

WHITEPAPER

Building the Business Case for an Alumni Platform

A three-part guide to securing leadership buy-in for your alumni platform.





Introduction

Alumni are more than “former employees.” They’re **future hires, business champions, and powerful brand advocates.**

Building a formal program isn’t always easy. Competing priorities and budget pressures make it hard to win executive buy-in.

This guide is designed to give alumni leaders **the insights and confidence** they need to influence stakeholders and secure the resources to succeed in making their case.

PeoplePath knows what works, what resonates, and how to spark the interest that secures buy-in for your alumni program.

Share your vision, secure support, and lead the charge to launch your alumni program!

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- Redefine alumni as strategic assets.
- Highlight the growing strategic importance of alumni networks.



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- Show why a dedicated platform is the smartest long-term investment for growth and governance.
- Share proven examples of organizations achieving alumni goals with a platform.



Part 3: Maximizing ROI, Program Costs, and Creating an Action Plan

- Define what to measure and how to communicate ROI across talent, brand, and business outcomes.
- Break down typical alumni program costs and show where investment drives the most value.
- Provide a clear, practical action plan to move from insight to execution and stakeholder buy-in.



Part 1: How to Demonstrate Strategic Opportunity

Goals of this Section:

- Showcase how former employee relationships are mutually beneficial.
- Redefine alumni as strategic assets.
- Highlight the growing strategic importance of alumni networks.

Alumni Are Your Hidden Advantage

Provide leadership with an executive summary using the text on the right as inspiration.

Show how your organization is overlooking what early adopters already know: alumni aren't just former employees, they're a strategic advantage.

Highlight key figures and make the case that treating alumni as a long-term investment is essential for growth, influence, and competitive advantage.

Why an Alumni Program?

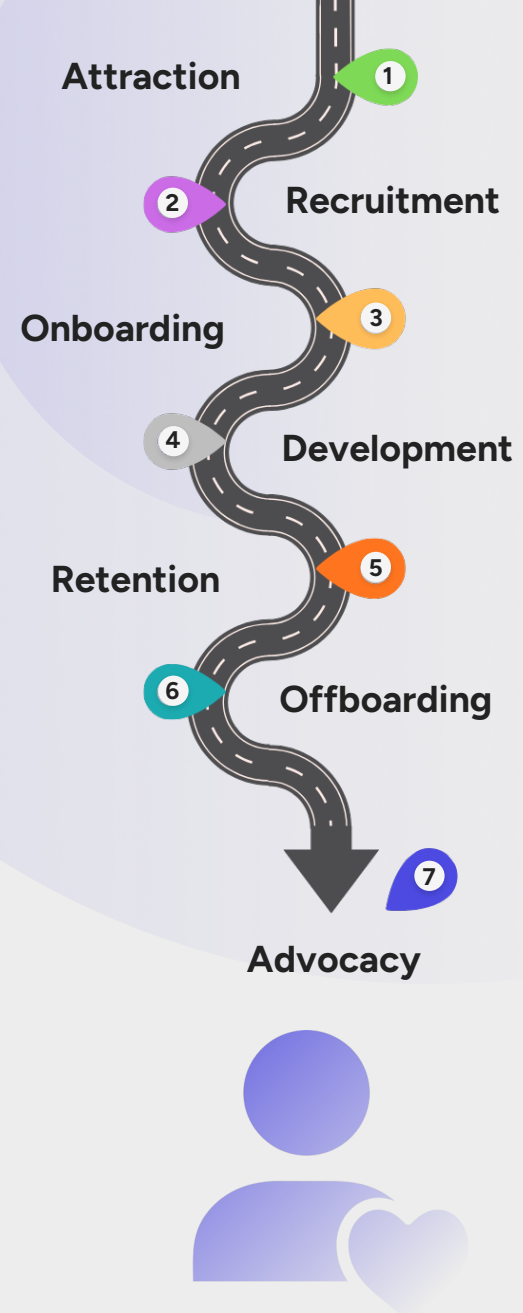
In today's volatile economy, the final stage of the employee lifecycle, Advocacy, is often overlooked, letting years of investment walk out the door.

The Peak-End Rule tells us people remember the high point and the end of an experience most, making offboarding more consequential than most organizations realize. Done well, it transforms departing employees into valuable ambassadors and boomerangs, turning goodbyes into goodwill.

The world's leading organizations, including EY, Microsoft, SAP, and Starbucks, have already recognized this opportunity and are seeing measurable returns across three key areas:

- **High-Impact Rehires & Referrals:** Boomerangs can make up to **30% of new hires**.¹ bringing fresh expertise.
- **Growth & Revenue:** Alumni land influential roles, remain loyal customers, drive revenue and can contribute between **5-20% of total revenue**.²
- **Brand Ambassadors:** Alumni strengthen employer branding, with those running alumni programs seeing **Glassdoor scores rise by 16%**.³

A formal program aligned with alumni needs and organizational goals sends a clear message: you are valued beyond your tenure. In return, organizations gain a loyal network that drives referrals, rehires, and reputation.



¹Nela Richardson for ADP Research, „Boomerang hiring makes a comeback“, (2025)

²Data from the 2025 Corporate Benchmarking Report

³Data from the Cornell Joint Research Report: The Business Case for Corporate Alumni Programs

Key Role Risk

- Only **one-third** of critical roles have succession plans.¹
- **74%** of employers struggle to find skilled candidates.²

Hiring Headwinds

- **56%** offer acceptance rate.³
- **18%** leave during probation.⁴
- Replacing an employee costs **50–200%** of their annual salary.⁵

Mobility Matters

- The average tenure is **3.9 years**⁶ with many holding **10+ jobs**⁷ in their career lifetime.
- **64%** of job hoppers see frequent moves as career boosters.⁸
- **20%** leave due to lack of career development.⁹

Speed Over Strategy

- Prioritizing quick wins vs. long-term vision: the **Productivity Paradox**.
- **Layoffs**, fewer growth opportunities, weaker connections.
- Higher turnover and **loss of institutional knowledge**.

