

E-book

# The Drip Campaigns Playbook

Capitalizing on Candidate Behavior





# Introduction

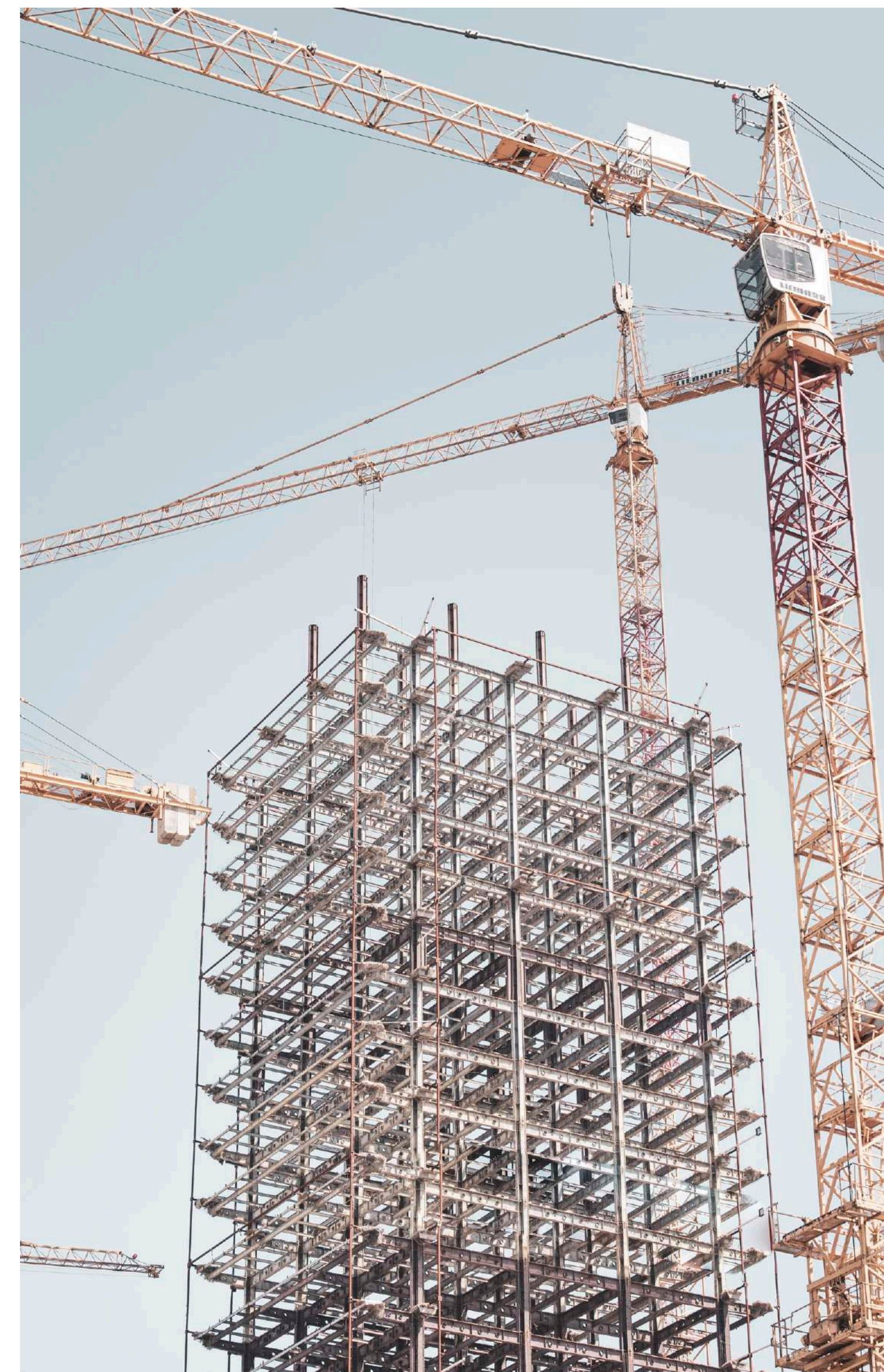
## The Context

A drip campaign isn't just the latest marketing buzzword to hit the HR industry, it is a strategic tool that has real impact in helping organizations foster tangible relationships with candidates over time. The companies spearheading their implementation are transforming day-to-day life for their teams, elevating the candidate experience and delivering mind-boggling results. However, knowing where to start and how to move forward on your own can be a little daunting and time-consuming.

This playbook is full of ideas on how to approach drip campaigns. We interviewed industry leaders to get their top tips and topline technical advice, as well as speaking to Avature experts. Learn how to make drip campaigns happen, how to get top brass buy-in and what to do (and not to do) to get started.

To kick things off, building a drip campaign is two-pronged:

- **Ideation:** Establishing the target audience, campaign storyline, content detail, key moments and channels
- **Implementation:** Setting up the campaign using the right functions, testing the campaign and setting up metrics to evaluate its success





## Defining Drip Campaigns

### What Is a Drip Campaign?

Drip campaigns are a marketing technique that's one step beyond standard email campaigns. An email campaign involves regularly sending a message to your database or a segmented audience. Drip campaigns automatically trigger a follow-up action based on candidate behavior: if they open the email, respond to it or ignore it.

"It is a communication that is based on building trust and nurturing a relationship with a target audience," explains Marvin Smith, Talent Engagement Strategist at Lockheed Martin. "It can have an immediate (with active prospects) or long-term return (with passive prospects)."

### Why Drip Campaigns?

Sixty percent of candidates quit halfway through an application because it is too long or complex.<sup>1</sup> Drip campaigns mean that you can gather this essential but extensive information over time.

It allows you to tailor your approach and content, depending on candidate preferences and level of interest, while simultaneously promoting your employer brand and presence.

"It positions your brand to look consistent and professional. With a drip campaign, it doesn't feel invasive but there aren't six-month gaps between touchpoints either," says Jennifer O'Brien, Talent Acquisition Leader of Candidate Attraction and Technology at Booz Allen.

As its name indicates, a drip campaign is about the long game. They are a strategic resource for organizations that are planning ahead and thinking not just about candidates they need now, but the ones that they will need in the future. Drip content can help your organization set itself apart.





## Five Types of Drip Campaigns

### 1. Proactive Sourcing

Putting yourself out there and engaging the talent that you will need in the future

### 2. Employee Referrals:

Building a strong network

### 3. Keeping the Spark Alive:

Building a relationship with candidates in your CRM before inviting them to apply

### 4. Re-Engaging Candidates:

Keeping silver medalists and eligible past employees warm

### 5. Internal Mobility:

Staying ahead of the curve for employees with itchy feet

## Why Drip Campaigns and ATS?

It's a shame to lose sight of a candidate who has not only shown interest in your organization, but also taken the time to apply. While they may not be the right candidate for now, they could be a top contender in the future. Moreover, these candidates have often been pre-screened (even interviewed) and assessed as a good fit for your company. Instead of closing the door, engaging them with drip content is a great way to keep them warm until the moment is right and to ensure that they have a positive experience, in spite of being rejected.

## Why Drip Campaigns in CRM?

If you have invested in a candidate relationship management (CRM) system, it means you want to improve sourcing results and build stronger candidate relationships. It also means you need to show results and ROI. By tailoring content based on candidate behavior, drip campaigns are your secret weapon. Drip campaigns allow you to keep top talent warm using automation until a recruiter is ready to reach out.





## Four Reasons Why You Need to Put Your CRM to Work on Drip Campaigns

According to Lina Hölker, CRM Solutions Manager at Avature

### 1. The COVID-19 Crisis Has Changed the Game:

"Companies need to attract the right people and convince them to join their organization at a time when people are less inclined to take risks [due to Coronavirus and its impact]," says Hölker.

### 2. Doing More With Less.

"Nowadays, you need to do a lot more with less. You don't have time to give these important candidates a call every day. But you can set up some personalized automated communications."

### 3. Personalize the Candidate Experience.

"It's like Amazon analyzing everything you do to make very personalized recommendations. It's very similar with drip campaigns. The key is understanding what candidates click on and open to become more relevant."

### 4. Keeping Your Database Clean.

"You don't need a database full of uninterested candidates. With drip campaigns, you can focus on the most interested and qualified candidates."

## Avature Advantage

Clients are bringing drip campaigns in-house with Avature. Instead of having to integrate systems, it can all be created and customized internally within the platform making it easy to track and manage across teams and seamless to evolve. This improves the process, not just for candidates, but for all stakeholders involved.

As Alex Bender, Solutions Consultant Manager at Avature explains, "The restrictive best-of-breed approach seems to be dying off in HR. It's now 'give me one system' - one platform that can do everything together and provide the best candidate experience. When you have it all under one umbrella - like Avature - it lightens the manual load and consolidates candidate's data in one place so it can be more easily leveraged in communication."



## Before You Start

Various Avature clients and internal experts were interviewed for this playbook. Here is a summary of their top five tips to know before you start.

By getting your ducks in order, you can be sure that you are laying a solid foundation to a winning drip campaign.

### 1. It's Okay to Feel Overwhelmed at the Beginning:

"When you start from scratch, it is overwhelming. You need to accept that and dig in," says O'Brien at Booz Allen.

### 2. Set Clear Objectives and Commit to Them:

Define your purpose and your target audience by asking yourself these key questions:

- **Why do you want to do a drip campaign?**  
For example, to engage more women with the intention of hiring them for technical roles.

- **Who are you targeting?** For example, mechanical engineers with at least three years experience in the Houston area.
- **What is your end objective?** For example, to be seen as a good career move for creative designers.
- **What will you do with these results?**  
For example, build a stronger candidate persona profile or identify what content works best for future campaigns.

Once you have a clear picture of what you want to achieve with your drip campaign, "commit to your strategy and stick to it," recommends Avature's Bender. "Work with it to tell a story to your leadership. You're providing valuable marketing about the cool things your company is doing, getting people engaged, elevating brand awareness and getting better recruiting results as a by-product".





### 3. Map Out Your Drip Campaign in Detail:

From the starting blocks to the end vision, map it all out at the beginning to give your project a clear direction and targets. “Put it on paper, do the Visio<sup>2</sup> and then build it. That’s the way it should be done,” adds Bender.

### 4. Start Small and Evolve:

Starting small means that you can iron out any kinks and make a business case study to show your campaign’s power and effectiveness. It gives you flexibility to adapt and grow, and helps to remove any intimidation barriers.

“Pick something that feels small and natural,” advises Jeremy Bloom, Talent Acquisition Operations Manager at Cisco.

“We started with silver medalists - candidates who had reached the offer stage of our workflow, but who did not receive an offer because a more qualified candidate accepted first. Our goal was to use drip campaigns to engage with a group of candidates that we knew were highly qualified and were our top target for the next available opportunity at Cisco.

It was something that seemed easy and we expanded from there to engage with qualified candidates who had progressed far in our workflow, but didn’t quite make it to the offer stage. We further expanded our campaigns to include Alumni (past employees), Stay-in-Touch candidates, and are now targeting Early in Career finalists as our next segment.”

### 5. Find the Manpower:

Make sure you have a (small) team to design and execute the strategy long term. Avature Consulting Manager, Pierre Raseev, recommends assigning a project ‘sponsor’, while Lockheed Martin’s Smith suggests creating an intra-team project by getting your organization’s marketing and tech experts involved. It’s also what your platform reps are there for, so use them as a support.

## Avature Advantage

The tools are there for you to create the drip campaigns of your dreams.

Avature flexibility means that you can easily scale up and grow as your drip campaign gains momentum and starts to show the fruits of your labor. The data and analytics functions give you all the information you need to make the business case and show return on investment (ROI).

Avature is your partner. Your reps are there to accompany you on your journey. Pitch your ambition to them and they will help you - based on their experience with other clients and insights - make your vision happen.



# Strategy And Ideation

## 1. Where to Start

### An Introduction

Getting your strategy right is the most important part of the drip campaign. It ensures that your content won't fall on deaf ears and will produce the desired response and engagement results that you're looking for. "It's not just a string of emails," says Paula Grunfeld, Strategic Account Manager at Avature.

So what exactly do you need to iron out before implementing a drip campaign?

