in every action and decision - Frontline & customer obsession, Ownership, Aim big, act small and Make the connection. This framework helps the company achieve the best outcomes and also emphasizes the importance of human resources. To support this, they have innumerous initiatives such as regular surveys called People Pulse, which measure employees' satisfaction and motivation with the main goal of fostering an environment of safety where all workers feel respected, engaged and have access to the same possibilities.

The internal resources are highly valuable to the company, as well as external resources and, therefore, sustainability is a major concern in every part of Rituals' supply chain. This includes using clean formulas, conscious packing and operations and engaging in caring social initiatives. This awareness has allowed Rituals to be certified as a B Corporation.

B Certified organizations uphold the highest standards of social and environmental performance, public openness and corporate responsibility to balance profit and purpose. Rituals is proud to be a B Corp company and demonstrates its commitment to governance, environment, community, employees and customers by considering them in decision-making processes.

To emphasize its commitment to employees, Rituals Cosmetics aims to be recognized as a great place to work in each market it operates and to attract and retain talent to ensure a long-lasting workforce. To achieve this, Rituals Cosmetics' Employer Value Proposition focuses on four pillars:

- Teamwork: Rituals' teams are distinguished by its commitment and passion. Together, they strive to accomplish their goals through creativity and excellent performance. It is this spirit of cooperation, connection and drive that enables them to exceed their predetermined goals.
- Growth: Innovation and entrepreneurship are valued not only at the level of the brand's products but also within its employees. Rituals Cosmetics focuses on providing training opportunities and developing its employees to support their empowerment and career progression.
- Culture: Rituals provides an ambitious, entrepreneurial and passionate organizational culture. They strive to take care of each other and celebrate common successes. When working at Rituals, you can anticipate trust and continuous feedback, where every day is characterized by fun, diversity and talent.
- Well-being: Rituals Cosmetics prioritizes employees' personal and professional well-being, enabling them to be passionate and purposeful on their journey at Rituals Cosmetics. Additionally, it offers the opportunities for employees to work at a company that consistently strives for positive and sustainable changes in all its activities.

The employer branding strategy has a global scope, but it is implemented differently in each country, aiming to align with local customs and traditions. Regarding the communication strategy, Rituals Cosmetics focuses on authenticity, transparency and consistency, always with the main goal of creating awareness about important topics related to Rituals Cosmetics. They make use of different communication platforms such as: Rituals' Career Page, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, job boards and events.

In the long run and on a global scale, Rituals Cosmetics aims to preserve its DNA and attract and retain the best international talent. The company aims to become an employer of choice with a distinctive employer branding proposition and increase recruitment ROI and brand awareness, which are two main goals for the upcoming years. To achieve this, Rituals Cosmetics wants to establish a strong, authentic and recognizable EVP, as well as maintain a solid and continuous online presence on web and social media channels.

CHAPTER 4

4. Methodology

To meet the company's request and restructure the employer branding process in Portugal, it was necessary to carry out information gathering processes to understand the main limitations of the current strategy and provide a well-founded suggestion for improvement. Thus, in this chapter, the instruments used for data collection will be described, as well as the results and information obtained about Rituals Cosmetics Portugal.

For this in-company project, primary data was collected from two interviews, enabling a qualitative analysis. The first interview (Annex B) was conducted with the team responsible for Rituals' international employer branding process, to analyze how it is structured. The second interview (Annex D) was conducted with Rituals' Portuguese Human Resources team to identify the limitations of the current employer branding process in Portugal and determine ways to improve it or adapt it to the Portuguese reality. Additionally, data from secondary sources such as the company's annual reports and statistics were collected to complement the qualitative study. These data allowed for an analysis of Rituals Cosmetics specifically in the Portuguese context.

Rituals Cosmetics made its entry into the Portuguese market in 2004, and as of May 2023, a total of 32 stores have been established, with 13 of them strategically located in Lisbon. Across the country, it has over 200 employees working at the stores, 88% of whom identify as female and the remaining 12% identify as male. Around 55% of these employees are under 30 years old, 29% are between 31-40 years old, 12% are between 41-50 years old and only 5% of the employees are over 51 years old. The turnover rate of Rituals Cosmetics stores in the first semester of 2023 was around 55% and the average seniority is 3 years.

In Portugal, Rituals Cosmetics' headquarters are located in Lisbon, at Avenida da Liberdade and it employs 13 individuals with an average seniority of 6 years. The organizational structure of Rituals Cosmetics in Portugal is divided into four main areas: Human Resources, Marketing, Wholesale, and Retail. The Retail department, for instance, comprises 2 departments, Training and Operations.

There are human resource management strategies that aim to improve the working environment for employees, as well as their motivation and satisfaction with the company. For example, when an employee is about to experience a highly memorable life event, such as buying a house, getting married, or completing a degree, they receive a personalized card from

Rituals. Additionally, there is an offboarding policy where employees who leave the company receive a kit of goodies from Rituals and a card of appreciation from their coworkers. Despite these practices, there is still room for improvement in terms of implementing employer branding practices at Rituals Cosmetics Portugal.

In terms of talent acquisition, there is an internal referral program in place that financially rewards employees for recommending suitable candidates to fill open positions at Rituals stores. However, the hiring process remains the same for all candidates. After receiving the application, the Shop Manager contacts the candidate to schedule an interview. If both parties provide positive feedback, the shop manager proceeds with the admission process. For positions at the headquarters', the interview is conducted by the Human Resources' Business Partner.

When it comes to employer branding, the practices are still underinvested and those that are implemented come from an Iberian strategy that is not customized for Portugal.

However, for a better understanding of Rituals Cosmetics' Employer Value Proposition, quantitative data was also collected from an internal survey, fully elaborated by Rituals' Human Resources department. This questionnaire measured the opinion of 2105 internal employees from different countries regarding Rituals' employer value proposition and, for confidentiality reasons, the company did not disclose the questionnaire metrics or provided access to it. Therefore, only the final results were provided to the author. According to the results of this questionnaire, over 50% of the employees choose to work at Rituals Cosmetics due to its culture, opportunities for personal development and the nature of their roles and responsibilities. Well-being and career growth were also mentioned by most of the respondents as a differentiating factor for Rituals Cosmetics compared to other companies in the cosmetics sector.

To complement the information gathered from the questionnaire analysis, a SWOT analysis of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal was conducted. The SWOT analysis was originated in the 1960s and is now widely recognized as an effective approach to strategize and oversee organizational resources to accomplish specific objectives within a defined timeframe. Its implementation in an organization aims to formulate effective business strategies by carefully considering both internal and external factors that impact its operations (Taherdoost & Madanchian, 2021).

This matrix encompasses an evaluation of the organization's Strengths and Weaknesses, as well as an assessment of the Opportunities and Threats it faces in its competitive landscape: Strengths encompass the internal elements that facilitate achieving organizational goals, while weaknesses are the internal factors that hinder success. Opportunities, on the other hand, are external aspects that assist an organization in achieving its objectives, including identifying

gaps and initiating new activities. Finally, threats represent barriers or potential obstacles in the organization's external environment that difficult goal attainment (Taherdoost & Madanchian, 2021).

Strengths:

- Consumer Experience: Rituals Cosmetics doesn't sell only a product, but an exquisitely presented feeling and experience. They are committed to the consumer experience and they apply their values in the smallest of things (e.g., every time a customer enters the store, staff offers them a cup of tea).
- Affordable Luxury Products: Rituals' products are perceived as high-quality products, with a gorgeous package, the ideal price and compelling storytelling - each product line has its own concept and narrative - which gives them a niche in the market.
- Organizational Culture: Beyond ensuring the wellbeing of its customers, Rituals Cosmetics works hard to ensure the motivation and satisfaction of its employees. As a result, the company's culture is very family-oriented and emphasizes the values of cooperation, unity and dedication.

Weaknesses:

- High turnover rates and low seniority: In the first semester of 2023, Rituals Cosmetics' stores in Portugal had turnover rates above 50% and the average seniority of its employees was only three years. These statistics negatively affect team performance and hinder knowledge retention.
- Low digital presence: Rituals Cosmetics has around 1 million followers on Instagram. However, unlike its primary rival Boticario, Rituals does not have a Portugal-specific Instagram page. This makes it more difficult to reach the Portuguese audience on Instagram, decreasing the engagement.
- Lack of representation at events and fairs: The poor investment in the employer branding of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal makes it more difficult to spread the organizational values and, as a result, the organizational culture. Because of this, are more familiar with Rituals Cosmetics from a consumer's perspective, but not as an employer.