Employer Brand Matters

- **83%** of employees and job seekers research company reviews and ratings to decide on where to apply for a job.¹⁰
- A minimum 0.5-point increase in Glassdoor rating leads to **20% more job clicks** and 16% more apply starts on average.¹¹

Lack Of Employee Trust

- **Over half of workers** feel disengaged as layoffs, reduced DEI, RTO mandates, and smaller raises erode trust and fuel burnout.¹²
- Falling engagement **cost \$438 billion** in lost productivity in 2024.¹³

Build the Case for Change

Start by giving leadership a clear, data-driven snapshot of today's biggest talent challenges and why the status quo is no longer an option.

Focus on what hurts most, then build the urgency for change.

^{1,3,4} McKinsey, *HR Monitor Report*, (2025)

²Manpower Group, *2025 Global Talent Shortage Report*, (2025)

⁵Regina Dyerly for SHRM Business, *"The Myth of Replaceability: Preparing for the Loss of Key Employees"*, (2025)

⁶The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, (2024)

⁷Harvard Business Review, *"Turn Departing Employees into Loyal Alumni"*, (2021)

⁸Forbes, *"Boomerang Employees Might Be the Best Hires: 4 Reasons Why"*, (2025)

⁹Work Institute, *2023 Retention Report*, (2023)

^{10,11} Glassdoor, *"The essential employer branding statistics you need to know"*, (2025)

¹²Forbes, *"The Great Squeeze: Q4 Leadership Challenge and Four Solutions"*, (2024)

¹³Gallup, *State of the Global Workplace Report*, (2024)

The Strategic Value of Alumni Networks

Show leadership what leading organizations are achieving and why a formal alumni network is a strategic, evidence-based investment.

The concept is not new. Early adopters like Accenture and McKinsey built alumni programs with a simple goal: keep relationships strong so former employees could bring clients and opportunities back.

Today, that value has spread across industries. From tech to healthcare to retail, organizations are using alumni networks to drive growth, innovation, and lasting connections.

*"Our former colleagues have become **the best clients**. It's good for business."*

- Simon Freakley, CEO, AlixPartners

*"Former employees are like **walking Yelp review** for customers and candidates."*

- Karen Crone, CHRO, Paycor Inc.

40%

higher win rate when a BCG alum was involved in a client pitch¹

10k

EY alumni in C-suite positions who influence consulting decisions²

The Top 3 Business Drivers for Alumni Programs

Talent Acquisition

- **7–8%** of all new hires are rehires on average, with some organizations reaching **10% - 30%** with a targeted approach.

Business Development

- **18%** of companies attribute **over \$50 million** in sales to alumni support.

Brand Advocacy

- Companies with alumni programs have **16% higher Glassdoor ratings**.



¹Oliver Staley for Quartz, "Who says talent development has to stop when an employee moves on?" (2022)

²Emma Jacobs for Financial Times, "Consultancy alumni networks focus on mutual benefits", (2023)

Events are Most Valued

98% of alumni programs host in-person or virtual events, and alumni consistently rank these as the top benefit.

Career Mobility Matters

80% of programs offer internal job postings; 59% share jobs at other companies; 54% allow alumni to post jobs.

High Engagement Channels

54% of programs see newsletter open rates above 40% - alumni pay attention to what matters.

72%

would consider returning if given the opportunity¹

What Motivates Alumni to Stay Connected?

Understanding what motivates alumni and what they want from a program is the foundation of any successful strategy.

Alumni networks often form organically outside the organization, as former employees seek to remain connected, share opportunities, and support each other through career transitions.

Organizations that fail to engage these networks miss the chance to shape them and benefit from their influence.

When alumni see real value, it builds authentic, lasting connections that benefit both sides.

Alumni Needs & Motivations



Aligned Benefits

Our Cornell study shows that alumni that are most aligned with the **company mission are often the most engaged**. Offer a broad menu of benefits to meet diverse needs but focus on those most valuable to alumni. Common benefits include:

- **Exclusive Content:** Newsletters, alumni stories, company updates.
- **Events & Networking:** In-person and virtual events, social groups.
- **Platforms & Tools:** Alumni website, directory, apps.
- **Career & Development:** Job postings, career resources, education.
- **Discounts and exclusive offers**

¹Tracy Brower, Forbes, "Should You Go Back To Your Old Job? 6 Ways To Know", (2022)