### Define the Purpose and Identify Your Target

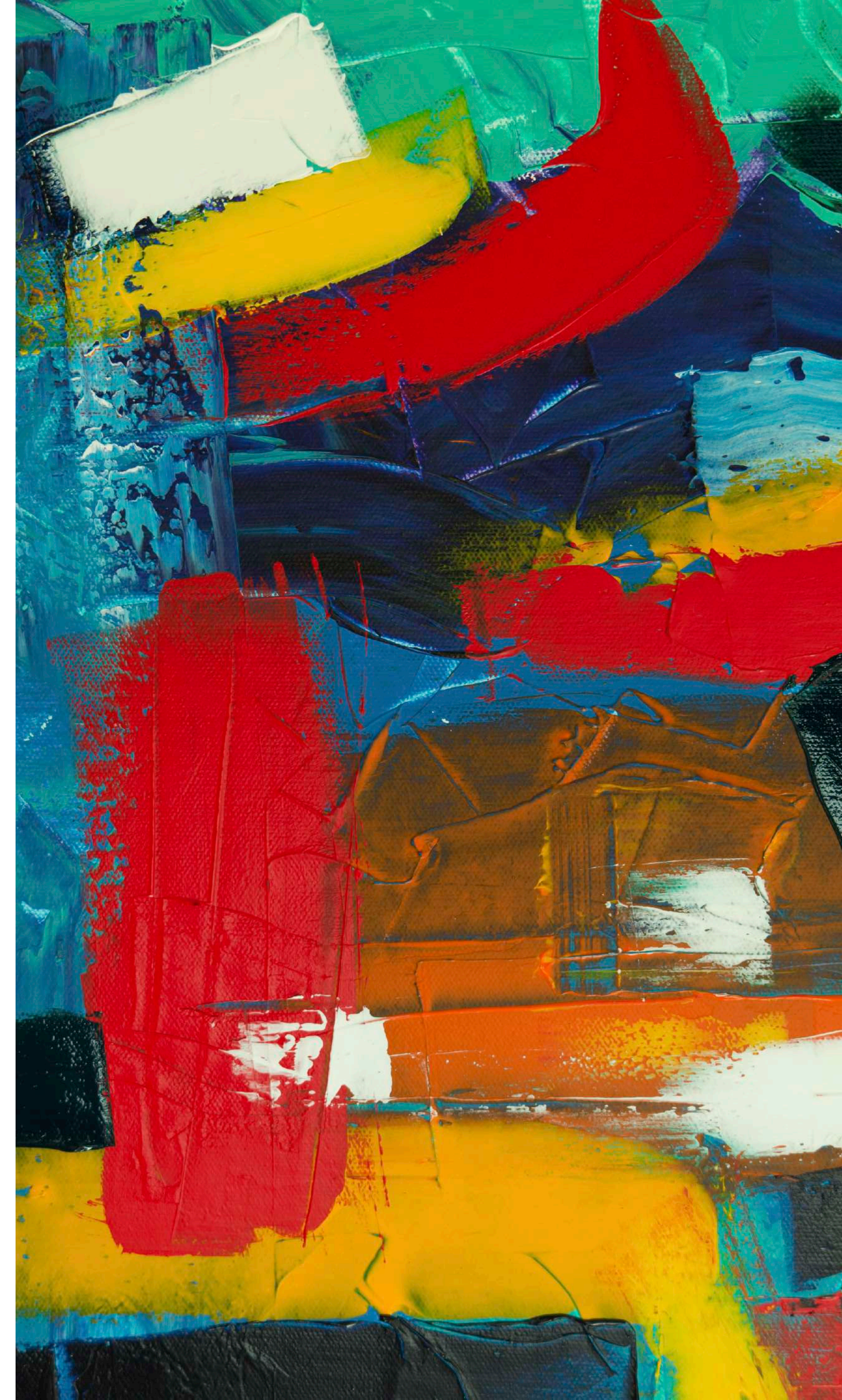
It's common knowledge in marketing circles that if you try to target everyone, you will end up speaking to no one. The starting point of any drip campaign is defining its purpose and target audience. Starter questions to think about are:

- **What Do You Want to Achieve With This Drip Campaign in Terms of Candidates?**

Are you looking to increase the number of candidates in your database, attract a specific type of talent, re-engage past applicants or employees, engage candidates that you will need in the future - whether that's six months or even 10 years down the line? This question will guide your approach.

- **What Do You Want to Achieve Vis-à-Vis Your Employer Brand Image and Presence?**

Do you want to showcase employee stories and talk about career opportunities, strengthen your employer brand positioning, provide a deeper understanding of your business and employer values, or is it about improving the overall candidate experience with more dynamic content?





- **What Will This Drip Campaign Do for Your Talent Acquisition Team?**

Do you want to save your recruiters and sourcers time and effort, automate marketing so that they can focus on their core functions, ensure that recruiters can have instant access to pre-qualified top talent when they need them? What will be their benefit from a solid drip campaign?

- **What Is the End Result You're Aiming For?**

Knowing this will help you identify what to measure and makes staying focused easier, by giving you perspective as the campaign progresses and evolves to make sure it doesn't lose steam or veer off course.

## **Flesh Out Your Target Persona**

Once you have identified a concrete objective, you need to bring your target audience to life as much as possible to build a strong candidate persona. Not only will this ensure that the candidates you attract through your drip campaign are actually the ones that you need, but it's also a great source of inspiration for the drip campaign content itself.



## **Key Questions to Ask Yourself When Defining Your Target Audience**

- Who are you targeting and why?
- What's your business objective e.g. are you trying to promote diversity, increase brand awareness, attract specific types of candidates for future needs?
- What attitudinal traits best fit your corporate culture, values and mission?
- What type of employee fits your candidate profile? While this can help you identify your target persona, be conscious of and work against hiring bias!
- What are their key demographics?
- Where are the candidates in their career journey?
- Are they passive or active job seekers?





## Doing Desk Research

The desk research phase is an opportunity to figure out audience drivers, tensions and ambitions, and to understand the role of work in their life. For example, is it part of their identity? Is it a means to an end? Do they want colleagues to be like family? Is it important for them to get to the top? Desk research can allow you to understand how your organization's culture and employer brand fit or the role it could play in their life, as well as getting ideas on how to create employer desirability and ideas for your storyboard.

To get these answers, there are a few sources that can help you have a clear idea and to help you build a strong candidate persona:

- Talk to current employees who fit the profile and your employees who best embrace your company culture to see what resonates with them.
- Scour the internet for audience-specific studies, surveys and blogs.

- Find human behaviour studies that you can learn from. For example, did you know that people are more likely to make a big life change when they are at an age ending with nine and that people are influenced by fonts? <sup>4/5</sup>

“

I start with researching the psychographic profiles of the target talent audience. It sounds more daunting than it is. I am interested in what makes a target audience tick in terms of values, desires, goals, interests and career choices. This information is leveraged to create outreach messages.”

**MARVIN SMITH,**  
Talent Engagement Strategist, Lockheed Martin



## Not Getting Labelled as Spam

While it's normal that it may take a few attempts before your audience reads your email, it's important to avoid getting labelled spam. The key here is to understand your target audience. Spam negatively impacts deliverability rates, and you want to make sure your emails reach their recipients.

Here is a summary of additional questions to ask yourself before you get the ball rolling. They may seem obvious, but don't take them for granted. Knowing this information will set your campaign apart, boosting open, click-through and response rates.

### Key Questions to Ask Yourself To Avoid Getting Labelled as Spam

These may seem obvious, but they are the starting point.

- When will candidates receive your drip content?
- Where will they be when they receive your drip content?
- What will make them open your email and not label it as spam?





## 2. Finding the People You Want to Nurture

### Searching Your Database

Whether they've recently signed up to your talent community or are silver medalists gathering dust in your system, drip campaigns are designed to engage candidates that have already shared at least their basic information with you.

Once you've identified the key demographics you're targeting, search your database to start segmenting your candidates into purposeful talent pipelines. Take a moment to consider how you want to organize candidates. Lockheed Martin did it by job role, Cisco does it by how often a candidate says they want to be contacted. They then subdivide their talent pipeline by skill set and potential function areas. Booz Allen has also divided and subdivided candidates: "The first segmentation is by function, skill and speciality. The second is called 'Segment and Nurture', which is done by location, market and what we have to offer," explains Booz Allen's O'Brien.

How you organize your talent pipeline ultimately depends on your broader business objective, not just your drip campaign purpose. Make sure that the pipelines you are creating are, not only organizing your database, but adding long-term business value.

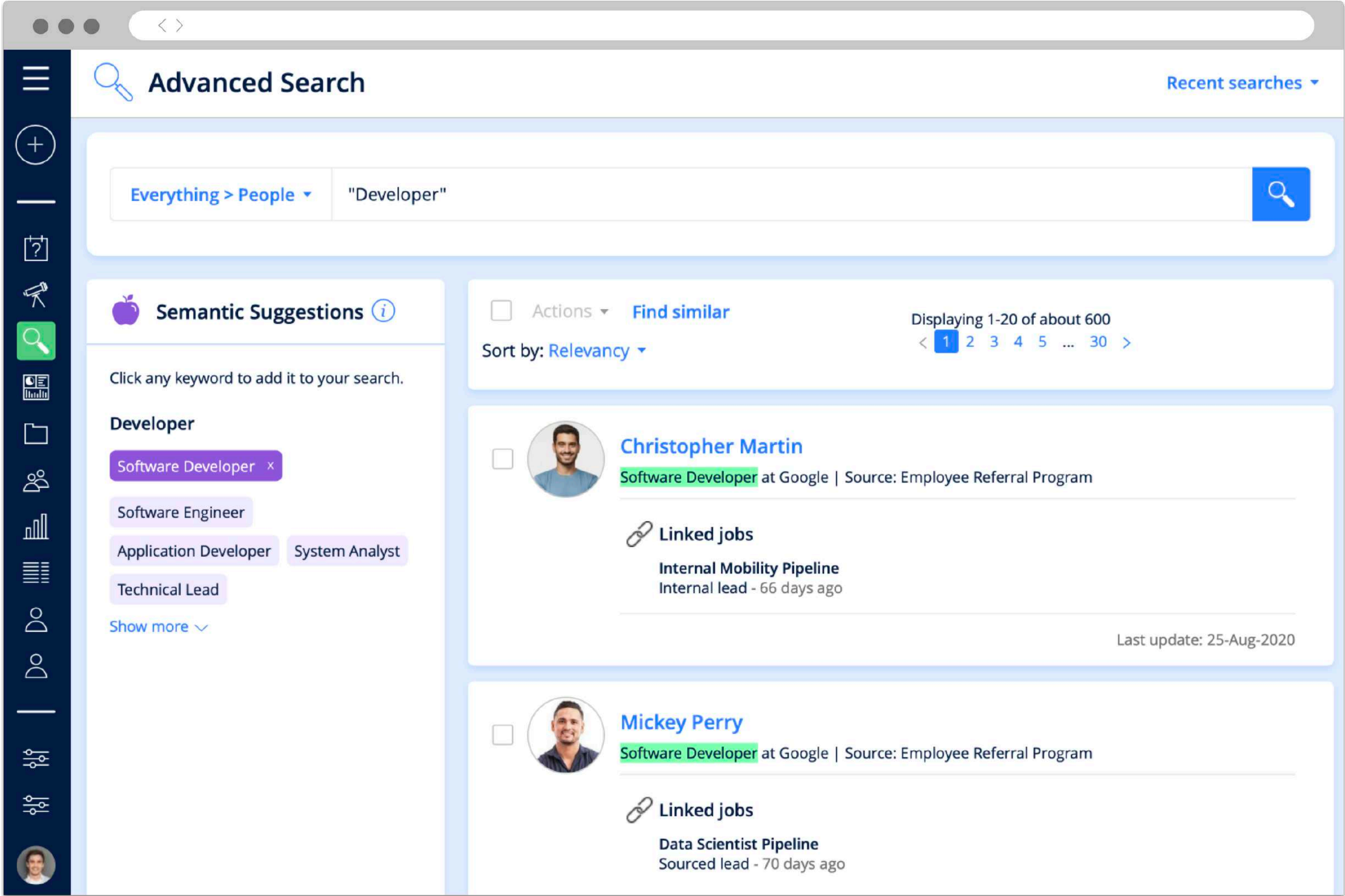


The first segmentation is by function, skill and speciality. The second is called 'Segment and Nurture', which is done by location, market and what we have to offer."

**JENNIFER O'BRIEN,**  
Leader of Candidate Attraction and Technology, Booz Allen







## Avature Advantage

Once you've identified your target candidate, use the Find Similar function to automatically access other candidates in your database that fit the profile. These can all be organized into a single pipeline with just a few clicks.

You can also use Avature's flexible filters to search candidates' profiles for criteria such as their past experience with your organization or years of experience in a specific field, to quickly create your initial pipeline. You can also leverage Avature WebSources to run automatic external searches.