Opportunities:

- Increase in male consumers' demand for cosmetic products: Male consumers are more aware of the importance of good cosmetic products, and they want to implement them in their daily routine. This can represent an opportunity for Rituals Cosmetics to become attractive to them, not only as consumers but also as employees.
- Awareness for the importance of employer branding: Currently, when choosing a place to work, employees give organizational culture and how well it fits with their personal philosophies a lot of thought. This shift in perspective makes it important for companies to invest in their employer branding to ensure they attract more candidates who are in line with the organizational values, giving the brand a competitive advantage.

Threats:

- Rising competition: Global rivalry has increased due to the rise in demand for cosmetic items. The cosmetics business has continued to experience significant and rapid growth over the years, distinguishing itself as one of the sectors with the most potential for future expansion. Rituals must continue to improve its cosmetics and incorporate technology to maintain success in the market.
- High Inflation Rate: The high inflation rate seen in Portugal results in a reduction in Portuguese purchasing power. As a consequence, Portuguese consumers may opt for less expensive cosmetic products than those from Rituals Cosmetics.
- Investment in social networks: Now, more than ever, businesses bet on their digital platforms to spread their values and increase their attractiveness as places of employment. This could pose a threat to Rituals since investment in these digital platforms is significantly lower in Portugal.

After analyzing the previously described data, the following problems were identified in the employer branding process of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal:

- Low attractiveness as an employer brand in Portugal;
- Weak engagement with the Portuguese audience on social media;
- Limited participation in employment events and fairs in Portugal.

These are the problems to which the restructuring process of the employer branding at Rituals Portugal, developed in this project, will respond.

CHAPTER 5

5. Project

This project will be developed according to the phases defined by the Deming Cycle. Deming Cycle, or also known as PDCA, is a management process that follows a spiraling cycle, emphasizing the principles of planning (P), doing (D), checking (C), and taking action (A). It is widely utilized in various organizations, from small to large enterprises, to develop effective strategies. This cycle allows for a conscious approach to decision-making, utilizing well-defined processes aimed at enhancing overall management and operational activities to achieve their objectives (Jagusiak-Kocik, 2017).

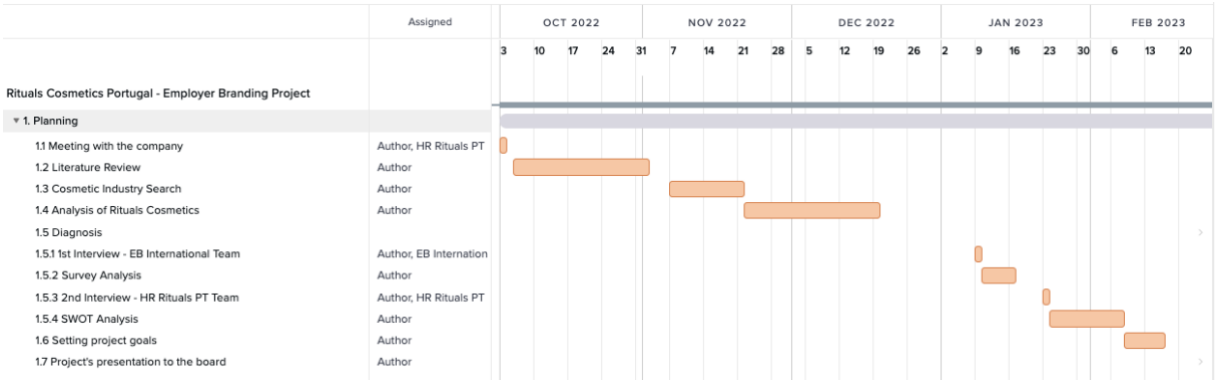
Therefore, the project was subdivided into four distinct phases and even though they adhere to the Deming cycle's principles, their titles were adjusted to align more effectively with the project's structure. The phrases are: i) Planning, which involved a review of the company's documentation and its employer branding strategy, as well as the identification of the main problems it faced and the corresponding improvement suggestions; ii) Conception, which involved the conception of all the components and materials necessary to carry out the suggestions; iii) Implementation and necessary support measures; iv) and, finally, Measurement of the results.

It was developed a Gantt Chart of the project (Annex E), outlining all project phases, the respective dates, as well as the individuals involved and costs. The dates are suggestive and should be adapted to Rituals' activity plan.

5.1 Planning

In October 2022, the author was doing an internship in the Human Resources department at Rituals Cosmetics Portugal. At that time, the company identified turnover rates exceeding 50% and an average seniority of only 3 years in their stores. Therefore, restructuring the employer branding process to attract new talent and retain existing employees became a significant need for the company and the Human Resources Team proposed this challenge to the author.

Figure 5.1



Gantt Chart: Planning Phase | Source: Author

Thus, as shown in Figure 5.1, on October 3, 2022, a meeting took place between the author and the Human Resources department of the company to discuss the problem. In this meeting, the author accepted the challenge and the Planning phase was initiated.

The second step was a literature review of concepts crucial to the development of the project, including the history and evolution of human resources and their current challenges, employer branding and its advantages and talent acquisition and retention. The definition of these concepts was made possible through research in databases such as Web of Science and Scopus.

After concluding the study of the main concepts, it was necessary to characterize the cosmetic industry by using the website of Cosmetics Europe - the Personal Care Association to understand the main market competitors of this industry and the primary challenges it’s currently facing.

Afterward, the author started the research and analysis related to Rituals Cosmetics on a global scale. During this phase, documentation on the company was gathered and analyzed. This included information about its history, organizational structure, concern for sustainability, core values and organizational culture.

Additionally, to study Rituals Cosmetics' global employer branding strategy, it was necessary to interview the team in charge of the procedure on an international level. Along with a description of the employer branding strategy, the company provided the author with the results of a survey created by its human resources department. The survey's goal was to determine what motivated employees to apply to and stay with the company, to establish the employer value proposition from their perspective.

Having examined the global circumstances, the next step was to study Rituals Cosmetics in the Portuguese context. In light of this, the author met with the Human Resources department of Rituals Portugal and concluded that the employer branding practices in Portugal are significantly lacking. After this meeting, a SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the impact of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's lack of investment in employer branding.

Finally, all of the gathered data allowed the author, in collaboration with the Human Resources department, to identify the main issues of the current employer branding process and the goals and actions of the new process (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 - *Problems, Goals and Actions*

Problems	Goals	Actions
1. Low attractiveness as an employer brand in Portugal.	G1. Increase Rituals Cosmetics' attractiveness and competitiveness against direct competitors.	• Development of a benchmarking plan to evaluate competitors' employer branding strategies.
2. Limited participation in employment events and fairs in Portugal.	G2. Enhance the presence of Rituals Cosmetics in national events and fairs.	• Participate in, at least, 5 national events until September 2024. • Creating a communication strategy for the events; • Development of a lounge area proposal.
3. Weak engagement with the Portuguese audience on social media	G3. Increase Rituals Cosmetics' digital presence in Portugal and share content related to the organizational culture.	• Launch of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's Instagram account and LinkedIn page. • Development of a communication strategy for the accounts.

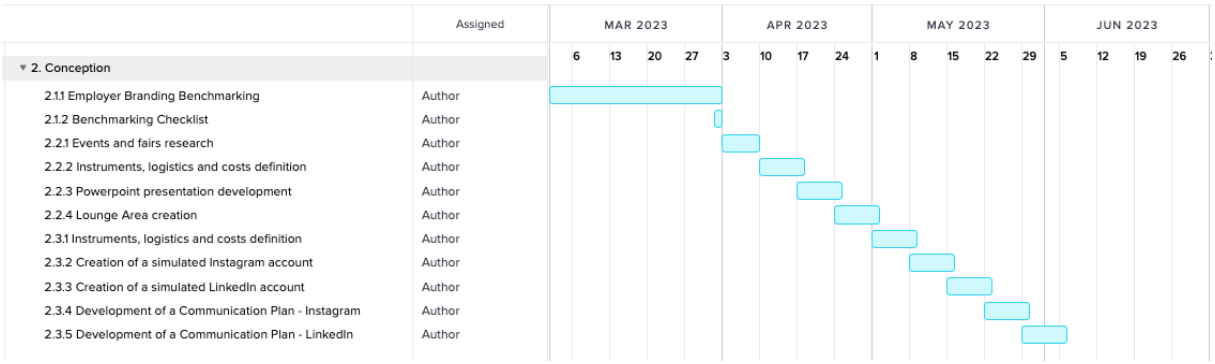
Source: Author

Finally, the presentation of this project to the board of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal was scheduled for August 28, 2023.

5.2 Conception

The conception phase took place from early March until early June 2023 (Figure 5.2). During these months, the necessary materials for implementing the suggested actions in the project were developed, along with defining the logistics and associated costs.