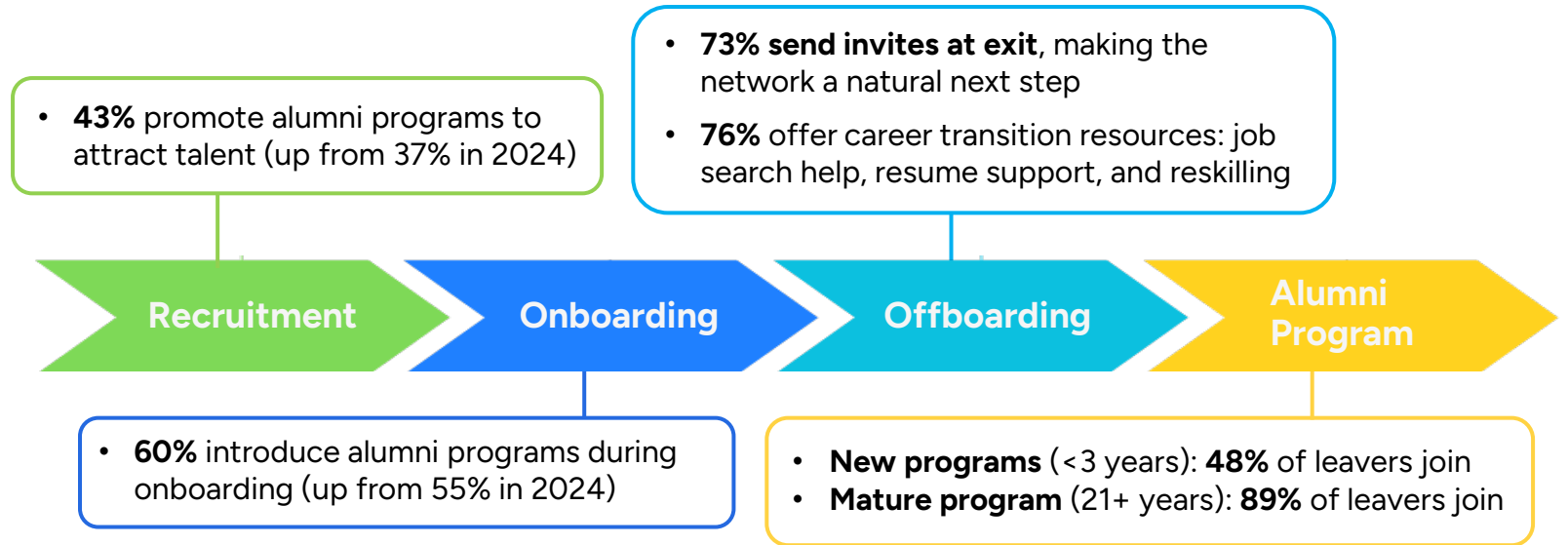
The Growth of Alumni Programs

To wrap up this chapter, note that the PeoplePath benchmarking reports, the most academically thorough review of corporate alumni programs, show over 10 years of growth, increasing sophistication, and rising investment.

Use the academic research to demonstrate the increasing importance of alumni programs.

Click [here](#) to access all of our reports.

Built into the Employee Journey



Maturing Programs, Growing Impact

Starting budgets average \$40,000, enough to launch, engage alumni, and track early results, setting the stage for bigger impact.

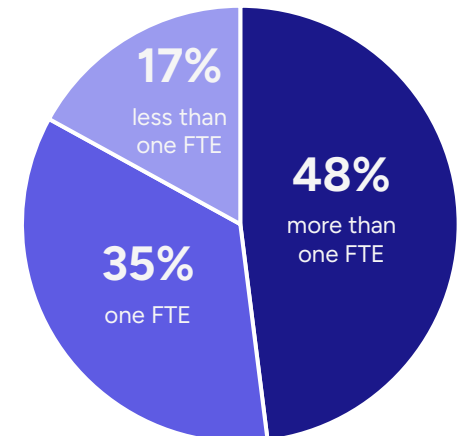
Programs are tracking metrics consistently, including alumni conversion rates, event attendance, referrals, NPS, and alumni-assisted sales.

With **68% now using dedicated platforms**, this focus on data and technology shows rising sophistication.

As programs mature, they grow in value and brand recognition, becoming an essential part of the employee experience.

Alumni Program Staffing

Resources dedicated to managing the program



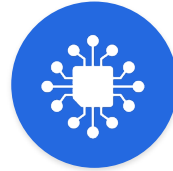
Examples of Corporate Alumni Programs in Various Industries



[EY](#)
[Accenture](#)
[Deloitte](#)



[Kirkland & Ellis](#)
[Linklaters](#)
[A&O Shearman](#)



[Microsoft](#)
[Xgooglers](#)
[SAP](#)



[Starbucks](#)
[P&G](#)
[Nestlé](#)



[Goldman Sachs](#)
[Morgan Stanley](#)
[JPMorgan](#)



[IQVIA](#)
[Novartis](#)
[GSK](#)



[Duke Energy](#)
[BP](#)
[Chevron](#)



[Bechtel](#)

Approaches vary, with some using LinkedIn alone and others opting for dedicated platforms or custom websites.

LinkedIn can be a low-cost, easy starting point, but groups that are run with minimal investment and no organizational control often **fail to properly engage alumni.**

15%

of companies run a formal alumni program.¹

67%

of company alumni groups exist without company support.²

How are Competitors Approaching Alumni Engagement?

Spot competitors investing in alumni programs to spark ideas, create FOMO, and show leadership they may be falling behind.

Leading companies are elevating the alumni experience in creative, high-impact ways:

- Deloitte offers cash rewards for referrals.
- Chevron provides contract assignments for returning alumni.
- LinkedIn extends premium subscriptions and early access to products.
- SAP builds connection through regional events and alumni badges that spark social media sharing.

^{1,2}Harvard Business Review, „Turn Departing Employees into Loyal Alumni“, (2021)



Part 2: Utilizing the Power of Technology

Goals of this Section:

- Highlight the risks of manual, fragmented alumni tools as programs scale.
- Show why a dedicated platform is the smartest long-term investment for growth and governance.
- Share proven examples of organizations achieving alumni goals with a platform.

Why the Right Platform Changes Everything

Many alumni programs start manually, with spreadsheets, static lists, and occasional newsletters. Data decays fast, with B2B records losing up to **70% accuracy each year**.¹ Engagement becomes inconsistent, and there's no clear view of impact. The right platform transforms efforts into scalable, insight-driven results.

Before: Manual & Fragmented

- × Spreadsheets & static mailing lists
- × No clear data "source of truth"
- × Sporadic, transactional outreach
- × No segmentation, no personalization
- × No analytics, no proof of impact



After: Modern & Scalable

- ✓ Centralized, living alumni directory
- ✓ Maintained, accurate data
- ✓ Automated, targeted communication
- ✓ Scales across regions
- ✓ Relationship intelligence

The Majority of Formal Programs Use a Dedicated Platform

System	Pros	Cons	Usage by Formal Programs (%)*
Dedicated Platform	Full engagement automation, data ownership, integrations	Higher setup cost; requires adoption	68%
CRM	Already in-house; low cost	Not built for alumni; no community features; no clear data ownership	10%
LinkedIn (standalone)	Free and simple set-up	No data ownership, limited engagement, no branding	7%
Own website	Low upfront cost; full branding control	Hard to maintain; lacks analytics & automation	3%

Disconnected Systems Hold Alumni Programs Back

Alumni programs reach a point where manual tools and fragmented systems become unsustainable.