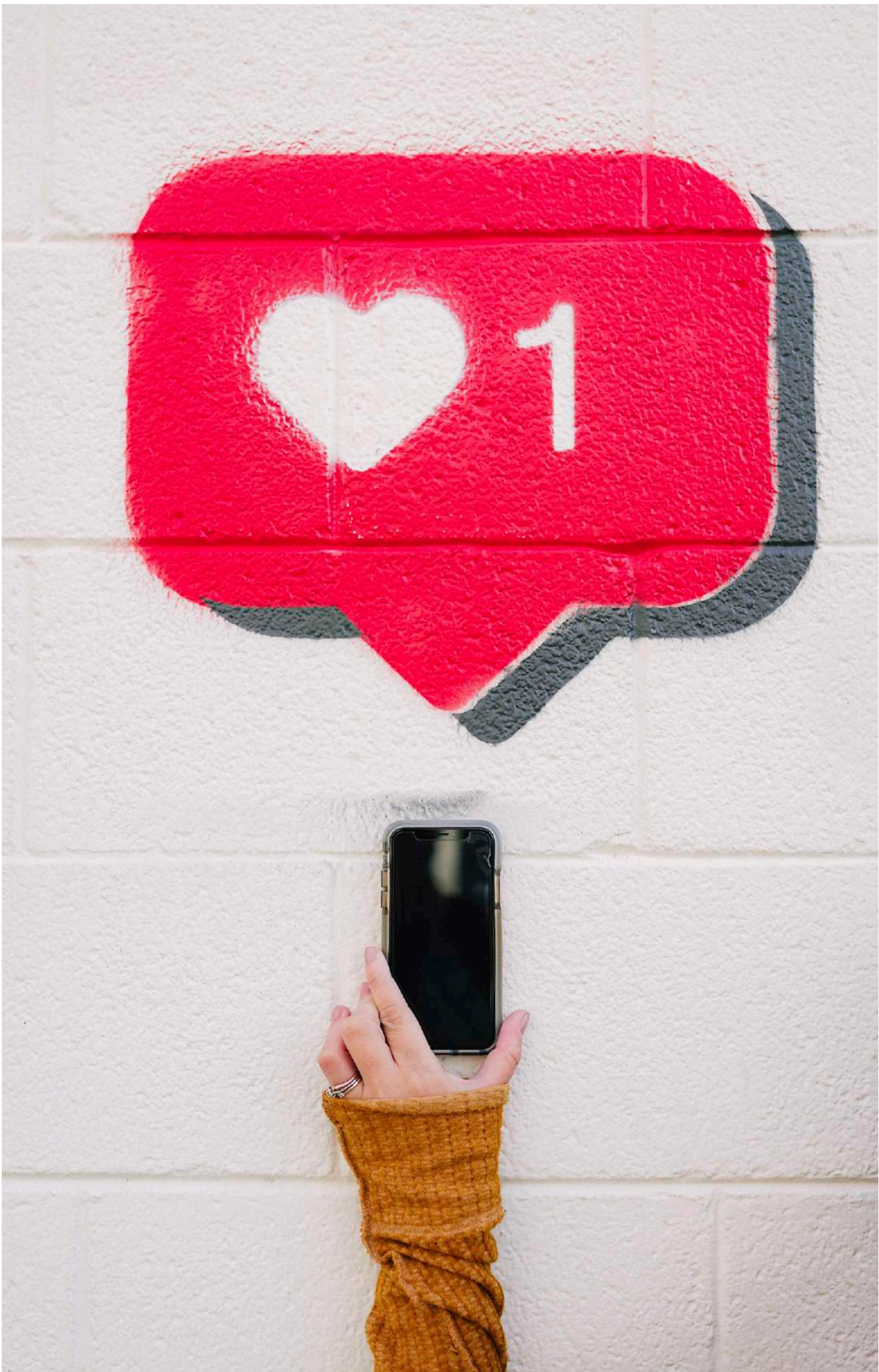
Easily keep track of your talent pipeline status with Avature dashboards to make sure you are inline with your objectives. These can show your key metrics, such as how many candidates entered your pipeline in a fixed amount of time and where these candidates are in the drip campaign and broader relationship management process.



Be Seen on Social Media

We spend on average over two hours on social media every day.<sup>6</sup> As the line between consumer and employer brand blurs, nearly half of all professionals - active and passive - follow brands, staying aware of their latest news and also job vacancies.<sup>7</sup> As these stats show, social media is a fertile ground for candidates and the perfect place to nudge them to share their basic information with you, so that you can start to engage them. At this stage, whether you're trying to drive volume or hone in on a specific target, your aim is singular: get candidates to sign-up and accept to hear from you. So keep it simple.

Don't initially dismiss any social media network (YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to share links to your talent community or career site. Find out what is the right channel for your specific audience.



Avature Advantage

Keep tabs of where talent is coming from with trackable URLs. This can help you identify your strongest sources of talent by quantity and quality. Perhaps your best talent comes directly from your career site, but most candidates sign up via Instagram or LinkedIn. By knowing this information, you can concentrate your efforts more effectively on your strongest channels. It can also help you make more strategic decisions in the future to maximize results.





## Key Insights For Getting the Green Light From Candidates

### 1. Engage with them on their preferred channel

Whether that be email, text, career site or on social media: “The feedback from our prospect population is that they don’t want to get unsolicited emails from us. So we drive traffic to our career page using social media rather than emails. Once they register, then we can use their information and engage them properly,” says Cisco’s Bloom.

### 2. If you’re nurturing a relationship, you have time to ask them questions.

Keep the initial contact point simple. “First name, last name, email address and phone number. Maybe an area of interest. Put them in a workflow and start there,” advises Avature Consulting expert, Bender.

### 3. Be clear about what candidates will gain by joining your talent community.

“You need to show value, whether it’s a newsletter with industry news or open positions at your organization,” says Avature CRM Solutions Manager, Hölker.





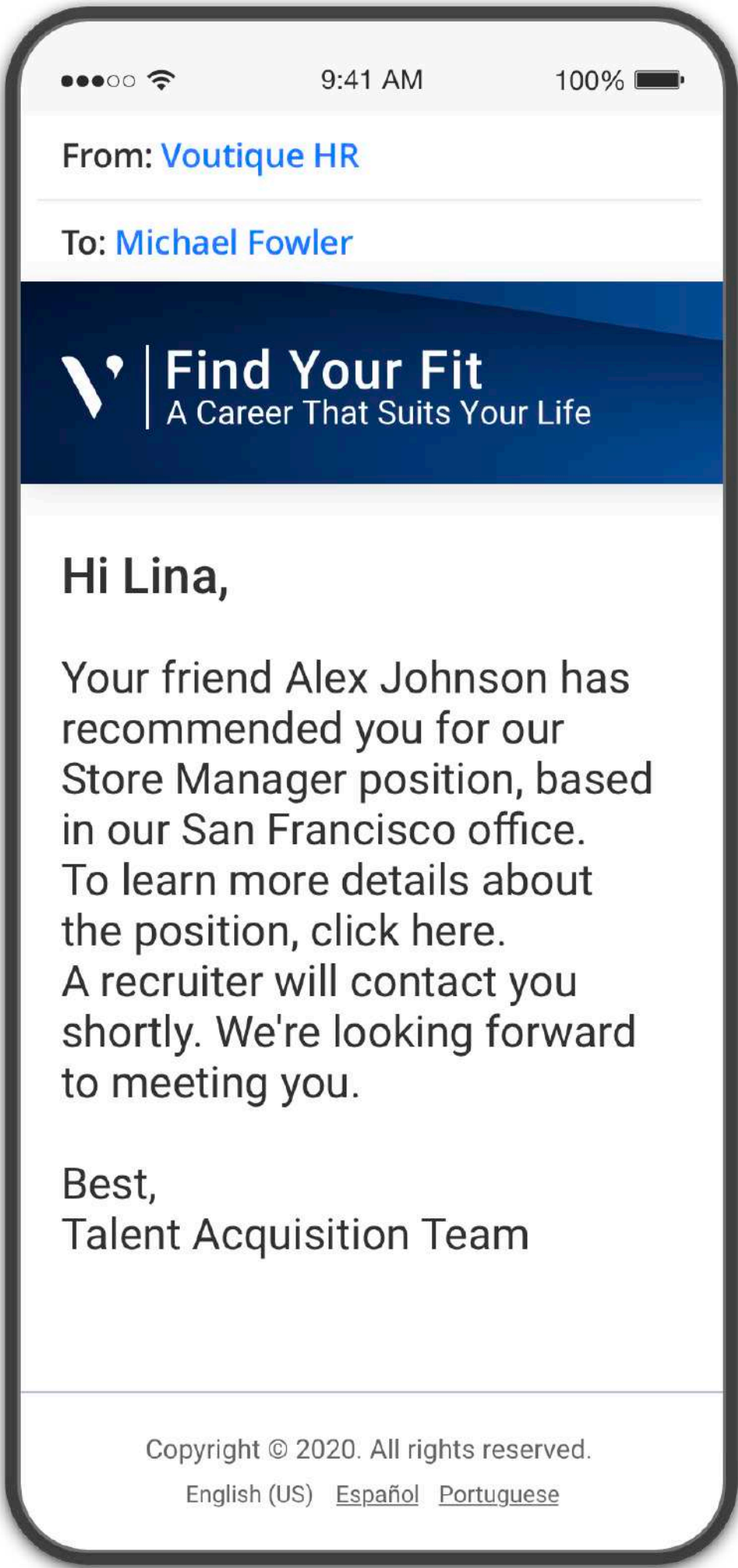
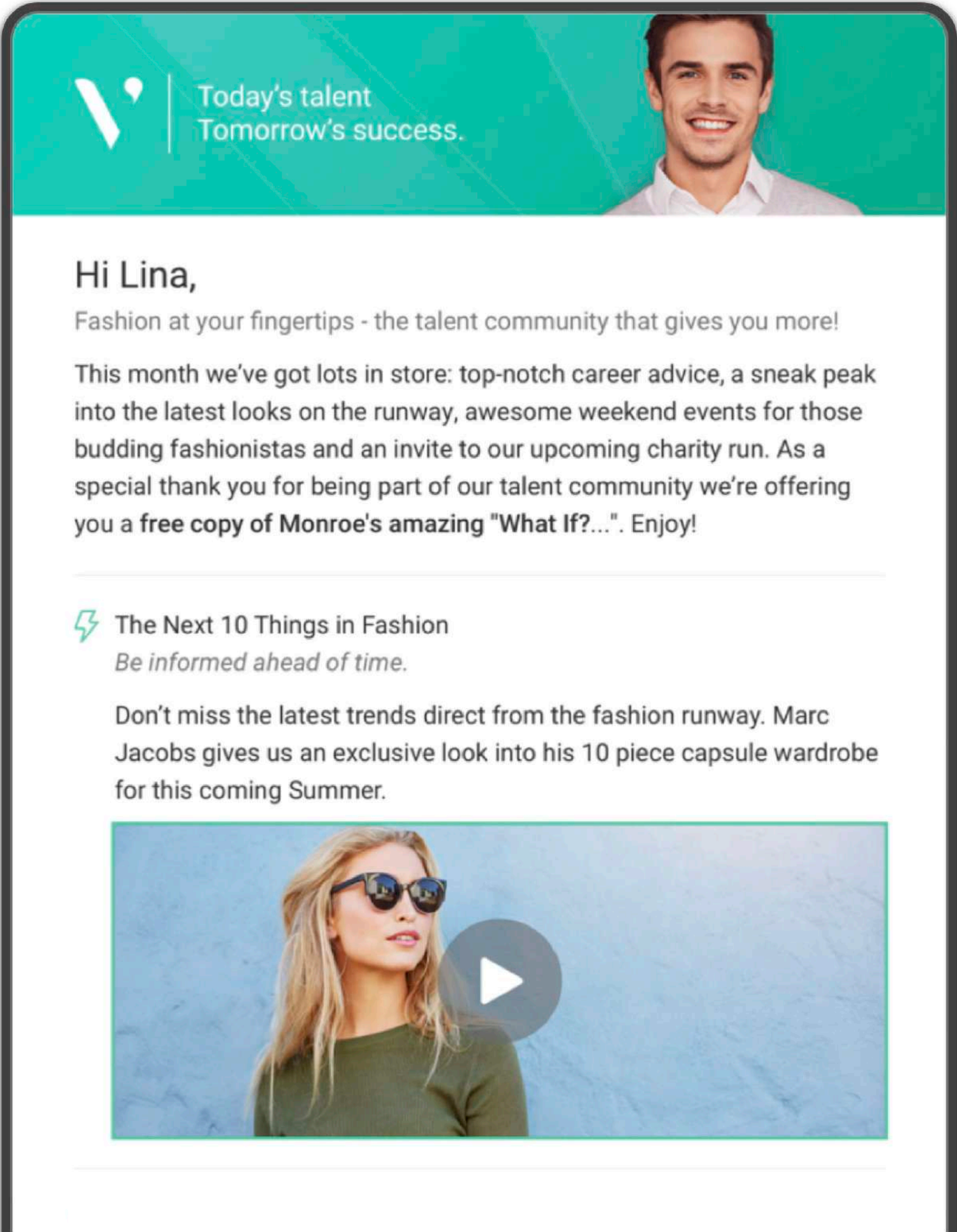
Asking Your Employees for Referrals

Employee referrals are considered to be the number one source of quality candidates.<sup>8</sup> Asking your employees that fit your target persona to refer candidates is a great way to give you access to passive and potentially hard-to-reach top talent. They're likely to recommend candidates with strong and similar work ethics and values, since their credibility is 'on-the-line'. The cherry on top is that by hiring people who already get along, a company can more easily create a positive and productive work environment. So it's a win-win all around!

Keeping Track of Top Talent

Too often companies lose top talent along the way. These candidates are high-performers, silver-medalists and even ex-employees, who unfortunately were not the right match at the right time and then got lost in the database abyss. However, it's a lost opportunity as they are pre-qualified and could be strong contenders for the future.

Drip campaigns are ideal for keeping talent warm and engaged, to show them that you have not forgotten about them, until the moment is right.





### 3. Creating the Content

#### Tell a Story

Drip campaigns are an opportunity to make sure that your brand is present in their inbox (and mind) when a candidate feels ready to look for new opportunities, but also to create a dynamic and multi-layered story. Whether you want to tell them about the professional and personal development opportunities your organization offers and potential career journeys, give voice to employee stories, get candidates to gradually share information with you over time or simply show them that you haven't forgotten about them and want to keep them close, the opportunities are endless. Knowing the story you want to tell will give your drip campaign fuel and direction.