Figure 5.2



Gantt Chart: Conception Phase | Source: Author

Goal 1- Increase Rituals Cosmetics' attractiveness and competitiveness against direct competitors.

It was necessary to conduct benchmarking of the Rituals Cosmetics' competitors in Portugal to structure an employer branding process that would allow not only correct the shortcomings of the current process and achieving the desired goals, but also enhance the brand's competitiveness in this area. This benchmarking compares Rituals Cosmetics' employer value proposition and employer branding practices with its main competitors in Portugal: O Boticario and L'Oréal Portugal.

The employer branding of Boticario was analyzed in Table 5.2 since it is the direct competitor of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal. Additionally, L'Oréal Portugal's employer branding was also considered relevant for analysis since it was considered the company with the most outstanding employer branding in Portugal, according to the 12th edition of the Portuguese Human Resources Awards.

Table 5.2 - *Employer Branding Benchmarking*

	Rituals Cosmetics Portugal	O Boticario	L'Oréal Portugal
Employer Value Proposition	• Internal culture; • Opportunities for personal development; • Roles and responsibilities; • Well-being.	• Balance between personal and professional life; • Meaningful career with the possibility of growth; • Culture of innovation; • Inspiring leadership.	• Constant growth; • People diversity; • Entrepreneurship and decision-making; • Work with impact.
Employer Branding Practices	• Rituals Cosmetics has an official website for Portugal where they promote the brand's philosophy and provide insights into the experience of working at Rituals. Moreover, on this website, it is possible to view available job openings and apply directly on the website. However, the company doesn't have a specific Instagram account for Portugal, nor a LinkedIn account, what hinders the interaction with the Portuguese audience; • Low representation at fairs and events in Portugal; • The implemented employer branding practices in Portugal are limited and, in consequence, there is still much room for improvement.	• In addition to the official website, O Boticario Portugal has an Instagram page with almost 170 million followers, where the brand showcases highlights of events held throughout the year and explains its hiring process, promoting the brand as an employer; • Low representation at fairs and events in Portugal; • The attractiveness of O Boticario as an employer brand is much higher in other countries, such as Brazil, than in Portugal. Consequently, there is significant potential for enhancing the utilization of employer branding strategies.	• L'Oréal Portugal has a portuguese official website and an Instagram page with almost 90 million followers. On this account, they publish posts of internal events such as volunteering, sport competitions, workshops, and so on. These posts provide a closer look at what is like to work at L'Oréal Portugal, enhancing its attractiveness. • Strong representation in career fairs and other events to share information about organizational values and culture; • All employees of the company participate in the employer branding strategy: they all are brand recruiters, hence it is their duty to promote the organizational culture.

Source: Author

A checklist was also performed on Table 5.3, summarizing the different employer branding elements of each of the companies analyzed in the previous benchmarking.

Table 5.3 - *Benchmarking Checklist*

	Rituals Cosmetics Portugal	O Boticario Portugal	L'Óreal Portugal
Career website	✔	✔	✔
Instagram account	X	✔	✔
LinkedIn account	X	X	✔
High participation in events and fairs in Portugal	X	X	✔

Source: Author

The findings from the previous benchmarking checklist (Table 5.3) underscore the significance for Rituals Cosmetics Portugal to improve its presence at fairs and events within the country. Additionally, the company should focus on reinforcing its online presence to effectively compete with its competitors in terms of employer brand attractiveness.

Goal 2- Enhance the presence of Rituals Cosmetics in national events and fairs.

To improve the representation of Rituals Cosmetics at national events and fairs, this project proposes the participation in, at least, 5 national events by September 2024. For this purpose, the first step was to determine which fairs or events Rituals would benefit from attending.

The first suggestion is national human resources events, such as HR Expo, Porto HR Meeting and HR Congress. The main goal of participating in these events is to keep the Human Resources department updated on current human resources trends so that it can later update current processes or establish new ones. In addition to that, participation in these events allows potential candidates to see that Rituals Cosmetics is interested in this area, which could be an important factor in their decision to apply.

The second suggestion is university events to increase the brand's attractiveness to young talent. Having employees from the younger generations is beneficial since they bring fresh ideas, eagerness to learn and easily fit into the current organizational culture. Moreover, Rituals Cosmetics' organizational culture is very welcoming to young talent, as these individuals seek more harmony between their personal and professional lives and closeness to their coworkers,

values that characterize Rituals. This is evident from the fact that over 50% of Rituals' workforce in Portugal comprises individuals under the age of 30.

Some examples of university-sponsored events related to employability in which rituals can participate include Talent Bootcamps and Career Forums. These events consist of annual employment fairs that takes place in several national universities and are among the biggest national university hiring events. However, there are numerous employment fairs held throughout the year and the Human Resources department must be aware to ensure that Rituals Cosmetics' participation in those fairs is guaranteed.

Rituals Cosmetics' participation in these events serves several purposes. It allows the company to share its culture, organizational values, and employment benefits with the students. Additionally, during these events, Rituals can showcase open positions for both office and shop roles, highlighting Rituals stores as a flexible option for students who want to work and study simultaneously.

Finally, participation in technical-professional school events is also highly important for attracting potential candidates for Rituals Cosmetics Portugal stores, as these students possess valuable skills for in-store work.

a) Instruments, logistics and costs

The logistics will be coordinated by the Human Resources department, which includes the selection of the events, the preparation of materials, as well as the human resources necessary for each event. The presentations will also be made by this department when necessary, unless the presentation's topic pertains to another department.

In this project, a presentation proposal with an easy-to-use template was developed (Annex F), however, it must be adjusted in accordance with the requirements of each event.

The collaboration with the Marketing department is also crucial, as they will be responsible for the design of any merchandising that might be needed. In this project, a simulation of a lounge area was developed to guarantee the visibility of the company on these events with an estimated budget of €500 (Annex E). This investment is necessary to attract people to get to learn more about Rituals at the events and they might become potential candidates. Additionally, it is estimated more €200 for any other merchandising that might be needed throughout the year.

Goal 3- Increase Rituals Cosmetics' digital presence in Portugal and share content related to the organizational culture.

Rituals Cosmetics has Instagram and LinkedIn accounts created for several countries in which it operates, but none specifically for Portugal. Therefore, this project proposes the creation of these two accounts to enhance Rituals Cosmetics' digital presence in Portugal.

Instagram is an immensely popular social media platform nowadays, leading to an increasing number of businesses using it to market their products and showcase their employer proposition.

As Instagram is a highly visual social network, it enables brands to attract new followers and engage with them. To ensure a successful Instagram account and reach a broader audience, it's vital to utilize various strategies like posting consistently and leveraging features such as Instagram Reels, influencer collaborations, brand partnerships, Instagram ads and Instagram Stories.

Thus, with a Portuguese Instagram account (Annex H), Rituals Cosmetics will be able to share the organizational culture and values and interact not only with customers, but also potential candidates.

On the other hand, LinkedIn is the most significant social network in the professional sphere, with almost every business and professional utilizing it. As a primarily informative social network, it is ideal for those who wish to learn more about a company and its internal processes. Furthermore, many employees seeking professional opportunities resort to this platform to find suitable offers. As a result, Rituals Cosmetics must create a LinkedIn page (Annex I) and remain active by publishing relevant content related to the business and its partners.

a) Instruments, logistics and costs

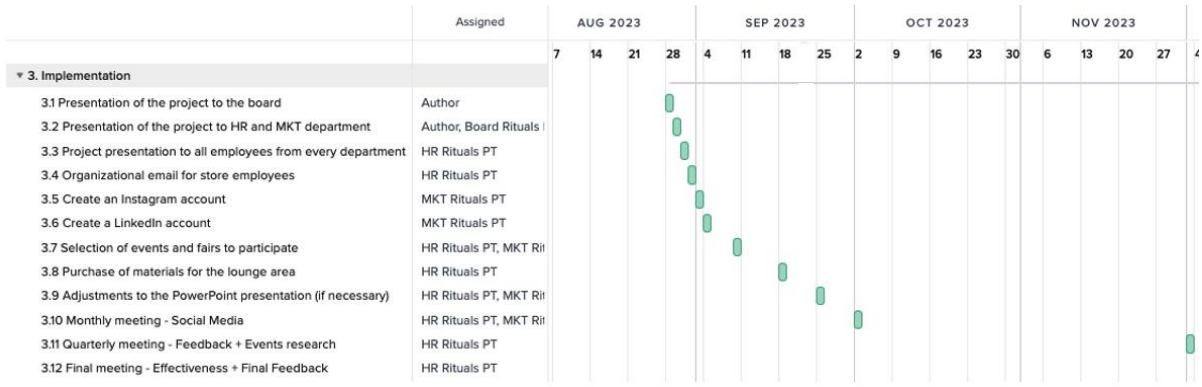
The design and publication of the content for both social media will be a responsibility of the Marketing department and to establish a planned and consistent strategy across all communication channels. However, the Human Resources department should develop a monthly communication plan with content suggestions for the month, regarding the organization’s values and internal culture topics. In this project, two communication plan proposals were developed for the month of September 2023 (Annexes J and K).