Data decays, programs stall, and opportunities are missed.

Most programs have moved to dedicated platforms for a reason: scale, accuracy, and consistent engagement that drives lasting growth.

¹Sean Shea for Forbes, "The B2B Data Decay Epidemic: How To Protect Your Bottom Line", (2024)

²Data from the 2025 Corporate Benchmarking Report

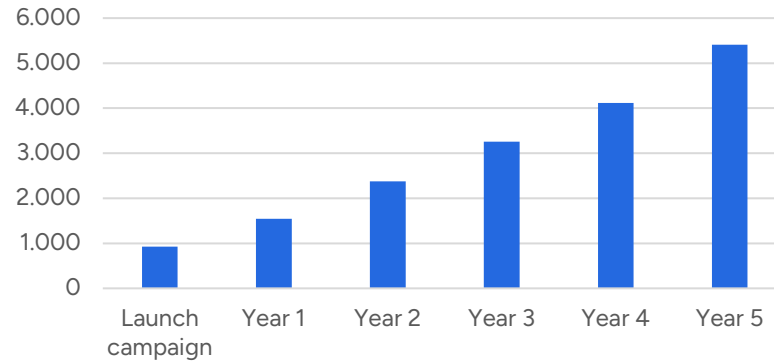
Alumni Networks Scale Beyond Manual Tools

Using our network growth model it's possible to demonstrate how a program can outpace manual or fragmented tools.

As turnover occurs, only a dedicated platform ensures smooth, consistent offboarding, one of the most important steps for driving adoption.

Projected Alumni Network Growth for a 10,000-Employee Organization

Alumni Network Growth to ~5,000 in 5 Years



Alumni networks scale quickly and compound over time. In mature programs, **conversion rates can reach up to 89%**¹, rapidly expanding the network as employees exit. To support this scale, **69% of programs rely on automated invite and reminder processes.**²

At this pace, growth cannot be supported manually. A structured, automated approach is required to manage onboarding, governance, and engagement as programs mature.

Projected Network Growth Using Benchmarks

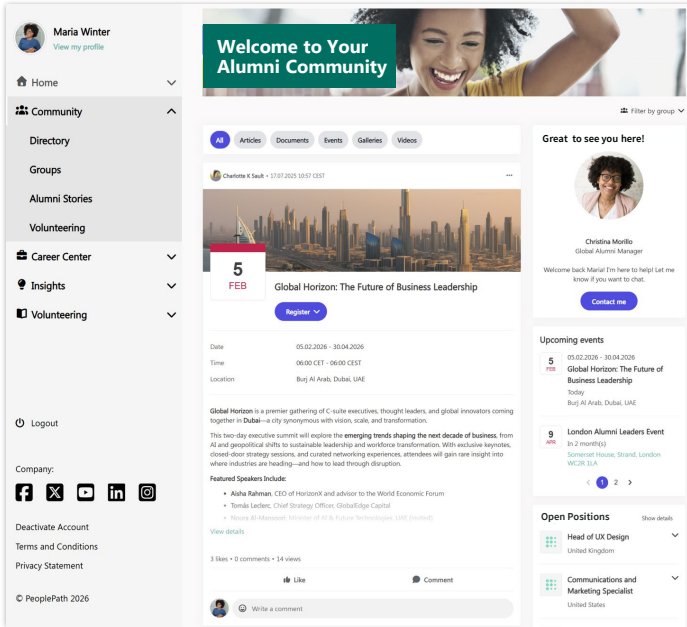
Network Metrics \ Timeline	Launch	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Alumni Invited / Annual Leavers*	3,900	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300
Eligibility rate**	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Join rate***	25%	50%	70%	75%	80%	80%
New Alumni Members	926	618	865	926	988	988
Churn	0	0	57	78	197	294
Total Alumni Members	926	1544	2377	3256	4114	4,896

*Existing alumni base based on industry benchmarks. Average voluntary leaver rate is 13% from Mercer's 2025 Workforce Turnover Survey

**Eligibility rates based on those leaving on good terms

***Join rates are based on benchmarking research

^{1,2}Data from the 2025 Corporate Benchmarking Report



Alumni Experience

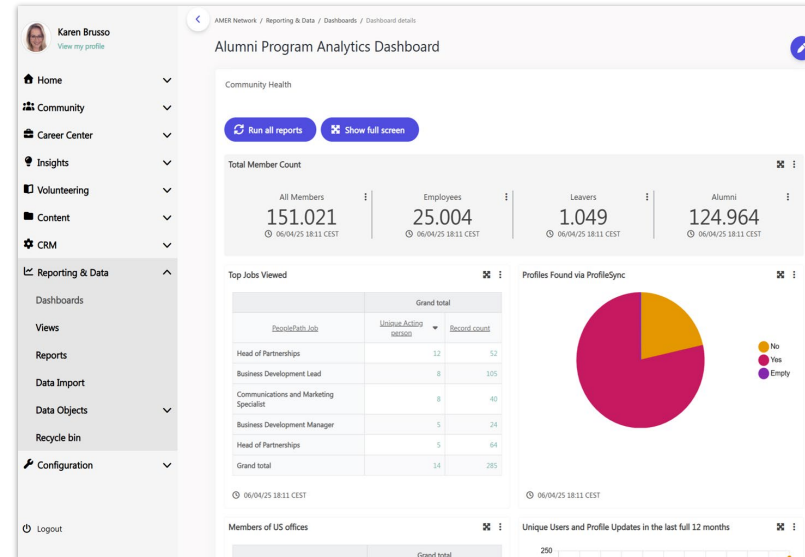
- ✓ Central, personalized home feed for news, updates, and opportunities.
- ✓ Easy, on-the-go access to community, connections, and communications.
- ✓ Modern, intuitive experience that keeps alumni engaged and coming back.