“

We are taking advantage of email variants to send different variations of content to different people. We have our standard content, where the messaging is quite consistent. In addition to our frequency segmentation...we subdivide our population by skills that are aligned to Cisco's Critical Talent and function areas they might be fit for. We will share the blogs that are relevant to that segmentation and their skill set.”

**JEREMY BLOOM**

Talent Acquisition Operations Manager, Cisco

### Avature Advantage

Whether your campaigns have different lengths or different iterations depending on candidates' profiles, preferences and their areas of interest, you can shape your campaign to fit your objective. Maximize the relevance of your campaigns by creating global and regional content.

Avature workflows and scheduled actions mean that you can add as many layers to your story as you want.







## Making It About the Candidate

“We found that high-volume talent sourcing was required due to talent shortages in the desired segments that are critical to our success. If you couple that with the level of distraction and the difficulty to gain these candidates’ attention, it’s easy to understand the need for drip recruiting,” explains Marvin Smith, Talent Engagement Strategist at Lockheed Martin, which has won a CandE award every year over the past seven years.

“Drip marketing assumes that timing is everything. When the prospect needs the product or service, the message will cut through the digital noise and be well-received.”

## Their Objective

“Our target talent pipelines have between 2,000 to 3,000 candidates. We have a goal to engage each prospect with relevant and valuable content on a monthly basis.”

## Their Drip Campaign

“I gather the information I acquired doing research on the candidates to create outreach messages that will resonate with the target audience. If you provide value and are relevant, then you are more likely to gain their attention.

Then I use the drip campaign to tell a story in three or four parts. Our idea is that profession-focused content should resonate with our target audience as most professionals need to upskill or reskill to stay relevant in their profession. If you use your own technical teams to present the profession-focused content, it can have the added benefit of showcasing the expertise of your organization.

Once the content has been sent, we evaluate the responses (or lack thereof). Interested and active job prospects that respond will begin the candidate screening interview process. For those who are not ready to apply, they can be moved to the next step, which is nurturing a longer-term relationship with the target talent over time.”

## Before Avature

“Our platform wouldn’t allow us to do drip campaigns, but I knew that they worked.”

## With Avature

“Avature’s assistance has come in the form of having a flexible platform that allows for drip recruiting campaigns to be established and easily tweaked over time. And of course, the coaching and advice that the Avature team provides is very useful.”



## The Results

"The end result is amazing. The difference is just staggering in the engagement and the amount of people that are responding.

We're getting three times the conversion rate because we are sending multiple emails. And we only had two people unsubscribe! People aren't considering it spam."

### Campaign #1 Targeting Engineers

Reached **92%** of **initial audience**

Of those **72% opened**

**6.5%** converted to becoming **active candidates** (industry average is **2.2%**<sup>9</sup>)

### Campaign #2

Reached **98%** of **people**

Of those **85% opened**

**31% conversion rate**

## Top Tips to Proactively Source Talent with Drip Campaigns

### 1. Collaboration is Key to Success:

"Find your partners and stakeholders. Blend technology, marketing and data with recruiting. This will make a drip campaign successful."

### 2. Do Some Research on the Candidate

"There are reflective moments in life when candidates are more likely to move. Their work anniversary, their birthday, changes in their company, etc. A lot of this information can be found on their resume or LinkedIn. Pay close attention to the items in a data profile that allow you to personalize outreach. By doing this research, you can communicate with them in a way that is relatable. You are part of the [tribe]. Think Red Bull and X-Games."

### 3. It's About Them, Not About You:

"To win over the target talent, you will need to 'talk about their favourite subjects: themselves', as Seth Godin put it."

### 4. Practice Data Hygiene:

"Have clean data that can be enriched and augmented as more data is collected on your key target talent segments."

### 5. Slow Down to Go Fast:

"Start with a pilot. Learn and make corrections. Conduct another pilot. When it's proven, take it wider."

### 6. Keep Focused on the Big Picture:

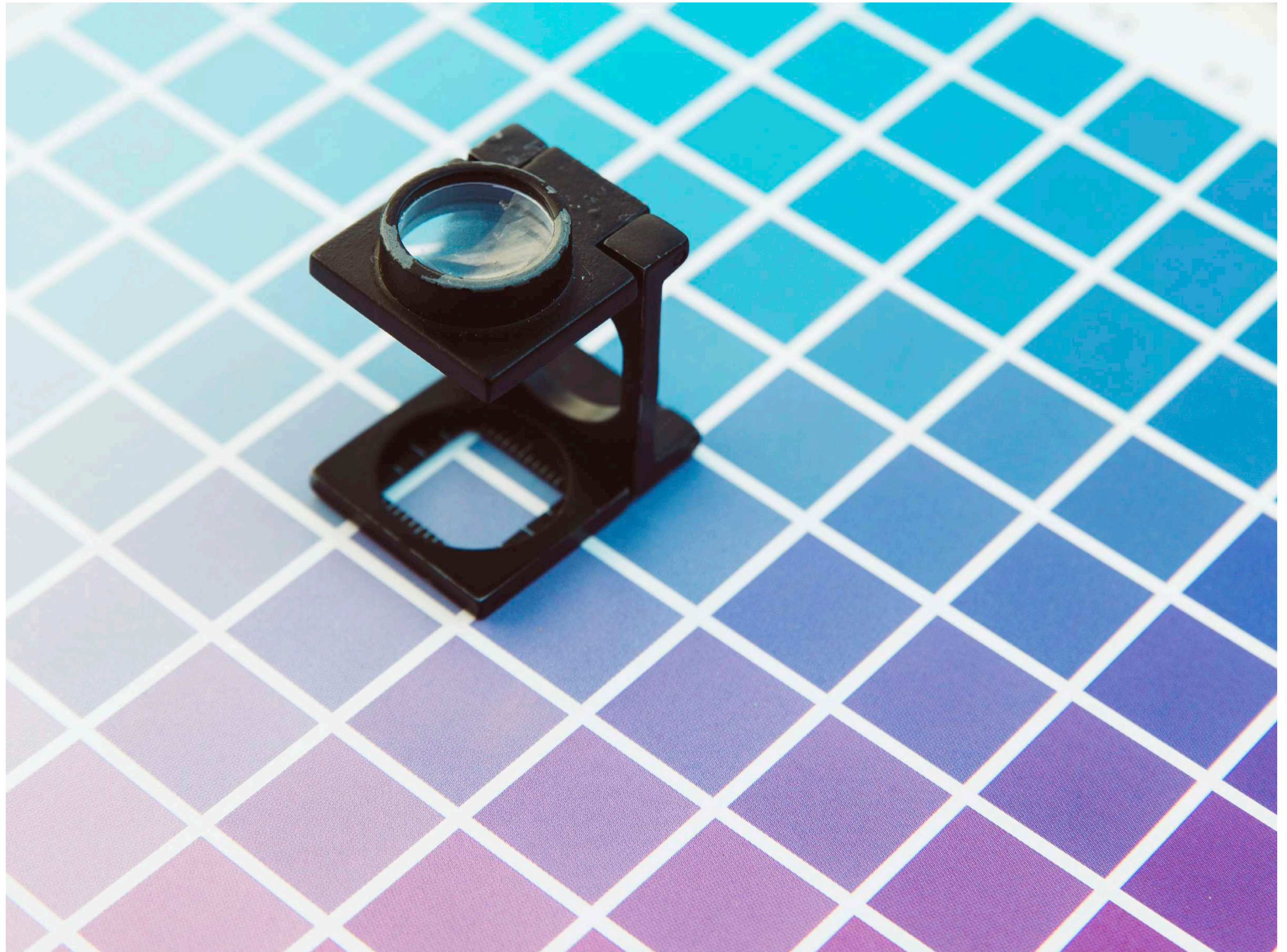
"Don't worry about the aberrations, focus on the 90% of the project that is working well. It helps to plant the seed with stakeholders and executive sponsors."



## Think About Potential Variations

While potential variations may seem infinite, getting clarity on possible candidate behavior will help to make sure that your drip campaign produces the desired results. Plan for as many eventualities as possible. Whether it's what happens if a candidate engages with your story after two emails or five, if they label you spam, next steps if they're ready to look for job opportunities two emails in, or that they want to explore your coding opportunities instead of engineering - you should do some contingent planning. Be flexible and think about all potential outcomes to really get personal and have impact with candidates.

Lockheed Martin's Smith compares it to playing chess. "Plan out your talent engagement like you are a chess master. Your opening gambit or message will create several responses: affirmative, negative, no-response or unsubscribing. Anticipate a counter-move for each one. Do the same for each message in your drip campaign," he recommends.





Thinking about possible outcomes may make your drip campaign seem quite beastly. The key, according to Cisco's Bloom, is to tailor existing content rather than reinventing the wheel each time. "We are not creating new emails, but we tweak the information to make it relevant and so that they don't get the same email twice."

"Learn from open rates and A/B testing. It's important to be aware of results," recommends Avature Strategic Account Manager, Grunfeld. A/B testing means that you can identify what content works best for specific audiences. Knowing this information can help you maximize reach and impact further down the line in your drip campaign and can help guide content creation.



## Avature Advantage

With Avature, you have 'carte blanche' to define variables as you please. "You could even mention a candidate's dog name in your outreach if you're so inclined and store that information in your custom data model," argues Avature CRM Solutions Manager, Hölker.

Be a strategic marketer with Avature and leverage the straightforward A/B testing function to identify and hone in on the content that works best with your target audience.

Avature branded templates mean that you can make it easy for your teams to create new content and various iterations while staying on brand. All templates are saved and kept in your Email Templates Library so you can recycle your most successful content and adapt them to specific pipelines.



## Updating Your Content

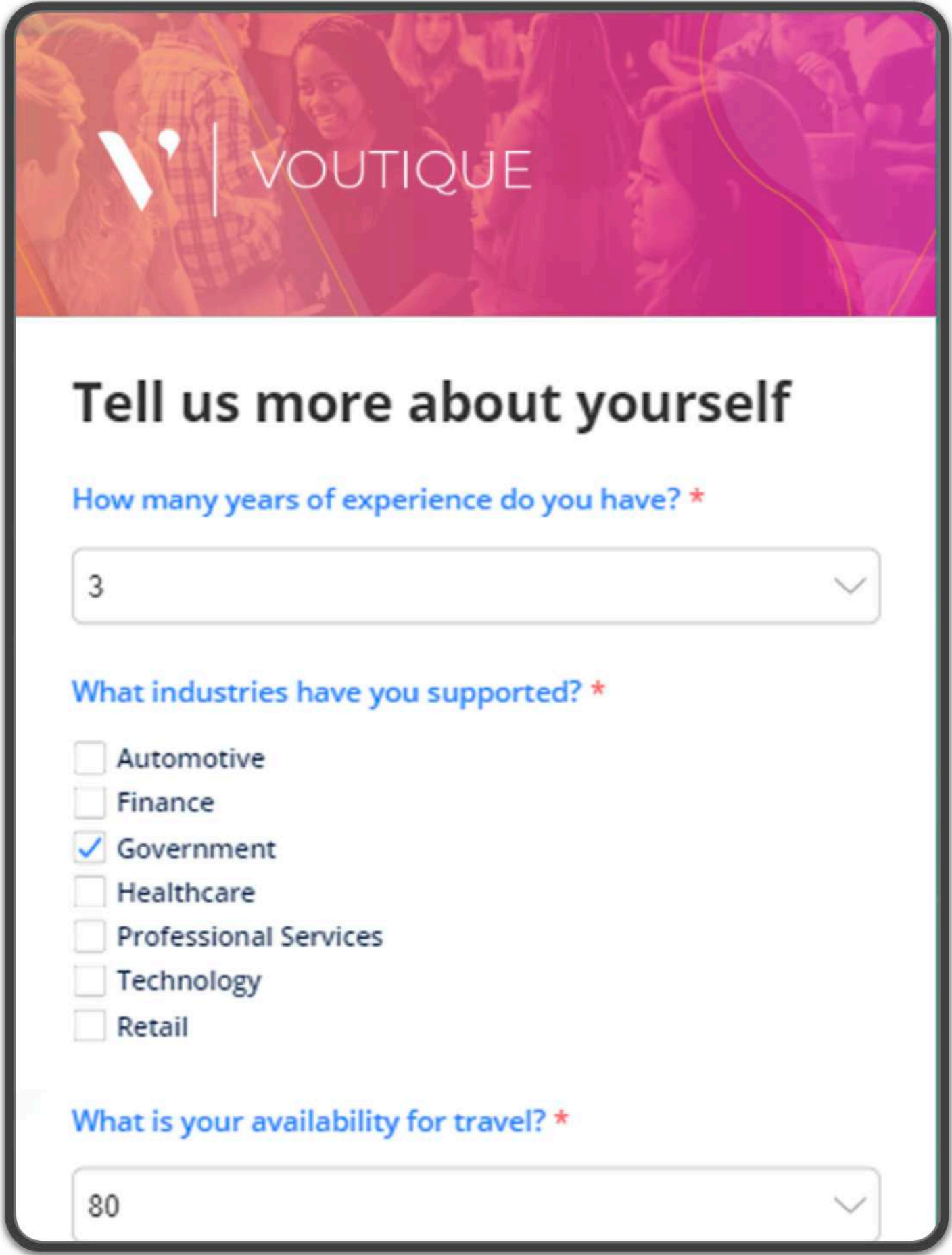
Once your drip campaign has a solid foundation, you will probably want to update content every once in a while. This helps to make sure that candidates don't get sent outdated content, you don't fall off their radar after a while and you can keep them updated on current developments, such as the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on your industry or business.