Since these platforms will be internally managed, there are no financial costs associated.

5.3 Implementation

As stated in the Gantt chart of the implementation phase (Figure 5.3), the presentation of the new employer branding strategy to the board was scheduled for August 28th, 2023.

Figure 5.3



Gantt Chart: Implementation Phase | Source: Author

In this meeting, the author will meet with representatives from all departments of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal to discuss the proposed employer branding strategy and its implementation plan. Additionally, during this meeting, adjustments to the timeline for the project's implementation can be made as needed.

The implementation of this project is planned to take place over the course of one year, from September 2023 to September 2024. Given this timeline, the implementation of this project will only begin after the author has completed it.

The steps and corresponding dates outlined in the Gantt chart are merely suggestive. The company has the flexibility to adjust them according to its activities plan or any new insights that may emerge during the project. This approach promotes a more agile and responsive implementation process.

However, according to the author's suggestion, on August 29th a meeting between the author, Rituals Cosmetics' board, the Human Resources and Marketing departments was scheduled to present the new employer branding strategy. During this meeting, the first tasks to be completed and the responsibilities of each participant should be outlined. Furthermore, during the meeting, necessary adjustments can also be made, such as to the communication plans for social media.

However, besides presenting the strategy to their respective departments, it is crucial to ensure that all employees from every department at Rituals Cosmetics Portugal are aware of the new strategy that the company will implement. Therefore, it was suggested that on August 30th the HR Business Partner scheduled a meeting with all employees from every department to communicate the project's goals and benefits. This meeting is highly important since it encourages transparency and active engagement among all stakeholders, empowering the company to move forward with confidence. The knowledge that each department is well-informed and committed to putting forth their best efforts to achieve the project's objectives will provide a strong foundation for success.

Finally, to ensure that employees from the stores are also informed, it is suggested to send an organizational email (Annex L) on August 31st, explaining the main goals of the new strategy.

Once the project has been presented to all employees, the author suggests that at the beginning of September, the marketing department creates the Instagram and LinkedIn accounts. During this month, they can follow the communication plan suggested by the author for both social media platforms.

Furthermore, during this month, the Human Resources department should conduct research and selection of the job fairs and employability events they would like to participate in until the end of the year. To this stage, €5000 (Annex E) are allocated for costs related to participation in events such as registration fees, as well as potential transportation and accommodation expenses for the human resources team.

Additionally, the author suggests that the purchase of materials for the Lounge Area should be made in September, along with possible adjustments to the presentation. This strategic timing ensures that the materials are thoroughly prepared for use in upcoming events, minimizing any potential delays.

Throughout the rest of the year, the author suggests that the Human Resources department meets monthly with the Marketing department. This will enable the HR department to provide information regarding the content related to the organizational culture that they would like to see on social media platforms (Instagram and LinkedIn). Based on this feedback, the Marketing department can then develop the necessary images accordingly.

The Human Resources department will be responsible for overseeing the project and monitoring its outcomes. Therefore, it is important to schedule quarterly meetings with all members of the department so that they can assess the results and adjust the strategy accordingly. These will take place in December 2023 and March, June and September 2024.

Finally, in September 2024, after the project's implementation is completed, the Human Resources department should meet to evaluate the project's effectiveness according to the defined KPI's.

5.4 Measurement

Measuring progress is crucial to ensuring the success of the project. Hence, it is imperative to establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that facilitate the assessment of outcomes and furnish vital insights to inform forthcoming decisions pertaining to the employer branding procedure. In Table 5.4, a comprehensive overview of these KPIs delineated for each specific action is presented.

Table 5.4 - *Goals, KPIs and Expected Results*

Goal	KPIs		Expected Results
G1. Increase Rituals Cosmetics' attractiveness and competitiveness against direct competitors.	Turnover Rate (%) = (Number of Employees Who Left During a Period / Average Number of Total Employees During the Same Period) x 100		5% reduction in the store's turnover.
	Seniority Mean = (Sum of each Employee Seniority) / Total Number of Employees		Increase in the store's seniority mean by 1 year.
	Number of Job Applicants		5% increase in the number of applications per year (store and office).
G2. Enhance the presence of Rituals Cosmetics in national events and fairs	Number of Events		Participation in, at least, 5 national events by September 2024.
	Number of Participants		5% increase in the number of participants per year.
G3. Increase Rituals Cosmetics' digital presence in Portugal and share content related to the organizational culture.	Instagram	Followers Growth	Reach, at least, 30 000 followers.
		Audience Reachability Rate (%) = (Number of People Reached / Total Target Audience) x 100	Achieve an audience reachability rate of, at least, 30%.

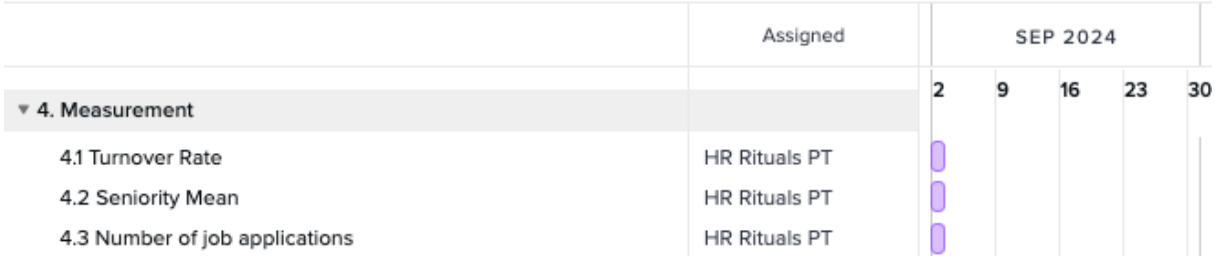
	LinkedIn	Followers Growth	Reach, at least, 2 000 followers
		Engagement Rate (%) = [(Total Engagement Actions / Total Followers) x 100]	Achieve an engagement rate above 2%.

Source: Author

Goal 1- Increase Rituals Cosmetics' attractiveness and competitiveness against direct competitors.

To achieve the first goal, three KPIs were defined: turnover rate, seniority mean and the number of job applicants (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4



Gantt Chart: Measurement Phase - Goal 1 KPIs | Source: Author

Rituals Cosmetics had identified a high turnover rate in its stores and an average seniority of only 3 years. For this reason, monitoring these indicators at the end of the project will be highly beneficial to evaluate the effectiveness of the new employer branding strategy and will be a responsibility of the Human Resources department.

It is intended for the turnover rate of the stores to decrease by 5% and for the seniority mean to increase by one more year, turning into 4 years. If the turnover rate decreases and the average seniority increases, it can translate into an improvement in the company's attractiveness.

The monitoring of these indicators will be a responsibility of the Human Resources department and the outcome of these indicators should be assessed in September 2024 (Figure 5.4).

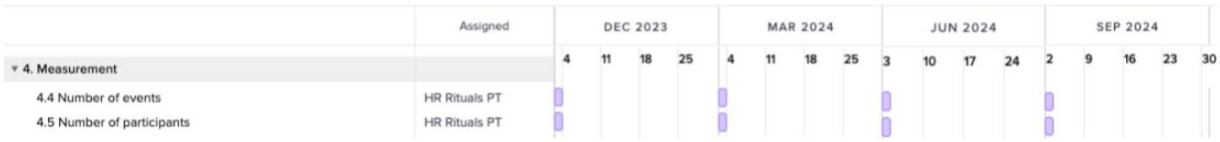
The number of job applications is also an excellent metric to analyze the impact of the new employer branding strategy on the company's attractiveness. Therefore, in September 2024, it

is expected that there will have been a 5% increase in the number of candidates for store and functional area positions.

Goal 2- Enhance the presence of Rituals Cosmetics in national events and fairs.

The number of events and participants were the KPIs defined in this project for the effective achievement of the second goal (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5



Gantt Chart: Measurement Phase - Goal 2 KPIs | Source: Author

By tracking the number of events conducted and the attendance of participants, the company can assess the interest and engagement of the target audience. With the implementation of this project, it is expected that the company will participate in at least 5 national events per year.