What a Modern Alumni Platform Delivers

Show leadership what's possible with a modern alumni platform.

Admin & Program Management

- ✓ Centralized tools to manage content, events, resources, communications, and engagement.
- ✓ Built-in tracking to measure activity and program performance.
- ✓ Single system of record with connected data, governance, and oversight across systems.



A dedicated platform acts as a one-stop hub, bringing engagement, communications, and program management together in a single, integrated system.

What a Dedicated Platform Delivers for Alumni and Admins

This chart shows why a dedicated alumni platform stands apart.

Built for both alumni and administrators, it unifies experience and operations in one system.

No other option delivers the same balance of control, scale, and long-term value.

Platform Capability	What Alumni Experience	What Admins & Leaders Gain	Why a Dedicated Platform Matters
Professional Set-up & Branding	A trusted, branded alumni hub that delivers a seamless, premium user experience	Faster launch, lower risk, and consistent brand and user experience	Enterprise branding, governance, and scale cannot be delivered with DIY tools
Automated Onboarding & Lifecycle Management	A seamless transition from employee to alum with clear next steps	Higher adoption with minimal manual effort	Lifecycle automation cannot be replicated with spreadsheets or email tools
Profile Data Enrichment & Relationship Intelligence	Surfaces relevant opportunities and connections without constant manual profile updates	Richer, continuously updated alumni intelligence for strategic targeting and insight	Integrated AI enrichment and relationship intelligence require unified, governed data and ability to segment and target.
Hyper-personalized Engagement & Communication	Personalized content, events, and messages that feel timely and relevant.	Stronger engagement targeting with less manual campaign work	Hyper-personalization requires aggregated data and intelligent orchestration
Career Opportunities, Rehires, & Skill Matching	Jobs and opportunities matched to skills, interests, and career stage, served up	Stronger rehire pipelines, referrals, and talent visibility	Skill matching depends on deep profile data and historical relationships
Analytics & Program Value Insights	Experiences and offerings shaped by proven engagement signals	Clear insight into what drives engagement, value, and growth	Strategic insight is built by tracking progress over time and viewing it through the right lens
Compliance, Security, & Governance	Confidence that personal data is protected and responsibly managed	Reduced legal, reputational, and operational risk	Enterprise compliance and permissions cannot be bolted onto consumer tools
Continuous Innovation & AI Enablement	More intuitive, tailored experiences as the platform evolves	Access new AI-driven capabilities over time without changing platforms	Innovation at scale requires a purpose-built platform and data foundation

Measuring What Matters

KPIs track how the program's key drivers perform over time. A dedicated platform makes growth, engagement, and alumni behavior visible, **turning insight into measurable ROI** and proof to support continued investment.

Key areas that programs track and measure in a platform:

Program Engagement

- Logins
- Registrations
- Active/Inactive Alumni
- Profile Completion
- Profile Updates
- Content Views
- Job Board Activity

Event Engagement

- Number of events
- Invitations
- RSVPs
- Attendance

Business Drivers

- Number of rehires
- Candidate referrals
- Business referrals
- Program Satisfaction (NPS)
- Glassdoor Reviews

Enabling Smart Strategy Through Real-Time Insights

The platform acts as the engine behind the alumni program, enabling continuous monitoring of engagement and growth over time.

Our benchmarks show a clear pattern: as programs mature, platform adoption increases and activity tracking becomes more consistent.

Tracking and communicating growth is critical for linking alumni outcomes to ROI, proving program impact, and securing long-term leadership buy-in.

40%

track alumni referrals¹

35%

track alumni-assisted sales²

76%

track boomerang rehire rates³

AI Capabilities for a Future-Ready Alumni Program

AI is becoming essential to alumni programs that scale and stay relevant.

The right capabilities power personalization, automate engagement, and turn activity into actionable insight, shifting programs from reactive communication to proactive relationship building.

Essential Future AI Capabilities to Drive Alumni Impact



Analytics

Transforms activity and profiles into role-specific insights, revealing engagement, value drivers, and key opportunities.



Concierge Service

Guides users with context, connects them to the right people and content, and streamlines alumni management.



Hyper-personalization

Transforms updated data into meaningful action, helping alumni discover people, content, and opportunities instantly.



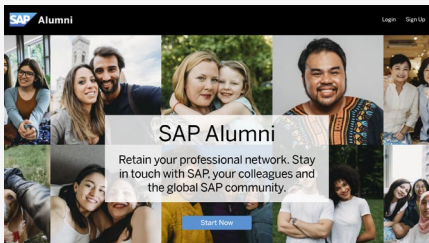
Data & Signals

The foundational intelligence layer that unifies all alumni and organizational data, keeps profiles current, and powers every AI capability.

Alumni Are Driving SAP's Brand Impact

SAP sought to strengthen alumni engagement and boost brand visibility. They relaunched a geographically-diverse and vibrant community that **activates alumni as brand ambassadors**.

[Read more](#)



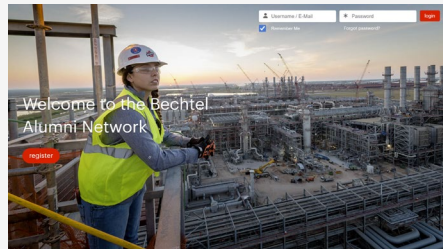
8x

average times per year alumni recommend SAP services or products

Bechtel Boosts Hiring with Alumni Network

By integrating HR systems with the PeoplePath platform, Bechtel automated alumni outreach, expanded engagement, and rehires, resulting in **25% of new hires coming from their alumni network**.