If possible, create intra-teams between the talent acquisition and marketing departments and assign each team a specific pipeline to oversee to create ownership and boost collaboration. This will help to ensure that no variation route goes awry or gets lost along the way.

“

Drip campaigns, with email variants and variables, can provide a great degree of personalization, giving you a high level of granularity that our competitors can't manage.”

LINA HÖLKER  
CRM Solutions Manager, Avature



VOUTIQUE

### Tell us more about yourself

How many years of experience do you have? \*

3

What industries have you supported? \*

- ☐ Automotive
- ☐ Finance
- ☒ Government
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Professional Services
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Retail

What is your availability for travel? \*

80

## Avature Advantage

Use the automation feature to schedule reminders that notify your intra-teams when it's time to create new content.

In addition to sharing marketing content, you can add links to forms to learn more about candidates with each drip content. These forms are then automatically attached to a candidate profile once they've filled out their information.

“Rather than relying on telephone conversations to update candidate status, Avature allows for an organized, well-planned and consistent outreach to the respective talent segments. In other words, we are just executing the essence of a CRM,” says Lockheed Martin's Smith.





## Re-Engaging Silver Medalists and Past Employees

"We make it easy for candidates. It's straightforward and we are not asking too much from them."

### Their Objective

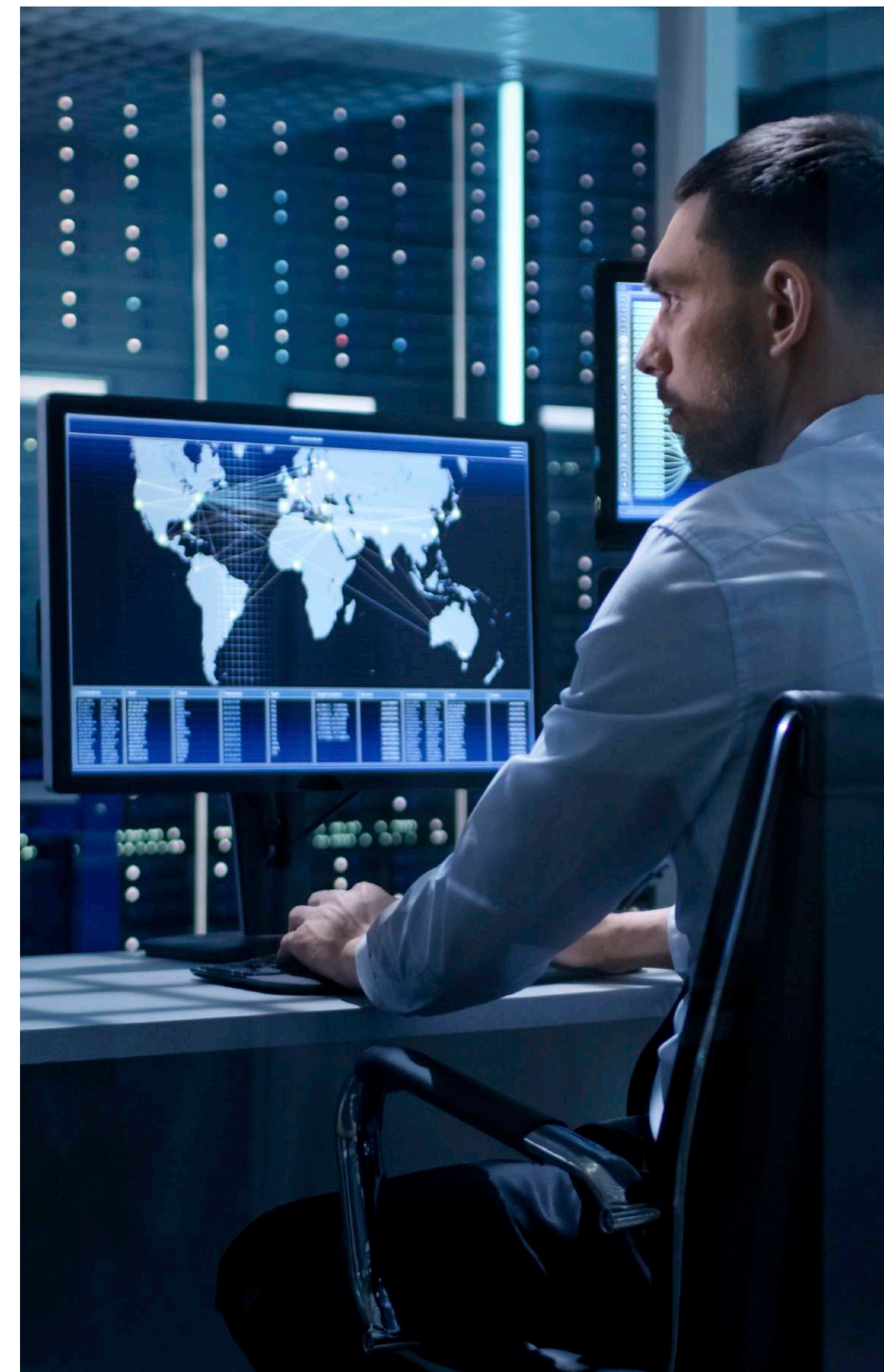
"We wanted a dynamic follow-up system based on email campaigns with actions and call-to-actions. We could have done it manually, but we would have missed the end-to-end cycle that we were going for."

Since most people in our talent network are silver medalists or eligible past employees, we view them as pre-qualified candidates. We engage them, so recruiters don't have to restart from scratch. It helps them have an even better candidate experience."

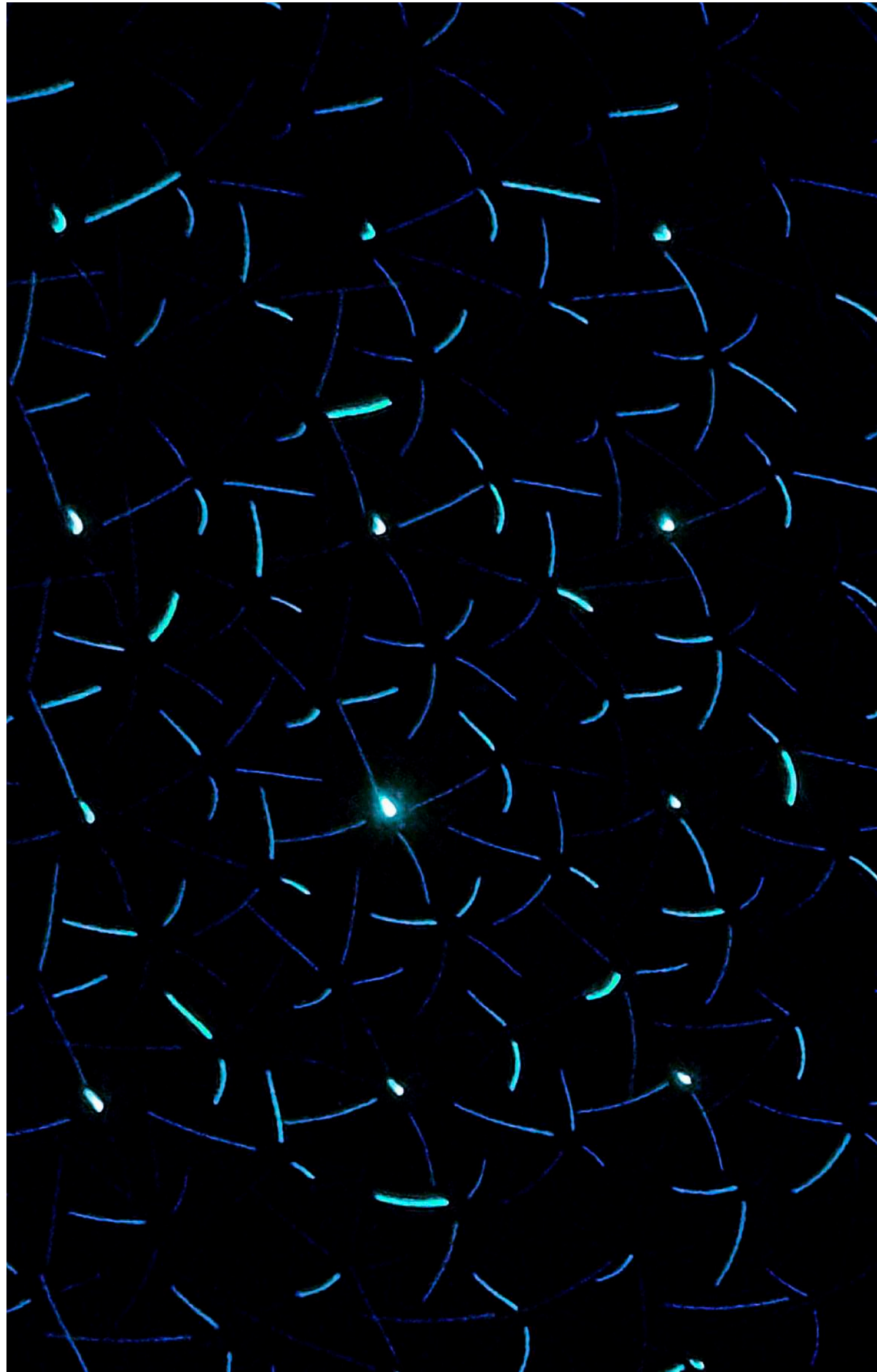
### Their Drip Campaign

"One of our custom fields in our Avature instance is called 'candidate type', which tells us if they are an active employee, former employee, applicant or other category of candidate. For eligible employees that will soon leave the organization, we try to catch them a week before they leave [Cisco] to ask them if they want to join our talent community. Once, they're linked to this project, with a workflow, there is a welcome email and a portal access request. We ask them to provide their personal email address and to opt-in to our network. They can choose how often they want to be contacted - often, every now and again, etc. They will then be moved to the relevant category that they chose themselves. We schedule email campaigns depending on how they self-identify."

All the emails that get sent are portal access requests, because we want them to update their information and change their preferences in the alumni (former employee) portal."







We are taking advantage of email variants to send different versions of the content. We have our standard content. In addition, we have some custom fields within our person record data model to subdivide our population by skills that are aligned with Cisco's Critical Talent, as well as some of the other function areas they might be a fit for. Every campaign has links to Cisco blogs that are relevant to that segmentation and skill set. We also try to vary these by geographical location.

We track which campaign candidates came from by tracking URLs and checking which ones work better."

### With Avature

"We've learned how to engage better people who are already in our talent pool. We took advantage of the tools that are available, thanks to Avature."

### The Results

"Since we started a year ago, we've found that the open rate, click-through rate and call-to-action success is much higher than we expected. With silver medalists, we have a 65 to 75% click-through rate and 70 to 80% of people opting in or choosing to remain active with the external talent network.

For alumnis, it's lower - about 30% want to stay in our talent network. We think that's because silver medalists actively want to be part of Cisco, while alumnis aren't necessarily looking for an opportunity here."



## Top Tips on Re-Engaging Silver Medalists and Past Employees

### 1. Make It Worth Your While:

"We are lucky at Cisco because we have a team dedicated to content. A single person might find it challenging to keep the content fresh and dynamic. My recommendation would be asking myself 1) Is it important to do this? Then find the time to do it. 2) Take advantage of the content you have already in existence. Make it look fresh and new. Make small changes."

### 2. Use the Avature Resources at Your Disposal:

"Take advantage of the Avature team resources, because everything we have done we did with a lot of engagement from our account manager, reading through the available resources, attending the Avature conferences where clients share their success stories. If you don't know how to leverage Avature, ask for help."

"See what's out there."communicate with them in a way that is relatable. You are part of the [tribe]. Think Red Bull and X-Games."