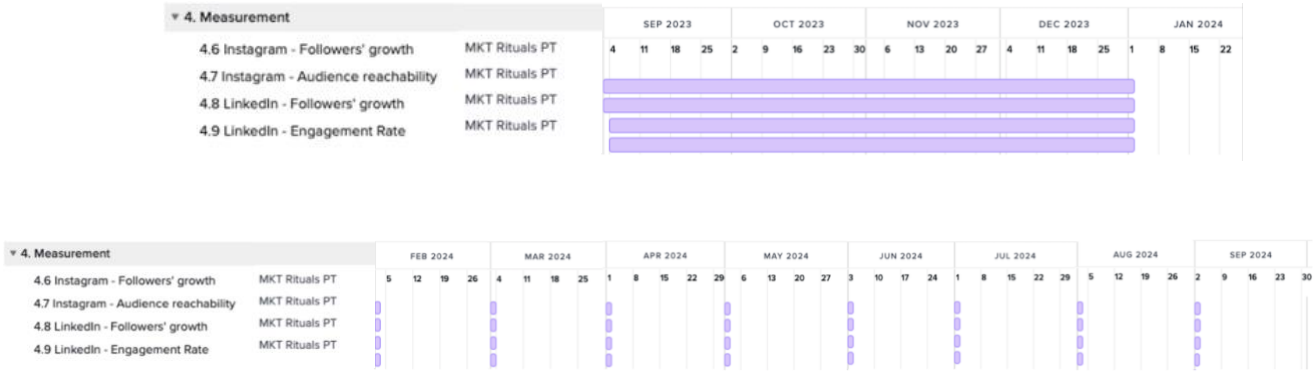
Furthermore, it is anticipated that there will be a 5% increase in the number of participants as a result of higher recognition of the employer brand and enhanced attractiveness of the company to potential candidates.

The monitoring of these indicators should be conducted quarterly to facilitate improvements to the strategy based on the results of the KPIs, which will be tracked by the Human Resources team (Figure 5.5).

Goal 3- Increase Rituals Cosmetics' digital presence in Portugal and share content related to the organizational culture.

Finally, four KPIs were defined to achieve the third objective of the project. For Instagram, followers growth and audience reachability rate were selected, while for LinkedIn, followers growth and engagement rate were chosen (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6



Gantt Chart Measurement Phase - Goal 3 KPIs | Source: Author

A. Instagram

Having a substantial number of followers on Instagram often leads to the perception of a business as being credible. Therefore, tracking this essential Instagram KPI is crucial.

Once Rituals Cosmetics Portugal creates an Instagram account, it is advisable for the Marketing team to closely monitor the number of followers, at least once a week, until January 2024 (Figure 5.6). This frequent assessment will enable the company to track the growth trajectory over time and take corrective actions if the progress falls short of expectations. As the company becomes more familiar with Instagram, gains insights into audience behavior and assesses the impact of its posts, it may choose to adjust the analysis frequency to a monthly basis.

It is expected that by the end of September 2024, the Instagram page of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal will show an increase in the number of followers, with a goal of 30 000 followers.

The Audience Reachability Rate is also a very important KPI and it consists in the percentage of followers within the audience who can view the influencer's content in their Instagram feed. A high audience reachability indicates that the influencer's content is effectively reaching the target audience, which can boost brand awareness, increase website traffic and consequently generate more business opportunities and sales. Therefore, monitoring and optimizing audience reachability can help companies and influencers assess the effectiveness of their Instagram marketing strategies and achieve better results in their campaigns.

It is recommended that the monitoring of this KPI be done by the Marketing team with the same frequency as the followers' growth (Figure 5.6) to ensure that the content on Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's Instagram account can reach at least 30% of its followers' accounts.

A. LinkedIn

Increasing the number of followers on LinkedIn is equally essential as it is on Instagram. As indicated in Figure 5.6, the monitoring should be done regularly by the Marketing team until January 2024 and, thereafter, it may become monthly. The ultimate goal is for the LinkedIn account of Rituals Portugal to reach 2 000 followers by September 2024.

The second KPI for LinkedIn is the engagement that encompasses all user actions on the social platform, such as liking, commenting, or sharing. LinkedIn engagement rate is calculated by dividing the number of these interactions by the total number of followers (Table 5.4).

According to Williams (2022), the standard value for a good engagement rate on LinkedIn is 2% and, for this reason, the goal is to achieve an engagement rate of at least this value by September 2024. A high rate can open up more opportunities to connect with other LinkedIn users, allowing the network to grow further. Moreover, increased engagement can result in more profile views and enhanced visibility Rituals Cosmetics.

Similar to the Followers' growth, this KPI should also be monitored more frequently until January 2024 and afterwards, it will be monitored monthly (Figure 5.6).

In the last meeting, scheduled for the 2nd of September 2024, a comprehensive feedback session should be carried out to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy implemented throughout the entire year. At the end of this one-year period, there are two potential outcomes: if the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) indicate positive results, Rituals Cosmetics Portugal may opt to continue implementing the strategy in the future. On the other hand, if the expected outcomes are not achieved, the strategy will need to be reevaluated for potential improvements or alternative approaches. This iterative process ensures that the company remains adaptive and responsive to the ever-changing market dynamics and consumer preferences.

CHAPTER 6

6. Conclusions

Adapting to a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) market environment necessitates a foundational organizational capability: resilience. It aids businesses in remaining sensitive and adaptive to the external environment and recovering from the difficult effects of adverse events (Yu *et al*., 2022).

Rituals Cosmetics exemplifies resilience through its 20-year history of adaptability and visionary approach. It brought a holistic approach to the cosmetic industry along with a futuristic and organizational vision. This distinction from what was previously on the market brought a rough beginning to the brand. However, the company never gave up and is currently growing at a faster pace.

However, in Portugal, the company was struggling to keep up with the growth in terms of employer branding, as there was a lack of consistency in these practices. Therefore, the main goals of this project were identified - increase Rituals Cosmetics' attractiveness and competitiveness against direct competitors, enhance the presence in national events and fairs, and finally, increase the digital presence in Portugal and share content related to the organizational culture.

With the implementation of this strategy, it is expected that Rituals Cosmetics will achieve the aforementioned goals, effectively spreading its organizational values in Portugal through interactions at events or on social media, and thus, gaining more recognition as an employer. Furthermore, it is expected that the company will be able to recruit qualified talent and retain those who are already within the organization.

Finally, the author will not be able to monitor the project's implementation as the thesis presentation will take place before it. Although not present during the implementation phase, the author is willing to provide its knowledge and expertise, if needed, to support the team responsible for executing the project. Collaboration and ongoing commitment from all parties involved will be crucial to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy and achieve the desired results.

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Annexes

Annex A – *Interview Protocol: Rituals Cosmetics' Employer Branding Team*

Interviewer: Tatiana dos Santos Lapa

Purpose: This interview is part of a project to restructure the employer branding process of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal. The project is currently being developed by the interviewer as the final project for Iscte Business School's master's program in management. Therefore, the information provided will be used solely for the purposes of this project and will not publicly disclosed any personal names or confidential information about the organization.
Do you agree to these terms?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Thank you for your cooperation!

1. What is Rituals Cosmetics' employer branding strategy?
2. Which communication channels are used to disseminate this strategy?
3. What are the main limitations of the current employer branding process?
4. What are the company's medium and long-term goals for its employer branding process?

Annex B – *Interview Transcription: Rituals Cosmetics' Employer Branding Team*

Author: What is Rituals Cosmetics' employer branding strategy?

EBT member: In 2022, we stablished a new employer branding strategy with the main goal of distinguishing ourselves from our competitors by having a strong, authentic and recognizable Employer Value Proposition to attract and retain the best international talent.

The new Employer Value Proposition focuses on four pillars. The first one is Teamwork - Rituals' teams really stand out because of their commitment and passion. They work together and give their best, being creative and delivering excellent performances to achieve their goals.

It's this spirit of cooperation, connection and drive that actually helps them surpass their initial targets.

The second pillar is Growth because it is so important for a company to invest in its employees' growth and development… Rituals really goes the extra mile by offering training opportunities and empowering its employees. We truly want to support their career progression and when employees feel empowered it creates a positive work environment and encourages them to give their best. Kudos to Rituals for recognizing the importance of employee growth and investing in their future success.

The third pillar is obviously the internal Culture - Rituals puts a lot of effort into nurturing an ambitious, entrepreneurial and passionate organizational culture. We try to create an environment where people genuinely care for each other and celebrate achievements together. A strong and inclusive culture can make such a difference in the overall employee experience.

And the fourth and final pillar is Well-Being which is really important for us! When employees feel supported and their well-being is a priority, it can make a huge difference in their overall satisfaction and productivity. Rituals really wants their employees to pursue their journeys with passion and purpose and also strives for positive and sustainable changes in all aspects of their operations. That shows a commitment to creating a work environment that aligns with their values and makes a positive impact.