[Read more](#)



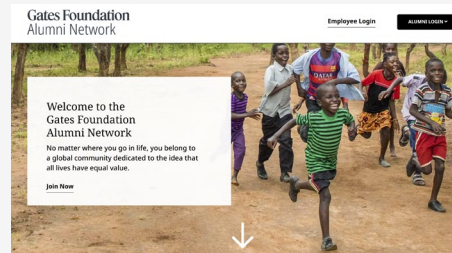
25%

of all new hires were boomerangs

Gates Foundation: Driving Collaboration

The GF Alumni Network uses its digital platform to connect a powerful community of **1,400 alumni supporting initiatives in 100+ countries**, strengthening engagement and advancing its global mission.

[Read more](#)



76%

of all former employees are members

Case Studies: How Technology Elevates Alumni Program Results

Draw on real-world case studies to see how alumni strategy turns into results.

These examples show how organizations put theory into practice by adopting PeoplePath, and why a platform approach was key to their success.



Part 3: Maximizing ROI, Program Costs, and Creating an Action Plan

Goals of this Section:

- Define what to measure and how to communicate ROI across talent, brand, and business outcomes.
- Break down typical alumni program costs and show where investment drives the most value.
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How to Maximize ROI

A corporate alumni program doesn't just have one avenue for showcasing a return on investment.

The majority of programs will be focusing on business development, talent acquisition, or brand advocacy.

However, some programs may seek to showcase an engaged & active community, how alumni give back to society, or keep track of all the incredible places alumni move on to.

Regardless of focus, make the case for current and projected activity, results, and overall impact to the brand.

Three ROI Sources: Business Impact, Community Health, and Storytelling



Business Objectives

- Set primary goals and build your programming, events, and content around them
- Measure, iterate, and expand as the program matures



Community Health

- A vibrant, active community is the foundation everything else is built on.
- Are alumni active & engaged (i.e., signing up, logging in, engaging with content etc.)



Storytelling

- Bring senior leaders into strategy early, their buy-in amplifies program impact
- Report both hard metrics and qualitative wins to leadership on a regular cadence

Hard ROI: Measurable Business Objectives

83% rank as a top priority*

Business Development

Up to 40% of new business could come from alumni by tracking alumni-assisted sales.

70% rank as a top priority*

Talent Acquisition

Avg F500 company could save \$12M/year on rehires by tracking boomerangs & referrals.

62% rank as a top priority*

Brand Advocacy

Alumni are up to 40% or more influential than regular clients, with higher NPS and brand mentions (~ 8x per year).

Soft ROI: Outcomes That Shape Culture & Competitive Advantage

Brand Loyalty

Alumni speak with authentic credibility no marketing can replicate, whether as customers, partners, or industry voices.

Workforce Flexibility

Alumni re-engage fast for project or interim roles, with no culture ramp-up and minimal onboarding.

Satisfaction & Morale

Valuing alumni boosts pride, engagement, and retention among current staff.

What Does ROI Actually Look Like?

The most successful programs define their primary objectives from the start and build everything around delivering results.

For example, if talent acquisition is the goal, the program offers job content, a job board, career resources, and networking opportunities, then tracks boomerangs and referrals to measure impact.

Not all value shows up in a spreadsheet. The soft ROI of alumni programs, from brand sentiment to relationship equity, is harder to quantify but often just as profound.

Understand & Monitor Community Health

An active, engaged audience is the foundation of any successful alumni program.

As covered in Part 1, alumni are driven by career, social, mission, and pragmatic motivations. Programming that speaks to these keeps them coming back.

The more engaged alumni are, the more likely the program is to deliver on broader business goals.

Leading Indicators of Program Health

Engagement Metrics

Job Board Activity

Profile Completion

Content Views

Profile Updates

Event RSVPs & Attendance

Logins

Active vs. Inactive Alumni

Registrations

Business Impact Metrics

Boomerang Rehires

Business Referrals

Candidate Referrals

Glassdoor Reviews

Net Promoter Score

Alumni in Strategic Roles

Why it matters: Engagement metrics are your leading indicators of community health. Business impact metrics are what you take to leadership to prove ROI.



Become a Powerful Storyteller

Programs are more than just numbers. 96% of alumni program managers share results with organizational leadership & the executive team, and more than 50% of managers do this on a quarterly and/or yearly basis.

Start by creating a framework that showcases all major areas of the program that will be tracked and include qualitative and quantitative successes expected in each area.

Review the community, infrastructure, and reach both for the past year performance, and projections for the upcoming year.

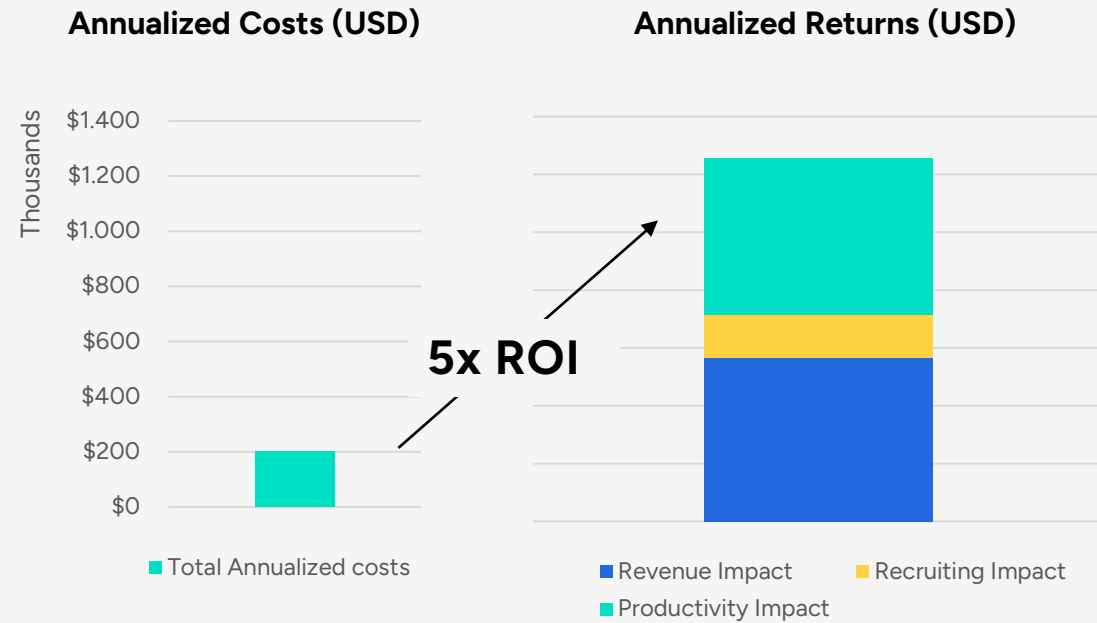
Calculating ROI using the PeoplePath Model

