

## Fifth Third Targets Young and Underemployed in Marketing Campaign

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When Fifth Third found the kind of customer it wanted to reach for a novel marketing campaign, she wasn't filling spreadsheets or giving PowerPoint presentations. She was serving drinks in a comedy club in Chicago.

Gina Harrison, a recent graduate with a B.S. in kinesiology and health, learned of the casting call opportunity from a friend. She fit the description: "Male or Female, 23-28 years. A college graduate with a bachelor degree that has not found the career he/she studied for in college. They can currently have a job, but it is not their ideal job, nor related to what they want to do for a living."

Curious, Harrison applied and got the gig as the face for the Fifth Third campaign designed in part to help the bank generate buzz among young adults, a demographic coveted by the industry.

She starred in a commercial with backup dancers and received one-on-one coaching from reemployment company NextJob, a service paid for by the bank that helps job seekers polish their social media profiles. All told, Fifth Third will award 1,000 "job coaching scholarships" for individuals who tell the bank, through Twitter, why they deserve free one-on-one job search coaching under the Cincinnati bank's new "[Brand of You](#)" campaign.

Fifth Third says it is aiming to help prospective bank customers and children of current customers address a burning issue: more than half of recent graduates lack full-time jobs six months after graduating. The prize includes eight weeks of personalized job coaching, personality and career testing, and creation or enhancement of LinkedIn and Twitter profiles.

"Millennials are our future customers," said Larry Magnesen, senior vice president in marketing at Fifth Third Bank.

The initiative points to an ongoing trend of banks allocating marketing dollars to offer consumers novel perks and digitally flaunt good deeds to drive [engagement](#) online — an increasingly important branding task as branch transactions continue to decline.

[TD Bank](#) and [Santander](#), for example, have showcased non-actors' raw emotional reactions to surprises like airline tickets coming out of a pseudo ATM in videos that each received at least upwards of a million views. Most recently, Regions Bank kicked off an [advertising campaign](#) that includes videos shining a spotlight on bank customers' personal stories, while [Eastern Bank](#) continues to chronicle the ways the Boston bank is surprising its customers with good deeds.

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answers in a 30-second video response. Likewise, NextJob coaches used web cameras to create videos to respond to the submissions and share advice, such as whether it's okay to be somewhat goofy during an interview. Fifth Third Bank has also created a behind-the-scenes video of Harrison making her commercial.

The Cincinnati bank is trying to tell stories that will resonate with a social media audience that's put off by Tweets about mortgage rates.

"At the end of the day, humans are emotional creatures," said John Siracusa, the president and chief executive of [mOSa Marketing](#). "It's the natural reaction that gets people to share [content]."

This is especially true when wooing a much sought-after audience: millennials. Helen Lawrence, a digital marketing coordinator at mOSa Marketing, says various studies show millennials don't trust traditional advertising. So she praises Fifth Third's campaign for demonstrating outside-the-box thinking and awarding engagement with something more valuable than a gift card.

Fifth Third's initiative is not designed to sell any product. So for now, the bank sees the investment as a way to start a social media conversation that drums up positive engagement with consumers — not [an easy feat for banks](#). There's always an element of unpredictability with social media and consumers can be quick to air their disgust with brands on sites for all to see.

Fifth Third's 10-week campaign is only about halfway in so it's premature to talk success and failures. But Shannon Paul, Fifth Third's social media manager, says the initiative is on track to meet the bank's set goals. And so far, the campaign is generating on-topic participation that is in line with the bank's brand and core values.

"For a bank to be able to generate this type of engagement is really, really special," said Paul.

Fifth Third had success in 2014 with a "reemployment" campaign: Rather than helping recent graduates, the campaign, which was called Retweet to Reemploy, tried to help unemployed bank customers get jobs. The campaign generated 44,000 shares — with the majority of shares being driven by paid display and online video. The campaign-dedicated microsite also drew in about 100,000 unique visitors.

To try to repeat that success, Fifth Third is driving awareness to its current campaign through varied techniques, including TV spots and digital ads (traditional banners and native ads on Gawker), and of course, using Harrison to inspire others in similar situations to try to get job coaching.

Harrison said she feels surer of what she's looking for in an employer because of the tips she's gotten from her coach.

"It's still unreal," she said.

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