Author: Which communication channels are used to disseminate this strategy?

EBT member: We try to spread our strategy consistently in all social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube and also some internal platforms. We also like to make our way into different events where we can talk about our brand in terms of its values and the benefits of working with us.

Author: What are the main limitations of the current employer branding process?

EBT member: I believe that it can be difficult for Rituals to become an employer of choice in every country we operate because we have a standardized employer branding strategy and the actions that work amazingly for example in Portugal, may not work so well in Germany because they have different needs and ways of work. So I think that, in the future, we should guarantee that every country has its own employer branding team' that can elaborate locally specialized strategies.

Furthermore, we still have a lot to grow in our digital platforms. Our content is mainly products and seasonal campaigns, but we should also invest in promoting our organizational culture and our values to attract candidates. Our work environment is great and everyone should be able to see that.

Author: What are the company's medium and long-term goals for its employer branding process?

EBT member: Our main goal, for the next two years, is to become an employer of choice with a distinctive employer branding proposition and increase recruitment ROI and brand awareness. Basically, until 2025, we aim to attract and retain the best international talent, while maintaining our company's DNA. To do so, we should build a strong Employer Value Proposition, with a solid and continuous online presence.

Annex C – *Interview Protocol: Rituals Cosmetics Portugal Human Resources Team*

Interviewer: Tatiana dos Santos Lapa

Purpose: This interview is part of a project to restructure the employer branding process of Rituals Cosmetics Portugal. The project is currently being developed by the interviewer as the final project for Iscte Business School's master's program in management. Therefore, the information provided will be used solely for the purposes of this project and will not publicly disclosed any personal names or confidential information about the organization.
Do you agree to these terms?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Thank you for your cooperation!

1. What measures are currently being implemented for employer branding in Portugal?
2. What are the main goals of restructuring Rituals' employer branding in Portugal?

Annex D – *Interview Transcription: Rituals Cosmetics' Human Resources Team*

Author: What measures are currently being implemented for employer branding in Portugal?

HR Team member: Unfortunately, in Portugal, not many measures focused on the company's employer branding are being implemented that is why there is a need to restructure the employer branding process in Portugal.

Author: What are the main goals of restructuring Rituals' employer branding in Portugal?

HR Team member: Unfortunately, we are facing a high turnover rate in our stores, as well as a very low average of seniority. Therefore, we want to strengthen our employer branding to improve not only the attraction of new talent but also to retain the existing talent in our stores.

To achieve that, it is necessary to enhance the attractiveness of our brand compared to the main competitors because, despite having high brand recognition in Portugal as a seller, it lacks recognition as an employer.

Additionally, it is necessary to improve the brand's digital presence to engage more effectively with job seekers. Currently, Rituals Cosmetics does not have any dedicated social media accounts for Portugal, such as Instagram or LinkedIn. Establishing a strong presence on these platforms would be a good initial step in enhancing the employer branding strategy.

Lastly, in line with the goal of increasing interaction with job seekers, it is crucial to boost the brand's presence in employment events and job fairs. Participating in events at universities, for instance, would be an excellent option. Unfortunately, Rituals Cosmetics has not been able to attend any of these events yet and it is important to prioritize and actively engage in such opportunities in order to expand the reach of the employer branding effort.

Annex E – *Project Gantt Chart*

Rituals Cosmetics Portugal - Employer Branding Project	Assigned	Duration (days)	Costs	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024
														Dias												
1. Planning																										
1.1 Meeting with the company	Author; HR Rituals PT	1 day	-	03 Oct																						
1.2 Literature Review	Author	27 days	-	05 Oct -1 Nov																						
1.3 Cosmetic Industry Search	Author	14 days	-		07 Nov -21 Nov																					
1.4 Analysis of Rituals Cosmetics	Author	27 days	-		22 Nov - 19 Dec																					
1.5 Diagnosis			-																							
1.5.1 1st Interview - EB International Team	Author; EB International Team	1 day	-				9 Jan																			
1.5.2 Survey Analysis	Author	6 days	-				10 Jan -16 Jan																			
1.5.3 2nd Interview - HR Rituals PT Team	Author; HR Rituals PT	1 day	-				23 Jan																			
1.5.4 SWOT Analysis	Author	14 days	-				24 Jan -07 Feb																			
1.6 Setting project goals	Author	7 days	-					08 Feb -15 Feb																		
1.7 Project's presentation to the board	Author	1 day	-										21 Aug													
2. Conception																										
2.1.1 Employer Branding Benchmarking	Author	31 days	-						01 Mar - 31 Mar																	
2.1.2 Benchmarking Checklist	Author	1 day	-						31 Mar																	
2.2.1 Events and fairs research	Author	4 days	-							03 Apr -07 Apr																
2.2.2 Instruments, logistics and costs definition	Author	7 days	-							10 Apr -17 Apr																
2.2.3 Powerpoint presentation development	Author	7 days	-							17 Apr -24 Apr																
2.2.4 Lounge Area creation	Author	7 days	-							24 Apr -01 May																
2.3.1 Instruments, logistics and costs definition	Author	8 days	-								01 May - 08 May															
2.3.2 Creation of a simulated Instagram account	Author	7 days	-								08 May -15 May															
2.3.3 Creation of a simulated LinkedIn account	Author	7 days	-								15 May -22 May															
2.3.4 Development of a Communication Plan - Instagra	Author	7 days	-								22 May - 29 May															
2.3.5 Development of a Communication Plan - LinkedIn	Author	7 days	-								29 May - 05 Jun															
3. Implementation																										
3.1 Presentation of the project to the board	Author	1 day	-										21 Aug													
3.2 Presentation of the project to HR and MKT departm	Board Rituals PT; HR Rituals P	1 day	-										29 Aug													
3.3 Project presentation to all employees from every de	Board Rituals PT	1 day	-										30 Aug													
3.4 Organizational email for store employees	HR Rituals PT	1 day	-										31 Aug													
3.5 Create an Instagram account	MKT Rituals PT	1 day	-											01 Sep												
3.6 Create a LinkedIn account	MKT Rituals PT	1 day	-											04 Sep												
3.7 Selection of events and fairs to participate	HR Rituals PT; MKT Rituals PT	1 day	5 000 €											08 Sep												
3.8 Purchase of materials for the lounge area	HR Rituals PT	1 day	700 €											18 Sep												
3.9 Adjustments to the Powerpoint presentation (if nec	HR Rituals PT; MKT Rituals PT	1 day	-											25 Sep												
3.10 Monthly meeting - Social Media	HR Rituals PT; MKT Rituals PT	11 days	-												02 Oct	01 Nov	01 Dec	01 Jan	01 Feb	01 Mar	01 Apr	01 May	03 Jun	01 Jul	01 Aug	
3.11 Quarterly meeting - Feedback + Events research	HR Rituals PT	4 days	-														01 Dec			01 Mar			01 Jun		01 Aug	
3.12 Final meeting - Effectiveness + Final feedback	HR Rituals PT	1 day	-																							02 Sep
4. Measurement																										
4.1 Turnover Rate	HR Rituals PT	1 day	-																							01 Sep
4.2 Seniority Mean	HR Rituals PT	1 day	-																							01 Sep
4.3 Number of job applications	HR Rituals PT	1 day	-																							01 Sep
4.4 Number of events	HR Rituals PT	4 days	-														01 Dec			01 Mar			01 Jun			01 Sep
4.5 Number of participants	HR Rituals PT	4 days	-																							
4.6 Instagram - Followers' Growth	MKT Rituals PT	26 days	-											01 Sep - 01 Jan					01 Feb	01 Mar	01 Apr	01 May	01 Jun	01 Jul	01 Aug	01 Sep
4.7 Instagram - Audience Reachability	MKT Rituals PT	26 days	-																							
4.8 LinkedIn - Followers' Growth	MKT Rituals PT	26 days	-											04 Sep - 01 Jan					01 Feb	01 Mar	01 Apr	01 May	01 Jun	01 Jul	01 Aug	01 Sep
4.9 LinkedIn - Engagement Rate	MKT Rituals PT	26 days	-																							
TOTAL			5 700 €																							

Annex F – *Employer Branding PowerPoint presentation proposal*[2]



YOUR BODY. YOUR SOUL.
YOUR RITUALS.

EMPLOYER BRANDING | 01

WHO WE ARE

GLOBAL PRESENCE

- Founded in 2000;
- Global home & cosmetic brand;
- 105 countries - 912 stores and around 7500 employees worldwide;
- B Corporation.