Using our experience, benchmarking, and research, we estimate that a sample program like the one outlined in Part 2 (for an organization of 10,000 employees) can generate approximately 5x the investment required to launch and sustain it.

This is modelled on a 5-year investment horizon with returns reflecting annualized Year 5 figures, and includes the cost of a full-time alumni program manager, all software set-up and subscription costs, and event budget.

It's worth noting that soft ROI such as employer brand, morale and workforce flexibility is excluded from this model, meaning the true return is likely even higher.

Alumni Programs Deliver Outsized Returns on Investment



Revenue Impact

- Assumes \$100 additional contribution margin per registered alum based on brand loyalty and referrals, using a conservative cross-industry estimate.
- Range varies significantly by sector. In some industries alumni generate **\$50K+ in annual revenue per alum.**

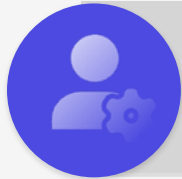
Recruiting Impact

- Assumes increasing the share of rehires by 4%.
- \$2,500 saved per rehire** (agency & sourcing efficiency).

Productivity Impact

- Rehires provide an additional **~25 productive workdays** based on faster ramp-up rates, and a lower rate of highly expensive early terminations (within 3 months).
- \$7,500 in productivity gained** per rehire, based on an average daily personnel cost of \$300.

Key Cost Areas



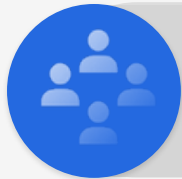
Human Capital

Staff dedicated to managing the program.



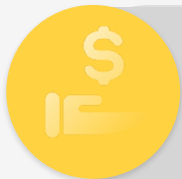
Technology

Multi-year contract ACV plus integrations plus maintenance fees.



Alumni Events

Event planning, logistics, and hospitality costs.



Perks & Partnerships

Discounts, memberships, or cross-promotions with partners.

Benchmark Insights

- New programs succeed with **at least a part-time** alumni manager.

- **68%** of firms use a dedicated platform provided by a third party.

- **86%** and **74%** of programs offer in-person and virtual events, respectively.

- **41%** of companies offer forms of exclusive perks and discounts.

Projected Costs

Costs vary by program age and size. Programs can be started with very few resources and close to no budget, however, as a program scales, budget for staff, technology, and events should be considered.

In our 2025 research:

- The average alumni program budget was \$172,512 (excluding technology and FTE costs).
- Budgets ranged widely: programs under \$100K averaged \$42K, while those over \$300K averaged \$467K.
- Budgets do correlate to program age, with programs less than 3 years old starting with less than \$100,000 and growing over time as the program size grows.

Outlining a Multi-Year Plan

Here is an example 3-year plan, adapted from our client Seyfarth Shaw's alumni program strategy.

Originally shared in PeoplePath's "How to Successfully Launch a Corporate Alumni Program" guide and webinar, it offers a real-life illustration of how a program can be structured and evolve over time, helping you better visualise a phased, scalable approach.