### 3. Start With Something That Seems Easy and Expand From There:

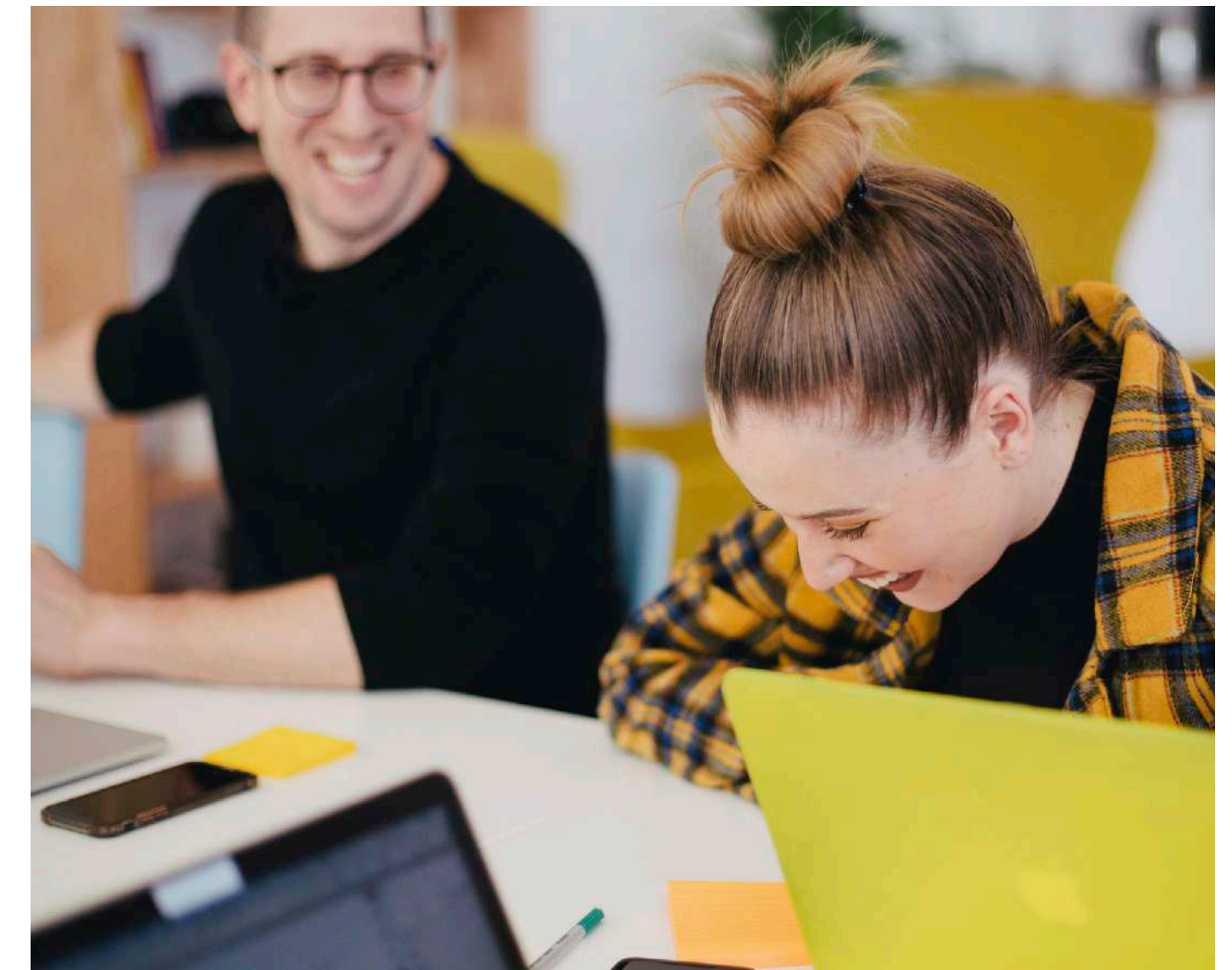
"Pick something that feels small and natural. Don't try to create a drip campaign for every single person in your database. We started with small groups and specific goals to keep them active and engaged. We started with something that seemed easy and expanded from there."

### 4. Automate with Avature:

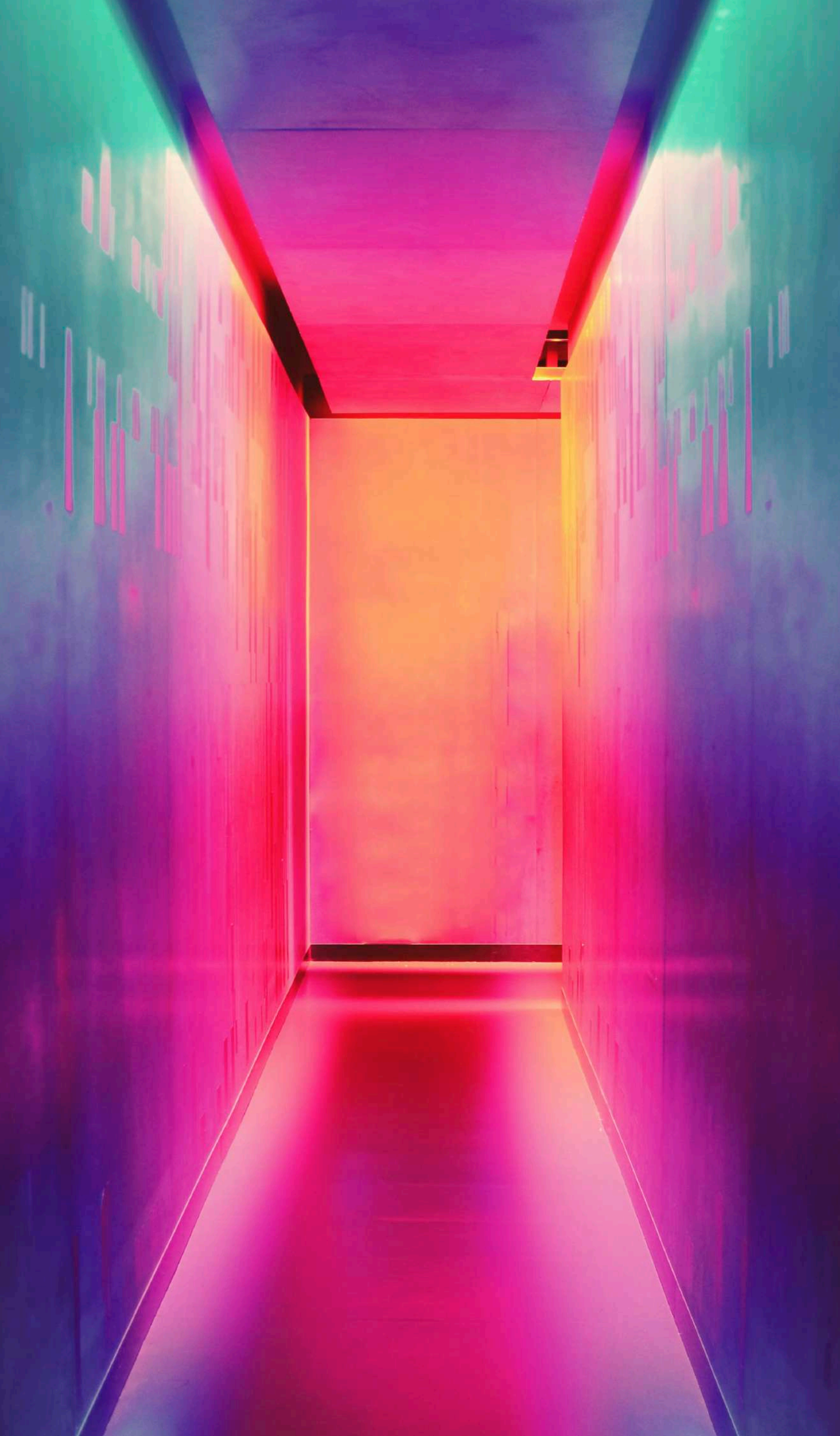
"Figure out how much Avature can automate for you. Our program kind of runs itself without manual interaction. We just keep the content updated."

### 5. Don't Be Intimidated:

"The term drip campaigns sounds intimidating. Don't get intimidated by the idea of something that seems hard to do, maintain or build. See what your goals are and what you want to do, ask the Avature team for help. They can help you automate it and achieve whatever you want to do."









### Thinking About the End Point of Your Drip Campaign

Mapping out your drip campaign involves more than the drip campaign itself. You should think about not just the source, but also the follow-up. Otherwise, if your talent acquisition team doesn't capitalize on its output, all that effort will go to waste.

Once they reach the end of your drip campaign, what happens? Will they be contacted by a recruiter or placed in your primed talent pipeline until an opportunity arises? What will you do with the information acquired? What is your end goal and are all the steps there to create a seamless experience for the candidate?



Today's talent  
Tomorrow's success.




Hi Noah,  
Thanks for being part of our **Developer Talent Network!**

We believe you are an interesting candidate for our **Software Developers Team** and we'd like to get to know you better.

Could you please book a time of your preference for a quick call [here](#)?

In the meantime, here's a video where Mark is talking about his experience and what it means to be part of the developer team.  
**Check it out!**





## 4. Implementation

### Introduction to Building Workflows

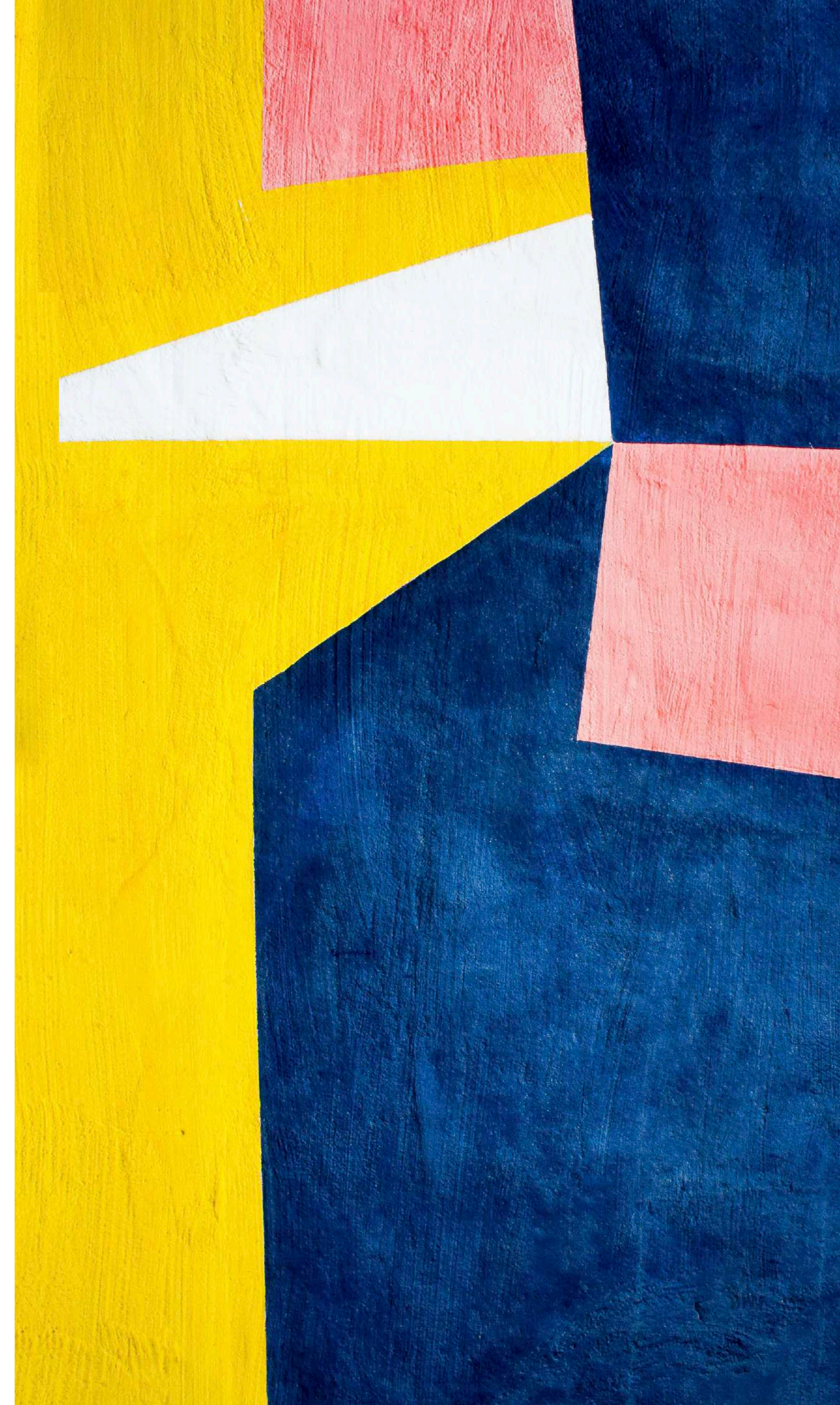
Once your content is created, it's time to implement your drip campaign. This requires workflows. Admins define the steps, target, frequency and potential variations. Once set up, workflows work their magic automatically in the background. Automated workflows help to create consistency in content and engagement, as well as giving back your recruiters and sourcers time to focus on more high-value tasks. It helps to standardize processes and make sure that no one deviates from the workflow.

“

From a technical standpoint, start small. Do it in a way that you can build on it. Get your head around it first and then evolve it as you start to see results. It will require work to get it off the ground and provide the value you're after. Afterwards, it will require some maintenance. It's not something that you can just flip the switch and you're done with it.”

**PIERRE RASEEV**

Consulting, Manager, Avature





## Define Your Frequency

How often are you planning to engage candidates? Do you have a fixed end date (e.g. an event in their area) or will it be a continuous campaign? Within this time frame, how frequently do you want to nudge candidates?

The beauty of an effective workflow is that you can pre-select when content is sent and then the technology triggers these emails (and also SMS) automatically.

While you can decide that once or twice a month is a good amount of contact, try not to guess this on a whim but actually research your target audience's preference. When in the week, time of day and the impact of time zones are also factors to consider.