PORTUGUESE PRESENCE

- Arrived in 2000;
- 32 stores across the country;
- Over 200 employees.



EMPLOYER BRANDING | 02

[2] The images used for the presentation were provided by Rituals Cosmetics Portugal

OUR DEPARTMENTS

Human Resources

Marketing

Retail

Wholesale





OUR CULTURE

FOAM VALUES

- **F**rontline & customer obsession;
- **O**wnership;
- **A**im big, act small;
- **M**ake the connection.

WHAT WE OFFER:

- Amazing culture;
- Opportunities for personal development;
- Dynamic roles and responsibilities;
- Well-being.

OPEN POSITIONS

HEADQUARTERS

[TO COMPLETE]

STORES

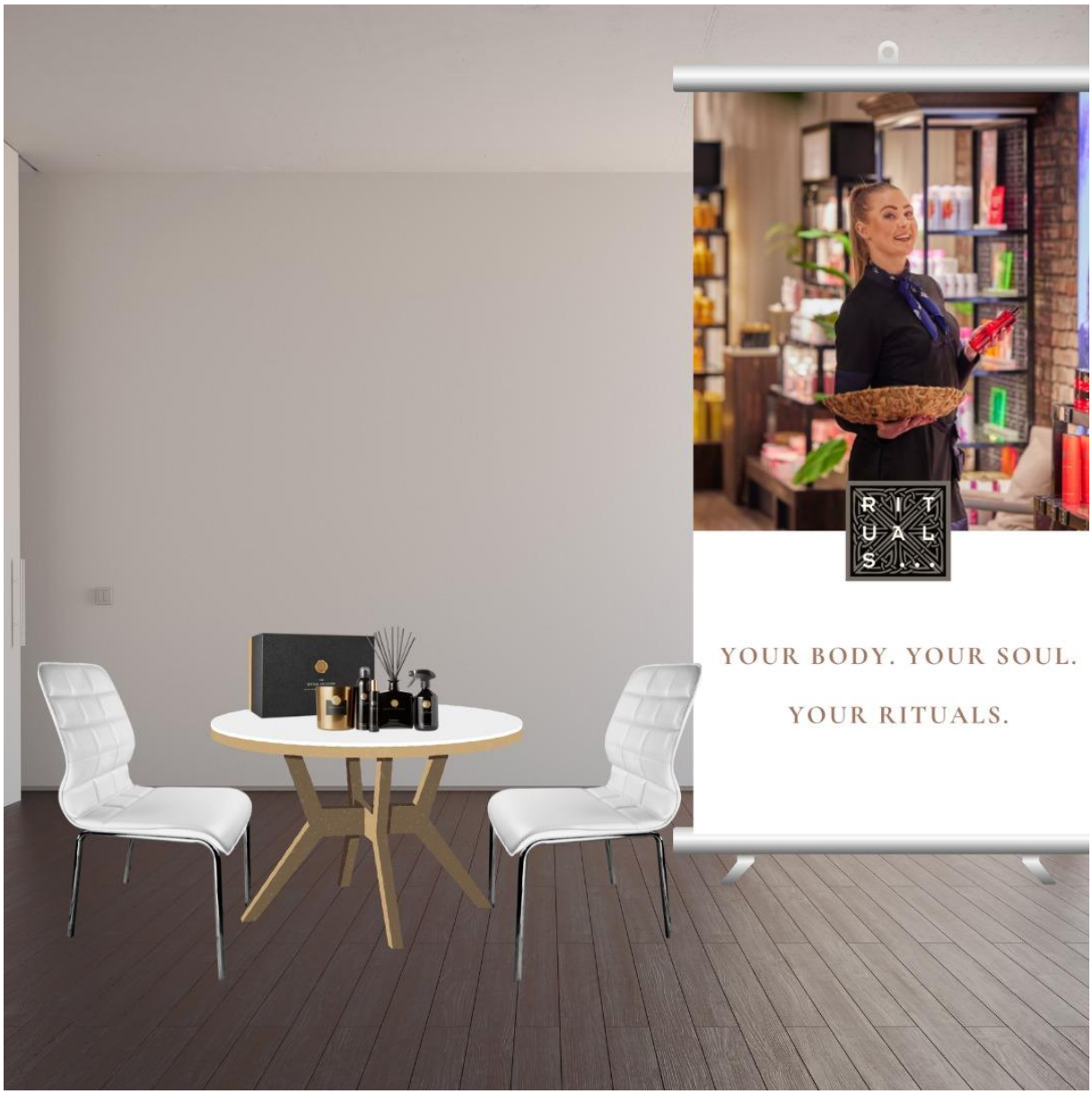
[TO COMPLETE]

YOU CAN SEE MORE IN OUR WEBSITE!

https://careers.rituals.com/pt/pt/home



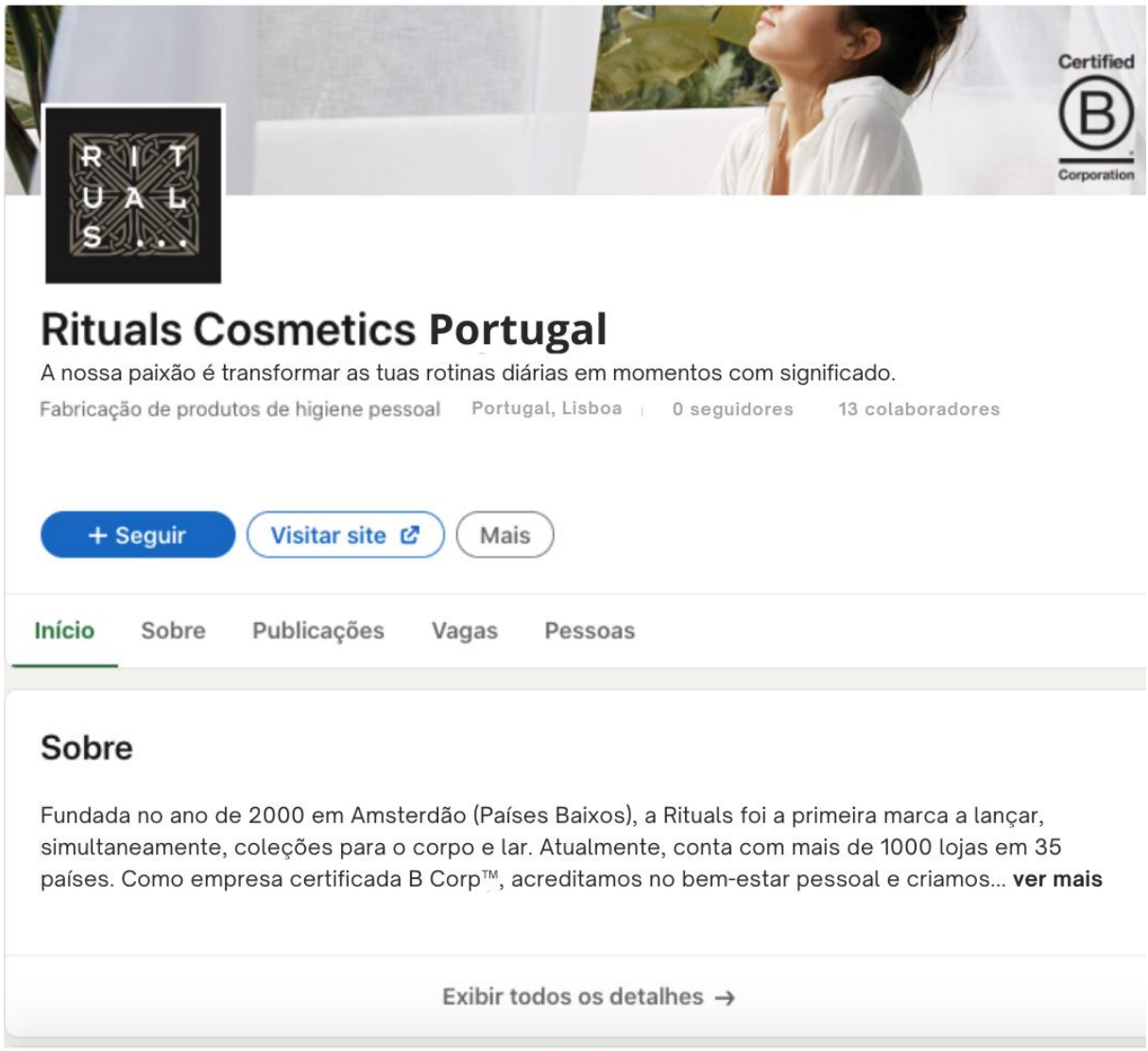
Annex G – *Lounge Area proposal*



Annex H – *Proposal for Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's Instagram Account*