Year 1

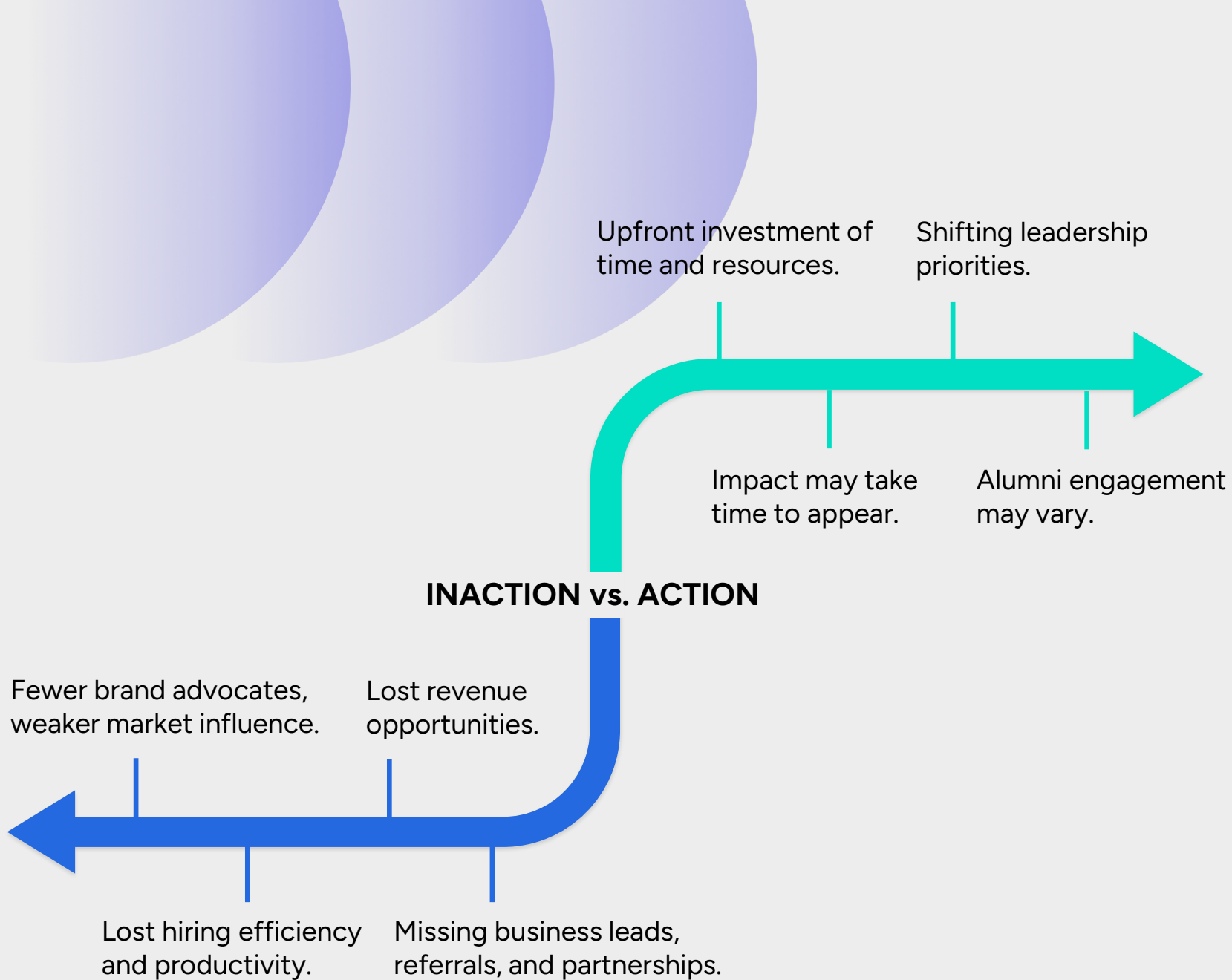
- **Growth:**
Build the alumni database
- **Process:**
Recruitment, Onboarding, Experience, Offboarding
- **Launch:**
Alumni Network Platform
- **Content:**
Create engaging pieces around human interest, firm news, and educational events
- **Marketing:**
Promote internally/externally to get registrations

Year 2

- **User Engagement:**
Communications and Events
- **Leverage Resources:**
Alumni Platform - Provide Resources and Value
- **Benchmark:**
Measure Business Driver Success
- **Engagement:**
Feel connected to the firm and alumni program

Year 3

- **Enhance:**
Inter-Department Collaboration
- **Develop:**
Strategic Career Development Program
Alumni Advisory Board
- **Create:**
Secondment Program. Track Secondments and develop metrics
- **Retired Partners:**
Greater emphasis



The Risk of Inaction vs. Action

Inaction carries the risk of missed opportunities across engagement, revenue, and talent mobility.

While launching a corporate alumni platform may feel like a strategic leap, the greater risk often lies in delay.

Choosing the right strategic partner helps reduce complexity, align stakeholders, and turn uncertainty into a structured path toward measurable growth.

Implementation Phases

Communicate the resource commitment clearly to leadership, covering both the duration of implementation and where stakeholder involvement is heaviest. Implementation runs 4–6 months across three phases.

A Customer Success Manager (CMS) coordinates the process end-to-end, aligning stakeholders, managing handoffs, and keeping the project on track. Some phases require heavier involvement from your team; others are largely handled by PeoplePath.

Pre-Kickoff

Internal Alignment

Confirm executive sponsorship, identify your Alumni Manager, and align on KPIs and content strategy before the first session.

Phase 1 6-8 weeks

Project Definition

Define platform settings and specifications, based on your objectives. Requires involvement from marketing, HR, legal, and IT.

Phase 2 8-12 weeks

Implementation

Platform is configured and internally tested. Your team plays a lighter role here, the CSM leads the bulk of the work.

Phase 3 8-12 weeks

Train, Test & Launch

Alumni Manager and IT lead user acceptance testing. Administrator training delivered by the CSM before go-live.

Executive Summary

Briefly state the problem, make the case for a dedicated alumni platform as the recommended solution, outline the expected benefits, and support with research.

Business Strategy & Goals

Explain if a mindset shift is needed. Show long-term value and the wider impact on the business.

Stakeholder Alignment

Identify key stakeholders across HR, Finance, IT, and Legal. Outline who needs to be informed, consulted, or have sign-off to avoid delays later in the process.

Project Outline / Benefits

Outline the project, the problem it solves, the urgency, and which parts of the business it affects. Include a clear rationale for why you're recommending a dedicated over manual or fragmented alternatives.

Timeline & Plan

Provide a clear timeline, key milestones, needed resources, and KPIs. Including a 3 year plan proves how investment and growth can impact results.

Risks

Identify risks of doing the project and risks of not doing it.

ROI / Financial Impact

Beyond just costs, highlight expected savings, revenue, or measurable benefits to make the economic case stronger.

Concluding Summary

The summary reinforces what decision makers should remember. It should achieve the following:

- Reinforces the main argument – restates why the project or investment is necessary.
- Highlights key benefits and value – summarizes expected ROI, strategic advantages, and outcomes.
- Addresses risks and mitigation – briefly acknowledges challenges and how they will be managed.
- Calls for action or decision – clearly states what approval, resources, or next steps are needed.

Create a One Sentence Strategy:

"Our alumni program exists to [verb] [audience] so that we can [business outcome]."

Create an Action Plan

It's time to put everything you have together! Here's a sample outline of everything to include as you build your business case.

The strongest plans cover the overall objective, clearly highlight the projected benefits, cover any risks that might be involved, detail financial requirements, and have a clear call to action with recommendations.



Thank you for downloading our whitepaper on how to build a business case for an alumni platform.

As you build your case, PeoplePath can help you develop a custom ROI model tailored to your organization, backed by real-world examples, benchmarks, and expert guidance.

We'd love to support you, reach out anytime.

Contact us at: sales@peoplepath.com