## Avature Advantage

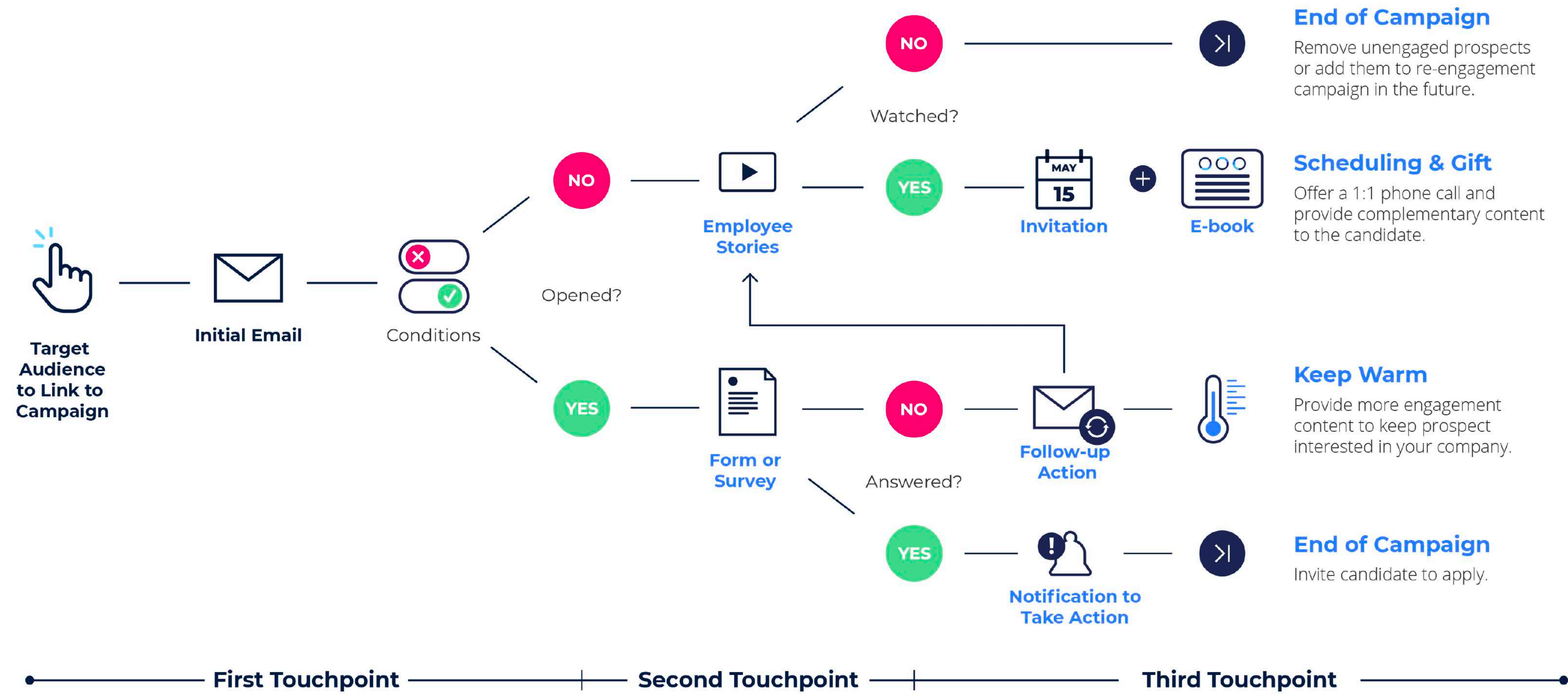
At Avature, we believe that you should let technology do the grunt work so your team's 'human resources' can be better spent on more valuable tasks.

Avature Workflows are organized in a logical manner so you can make sure that you don't miss a step, using the conditional filters to trigger different actions within the workflow and put candidates on the right path, depending on their action or inaction. This is where clarity in the journey is essential to make sure that you don't have dead ends.

On the next page you'll find a visual overview of what your drip campaign could look like, with key elements to consider including Scheduled Actions.



Drip Campaign Map





Define Your Metrics

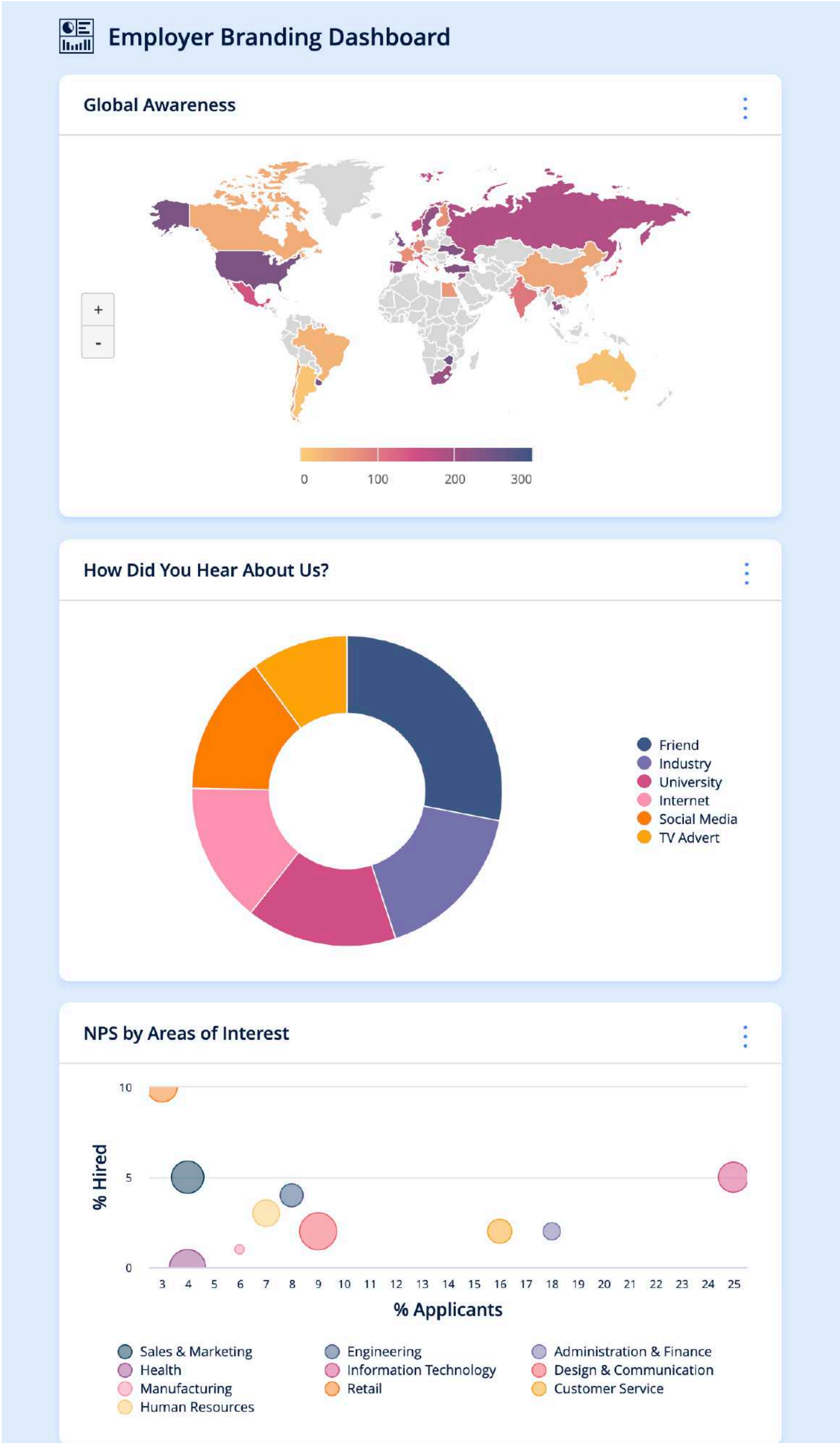
“Begin with the end in mind when it comes to metrics,” says Lockheed Martin’s Smith. “Set up drip campaigns to capture as many metrics automatically. Make sure these correspond to your KPIs”. Skipping this step is a lost opportunity and can limit the success of your drip campaign.

By defining the metrics, you can identify what is working and not working, as well as delivering results to help make the business case. It also allows you to see what happens to these candidates that you have nurtured with drip content e.g. what percentage gets hired, how long do they stay on as employees, what is your recruiter feedback on this talent. Think about measuring which are your most successful call-to-actions and sources, at which point candidates start to engage with your content, which content creates the most engagement, if there is a moment when candidates unsubscribe, and candidate net promoter score (NPS).

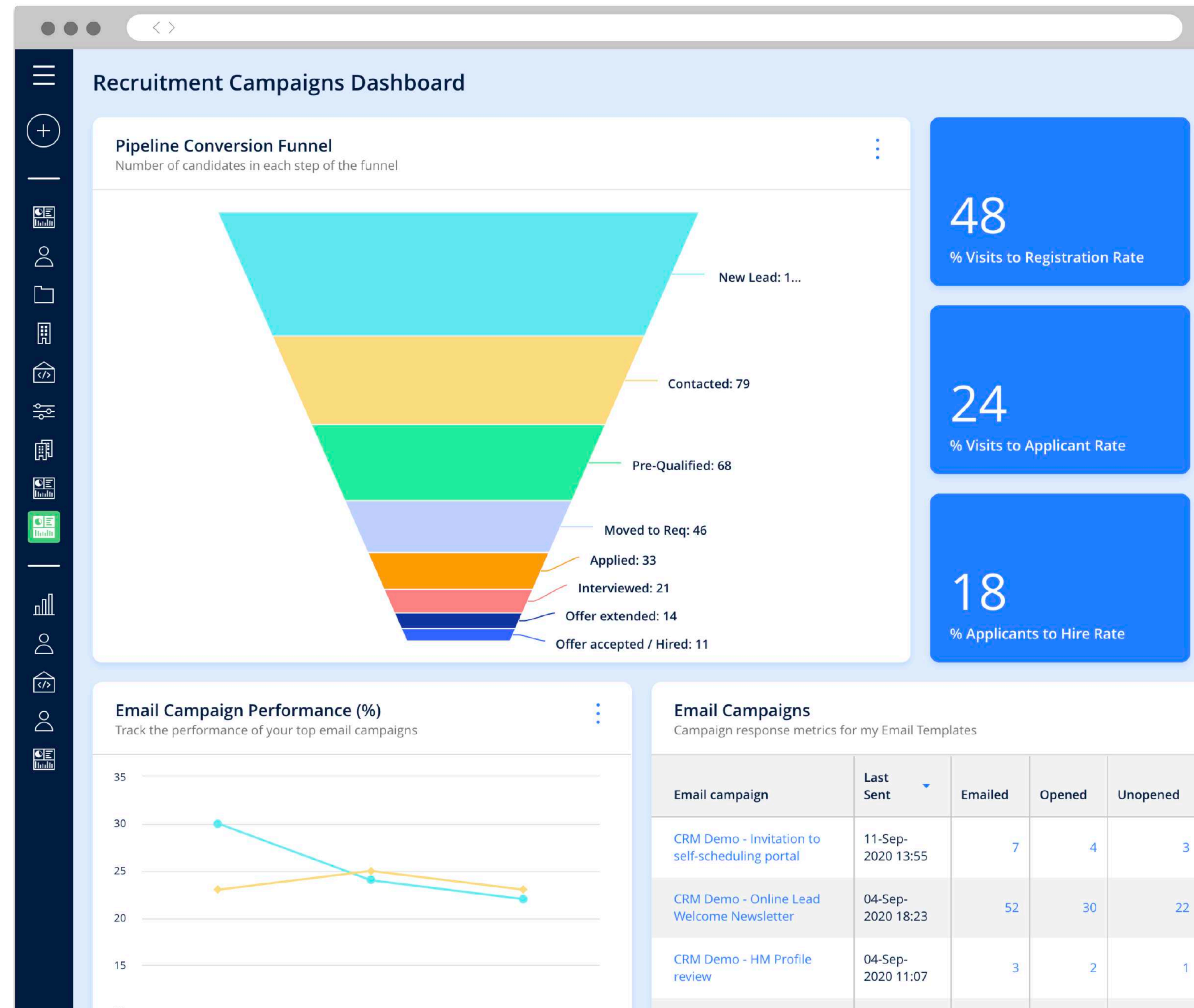
“Monitor your results. You want to stay on top of this and see how it’s going. Use the metrics to see what’s working where you need to adapt your campaign.” says Avature Consulting Manager, Raseev.

“Data analytics and reporting becomes harder with disjointed systems. Avature can give you a seamless flow because it’s a one-stop shop. Depending on how you design your workflow, it’s really easy to see conversion ratios and to determine return-on-investment [on your drip campaign].”

ALEX BENDER  
Solutions Consultant Manager, Avature







# Avature Advantage

Your Avature workflow can automatically gather the data of your choosing with its custom field while it works in the background. By visualizing this data in Avature dashboards, even team members who are less confident with reporting and analytics can monitor the success of a drip campaign in real time. These can be displayed in a variety of ways depending on your personal preference, including world map charts, bubble charts and gauge charts.

Avature comes with a library of standard reports to get everyone started, but each user can also create their own reports using Avature's list builder - our version of Excel for managing candidates and pipelines. Customers with the custom report builder can create their own custom reports beyond what is possible with lists.



## Being Present and Gathering Candidate Information Over Time

“It’s not just about creating a pipeline that qualifies people. You need a team that supports the whole purpose of why you started this community, which is good quality content. With this content, you can continue to nurture these people so that they feel like they’re becoming closer to your brand. This way, when the recruiter goes into the CRM and picks a candidate from the talent community, they are aware of you.”