Annex I – *Proposal for Rituals Cosmetics Portugal's LinkedIn Page*



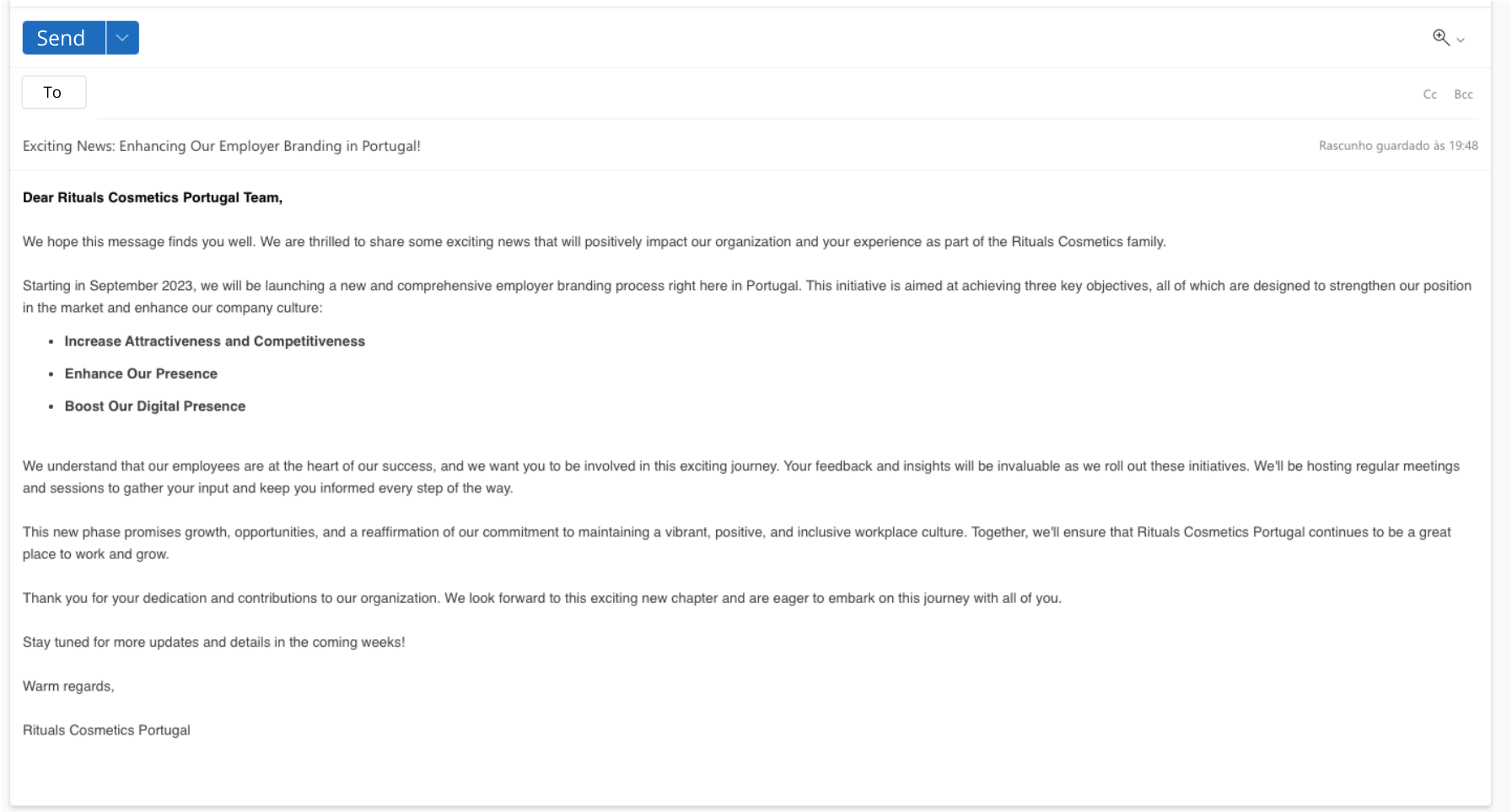
Annex J – *Communication Plan: Instagram account*

	Post	Information Needed	Description	Formats	Date	Time
Instagram	Launch	A simple instastorie with the phrase "Olá Portugal!"	Olá Portugal! Sejam bem-vindos à pagina de Instagram oficial da Rituals Portugal, fica atento às novidades. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Instastory (1080x1920 px)	2023-09-01	19h
	Stores Presentation	The phrase "Cnhece as nossas lojas!" with a photo of a portuguese store in the background	Já visitaste uma das nossas lojas? Estamos à tua espera para te proporcionarmos uma experiência única numa das nossas lojas. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Instastory (1080x1920 px)	2023-09-02	19h
				Feed (1:1)	2023-09-02	19h
	Team Presentation	The phrase "Conhece as nossas pessoas!" with a portuguese team group photo in the backbround	Em Portugal, já somos mais de 200 colaboradores Rituals. Vem conhecer-nos nas nossas lojas! Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Instastory (1080x1920 px)	2023-09-03	19h
				Feed (1:1)	2023-09-03	19h
	Job Opportunities	The phrase "Junta-te a nós!" with a with a photo of a Rituals employee inviting someone to enter the store in the backgroud	Gostavas de ter uma experiência profissional numa loja Rituals? Acede já ao nosso site de carreiras e candidata-te. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Instastory (1080x1920 px)	2023-09-10	19h
				Feed (1:1)	2023-09-10	19h
	B Corporation	The words "B Corporation" " with a photo that envolves nature in the background	Sabias que a Rituals Cosmetics é considerada uma B Corporation? Se queres saber mais sobre aquilo que isso significa, acede já ao nosso site. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Instastory (1080x1920 px)	2023-09-16	19h
				Feed (1:1)	2023-09-16	19h

Annex K – *Communication Plan: LinkedIn page*

	Post	Information Needed	Description	Formats	Date	Time
LinkedIn	Launch	A simple post with the phrase "Olá Portugal!"	Olá Portugal! Sejam bem-vindos à pagina de Linkedin oficial da Rituals Portugal. Aproveita e segue-nos no Instagram e fica atento às novidades. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Post (1:1)	2023-09-04	10h
	Country Manager Testimony	The phrase "Conhece o nosso Country Manager!" with a photo of him (preferencially at Rituals' Office)	Conhece a experiência do nosso Country Manager: (insert text written by him) Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Post (1:1)	2023-09-11	10h
	Area Managers Testimony	The phrase "Conhece as nossas Area Managers!" with a photo of them (preferencially at a Rituals' store)	Conhece a experiência das nossas Area Managers: (insert text written by them) Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Post (1:1)	2023-09-18	10h
	Shop Advisors Testimony	The phrase "Conhece os nossos Shop Advisors!" with a photo of 3 shop advisors (preferencially at a Rituals' store)	Conhece a experiência de dois dos nossos Shop Advisors: (insert text written by them). Se ficaste interessado/a nos seus testemunhos, acede ao nosso site de carreiras e candidata-te! Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Post (1:1)	2023-09-25	10h
	Job Opportunities	The phrase "Junta-te a nós!" with a with a photo of a Rituals employee inviting someone to enter the store in the backgroud	Gostavas de ter uma experiência profissional numa loja Rituals? Acede já ao nosso site de carreiras e candidata-te. Your Body. Your Soul. Your Rituals.	Post (1:1)	2023-10-02	10h

Annex L – *Organizational Email Template*


Send

To

Cc Bcc

Exciting News: Enhancing Our Employer Branding in Portugal!

Rascunho guardado às 19:48

Dear Rituals Cosmetics Portugal Team,

We hope this message finds you well. We are thrilled to share some exciting news that will positively impact our organization and your experience as part of the Rituals Cosmetics family.

Starting in September 2023, we will be launching a new and comprehensive employer branding process right here in Portugal. This initiative is aimed at achieving three key objectives, all of which are designed to strengthen our position in the market and enhance our company culture:

- **Increase Attractiveness and Competitiveness**
- **Enhance Our Presence**
- **Boost Our Digital Presence**

We understand that our employees are at the heart of our success, and we want you to be involved in this exciting journey. Your feedback and insights will be invaluable as we roll out these initiatives. We'll be hosting regular meetings and sessions to gather your input and keep you informed every step of the way.

This new phase promises growth, opportunities, and a reaffirmation of our commitment to maintaining a vibrant, positive, and inclusive workplace culture. Together, we'll ensure that Rituals Cosmetics Portugal continues to be a great place to work and grow.

Thank you for your dedication and contributions to our organization. We look forward to this exciting new chapter and are eager to embark on this journey with all of you.

Stay tuned for more updates and details in the coming weeks!

Warm regards,

Rituals Cosmetics Portugal