### Their Objective

“We feed our qualified, interested and available (QIA) pipeline. Its purpose is that when our recruiters need talent, they don’t need to start from scratch. It’s all there in the database. Recruiters can source based on the information that has already been taken. We know exactly what someone’s profile looks like. Our goal is that at every touchpoint, we learn something new about candidates.”

### Their Drip Campaign

“We market out about joining our talent community. They complete a form and are automatically sent a drip email, asking them about their larger areas of interests and what they’re looking for. The next email asks them their level of interests, if they are looking or are just listening, or if they don’t want to be bothered by emails. There is a pull-down menu for them to choose their answer.

We also ask about security clearance and questions to engage them. I wanted three categories of communication. The very top one is the general Booz Allen content that goes out to everyone in the talent community, both military and university, regardless of specific areas. For example our COVID response. It talks about resilience and best practices. Then, we set an objective to share once or twice a month. We share an article or content piece that is relevant to the business, recruiting or jobs that are specifically related to their profile. We use every bit of their profile to send targeted messages.”

### Before Avature

“We worked with [another system] and forced people to join our talent community as part of the application process. While that was great, we had an uncomfortable feeling that we didn’t know how interested they were, how qualified or any other data.”



## With Avature

"I went for Avature because I wanted the Cadillac of CRMs. It is one of the best CRMs and we needed a good one. We didn't have a CRM before Avature, so we kind of started from scratch. That gave us the ability to think outside the box, because Avature has a lot of flexibility and customization."

## The Results

"I believe that our talent communities are growing at a steady five to six percent per month, which is really good. We have just launched a Women in Tech community. Within the first 30 days we got 300 members to join! We started from scratch. Now if we have a podcast about a woman's career journey, we can serve it to whomever and whenever we want easily. We've had a lot of 'thank you for doing this' and 'good content' feedback. We are improving the candidate experience."

## Top Tips to Be Present and Gradually Gather Candidate Information Over Time

### 1. Get the Right Resources:

"What's the point of building something that nobody can support? Make sure you have strong foundational building blocks and that it's the direction you want to go. We have a designated marketer - from my team - that owns each different talent community."

### 2. You Will Feel Overwhelmed at the Start:

"It was overwhelming at first. When you start something from scratch, it's overwhelming. You just need to accept it and dig in."

### 3. Create Solid Architecture:

"The secret to any success is to create a solid architecture to work from. What is it that you want to communicate? I mapped out the journey I wanted to create and what I wanted to happen at each step of the journey."

### 4. Have the Foundational Building Blocks:

"It's about technology, the right resources, creating architecture, having the foundational building blocks to be successful. If you don't have the right process and flows, the right architecture, it's going to be a problem."

### 5. Technology Shouldn't Feel Intrusive:

"By using a system like Avature and creating the right configuration within your talent community, by trying to grab a bit of information at every touchpoint, it makes it better for the recruiter and for the process in the end. Technology shouldn't be seen as intrusive or too big. It's what you make of it. If you take the time to configure a strong process flow and communicate at the right time and place, you will win candidates over time, because it feels like a stronger relationship is being built."



## 5. Final Thoughts

Rome wasn't built in a day and your drip campaign won't be either. But when you look at the results - whether engagement rates or stakeholder satisfaction - it is more than worth the effort.

This playbook has all the tips and insights you need to get started - check out the next page for a handy summary. Now it's up to you to get the ball rolling. Start with a pen and paper, answering the key questions outlined and mapping out the drip journey you want to create for your target candidates and to strengthen your employer brand.

It's the start of the long but glorious road to building your talent empire.





## Top Insights from Avature Experts

As a final food for thought, here is a summary of the top insights Avature experts want you to walk away with to build an impactful drip campaign.

**1. Have your goals and vision well-defined.**

**2. Define your strategy first, then build it technically.**

**3. Have someone 'sponsor' your drip campaign strategy internally.**

**4. Identify candidate needs.**

What is a positive experience for them?  
How can you keep them warm? How can you communicate specific content so it resonates?

**5. Start small and stay flexible.**

**6. Variability makes a campaign more attractive.**

**7. Not all demographics are the same.**

Some have a higher tolerance for general content than others. Curate content for specific demographics and channels, such as an SMS campaign for younger generations.

**8. Use A/B testing to see what content is most successful.**

**9. Don't be afraid to ask why when a candidate unsubscribes.**

Have them put a reason as to why they don't want to hear from you.

**10. Stay on top of your drip campaign and be aware of results**

Use every reporting capability available.

**11. Network with other Avature customers to see what they're doing.**

During the conferences or through the Avature Resource Center (ARC).

**12. Always gather more data and results to evolve your drip campaign.**



# Sources

<sup>1</sup> Study: Most Job Seekers Abandon Online Applications, SHRM (2016)

<sup>2</sup> Visio is a Microsoft Office solution that helps teams visualize and plan projects. From flowcharts, org charts to diagrams, not only can your team map out every step to your drip campaign, but update it in real-time to adjust as you go along and your drip campaign evolves. Other similar tools include LucidChart, Gliffy and SmartDraw.

<sup>3</sup> Does Hiring for ‘Culture Fit’ Perpetuate Bias?, SHRM (2018)

<sup>4</sup> The Choice Factory: 25 Behavioural Biases That Influence What We Buy, Richard Shotton (2018)

<sup>5</sup> The Brain Sell, David Lewis (2013)

<sup>6</sup> How Much Time Do People Spend on Social Media in 2019?, Medium (2019)

<sup>7</sup> Inside the Mind of Today’s Candidate: 13 Insights That Will Make You a Smarter Recruiter, LinkedIn (2017)

<sup>8</sup> Want More Employee Referrals? Larger Referral Bonuses Might Not Be the Answer, Avature (2020)

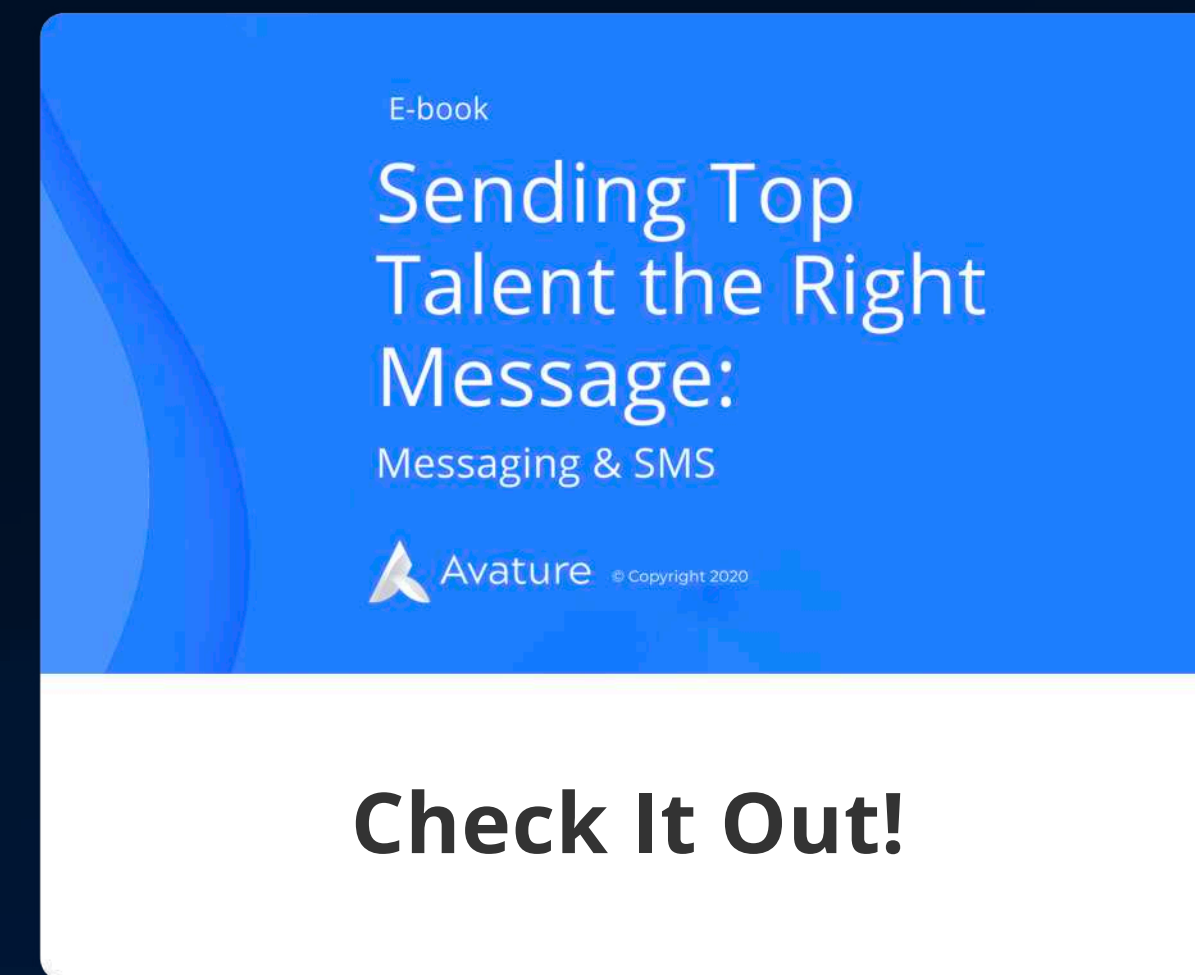
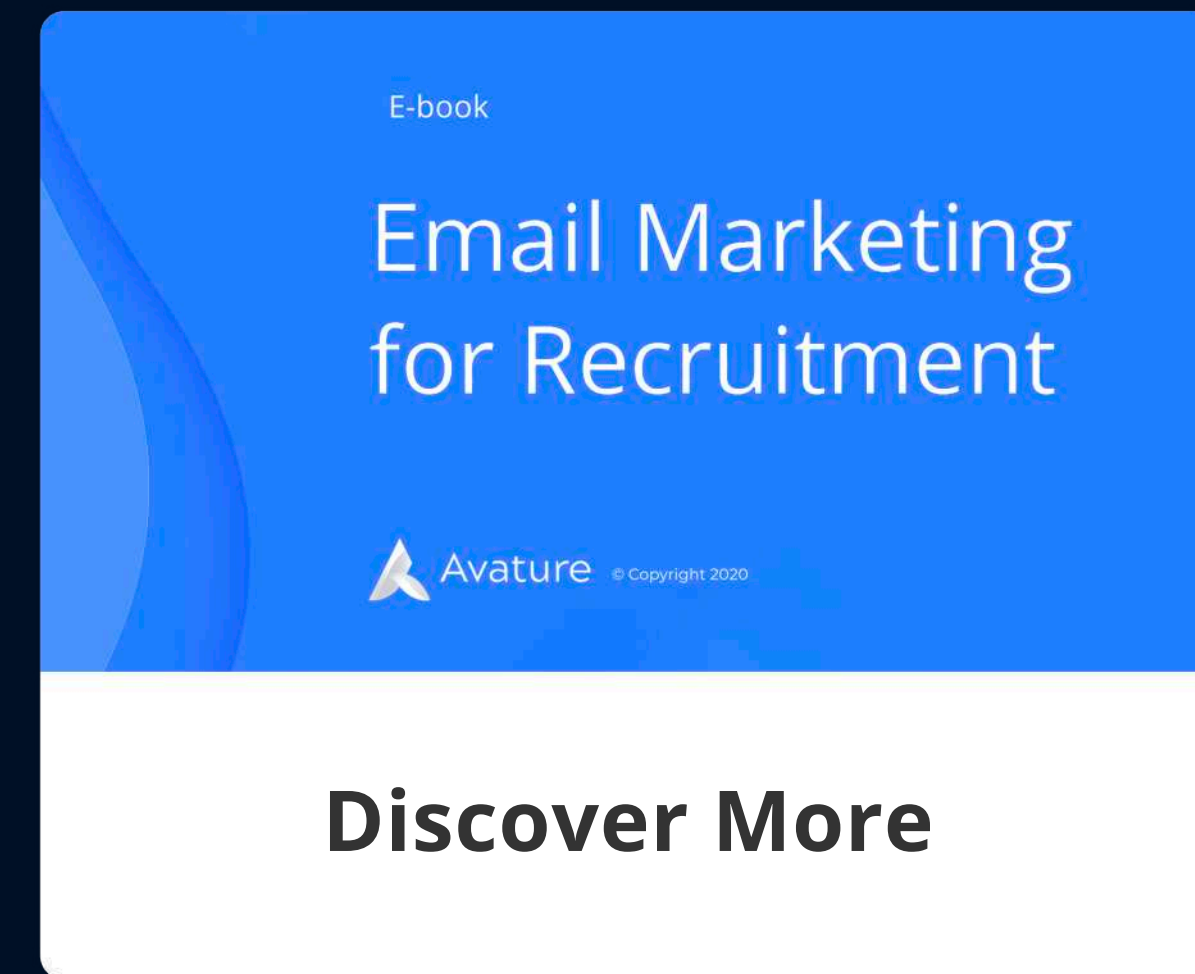
<sup>9</sup> Email Marketing Conversion Rate Comparison, Marketing Insider Group (2018)



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# Ready to implement a dynamic drip campaign strategy that delivers authentic connection with candidates?

Your recruitment success story begins with strong engagement. Execute it properly with a CRM that engages, nurtures and converts candidates into your next hire.

[Request a Demo](#)

