Contribution of Social Networking Sites in Employee Recruitment

Dr.Monika Bhatia

Assistant Professor, School of Management Studies

Ansal University, Gurgaon

Social Media, the new term that has invaded our daily lives in high velocity, consists of social networking, playing interactive games, making international friendships and communicating in general, worldwide. On the other hand Human Resources are occupied with terms such as recruitment, career advancement, motivation, employability, evaluation. Those two seem so different and diverse but nowadays a correlation and a parallel walk is occurring. Social media sites such as Face book, Linked in, Twitter, etc are currently being utilized as a company promotion tool under their will to reach in a personal way each 'user' or as a possible employability entrance. The research scope of this paper is concerned with the traditional way of recruitment and selection as well as career advancement and evaluation through the basic principles of Human Resources Theory and practical experience, in correlation with the will to explore and investigate the opportunity or to utilize social media as an additional tool in order to advance in a modern world of Human Resources. This analysis deals with selecting appropriate Social media sites and formats from the myriad options available and leveraging the same to create value for the organization. This requires an in-depth understanding of the key benefits and pitfalls of Social Media and managing these effectively in the organization's context. This discipline emphasizes harnessing social media for effective human resource management, which includes recruitment, collaboration and engagement. It also explores the non financial impact as well as the approaches for measuring the return on investment in Social Media. In addition, it outlines the future trends and implications of Social Media for HR professionals.

Keywords: Social Media, Recruitment, Human Resources Evaluation, Employability Modern Technologies

INTRODUCTION

Today, the Internet is in fact transforming the whole world, in diverse aspects, in the commercial as well as in the personal world. In business, the recruitment process for a new employee to join a firm has been completely changed and revolutionized by the Internet, and currently all the traditional and slower process of recruitment is transformed in favor of the new process that is known as 'e-recruitment'. It is a buzzword and the latest trend in recruitment is the "e-recruitment'. Also known as "online recruitment". It is the use of technology or the web -based tools to assist the recruitment process. Many big and small organizations are using Internet as a source of recruitment.

Over the past few years it has become inevitable to be familiar with most of the problems faced by industries worldwide. The ongoing recession has as cost dramatic changes in the business world. Words such as bankruptcy, layoffs and cost reduction have become increasingly familiar and common. Human resource management has also taken its share of these cuts. The area where companies want to find more efficient and effective as a well as cost-effective way to act is recruitment. There is always the need for recruitment in the business world and companies spend fortunes on it. It is also clear that the hiring process is all the time a thought about new prospects. All the time companies are trying to find more conventional ways to recruit more people and companies have discovered that web-based hiring is more efficient than the traditional ways, such as advertisements in newspapers. Internet advertising has longer lifetime cycle and in many cases it is also free, or at least cheaper than advertising in newspapers. Nowadays, people that are seeking work are based on the Internet, for example in social media websites where thousands of new job ads are posted and advertised daily.

Furthermore, during these years, a new phenomenon called social media has surfaced in our society and has become a hot topic around the world. All media are full of articles about social media. Social networking sites quickly became very popular presenting and magnifying every day millions of users around the world. Companies have realized that explosion. As the core idea of social media is based on free and no cost access, companies seem to resort to social media like face book, Linkedin. Companies want to have as may fans as possible and their own profile but

they do not even think about how to use them. Suddenly everyone is talking about hiring through social media, without really knowing what to do there, either on the part of companies or the side of job seekers. In Greece, many seem to discuss the possibilities of social media in recruitment, but results are still missing. Companies can succeed in recruitment through social media; Jobseekers via social media can be assured of their reliability or being hired without the traditional recruitment? In what ways can social media be used for recruitment and are these methods effective?

The purpose of this study is to determine the role that professional networking websites, such as LinkedIn, play in the hiring decision of talent recruiters at major advertising and public relations firms. A study of literature relating to social media, traditional recruitment techniques and legal implications regarding the use of networking websites in the hiring process provided a foundation for the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As social and online technologies advance, they continue to change the recruitment landscape for jobseekers and professional hiring managers alike. Cober, Brown, Blumenthal, Doverspike, and Levy (2000) predicted that online recruitment efforts will continue to replace traditional methods such as job fairs, newspaper ads, word of mouth, and campus recruiting.

Social media plays a very important role in people's lives. It is identified as a "free participation that allows (communities) to get engaged and build genuine relationship (s)" (Narvey, 2009). Examples of social media include Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, and Second Life. While there are design differences between these sites, the basic components are the same (Smith, 2010). LinkedIn and Facebook, however, stand out as recruiting tools since they both include job-posting features for recruiters.

Facebook and LinkedIn are most popular among young professionals. In a study conducted on 430 employees, LinkedIn and Facebook use is highest among the employees who are aged 26 to 45. In addition, 52% of the people surveyed use LinkedIn, 49% use Facebook, 31% use MySpace, and 6% use Twitter (Skeels, 2009).Employers who use LinkedIn and Facebook, as a result, have the highest potential of reaching young professionals in the workplace.

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In July 2010, Facebook revealed that it had over 500 million active users (Schroeder, 2010). In August it was reported that U.S. we user spent 41.1 million minutes on the website. That is equivalent to 9.9% of their entire time web -surfing that month (Schroeder, 2010). LinkedIn, on the other hand, has 30 million users and is used purely for business and networking reasons (Bulik, 2008). LinkedIn is described by users a virtual contact book. Both these sites, as a result, allow users to connect with others and tap into their internal network and contact business professionals. Many hospitality companies have recently been experimenting with social media, and using it to help perform certain human resource functions. After surveying over 2,500 people, CareerBuilder found that 21% of employers use social networking sites to research and recruit potential employees (Leggatt, 2010). These new resources give employers the advantage of fast response. The employer who makes contact with the candidate right away "is the most likely to land them" (Berta, 2000). This gives employers the ability to find new candidates and move them through the interview process at a faster speed. It also helps employers filter out unqualified candidates.

Social media may lend itself for targeting enthusiastic and interested job applicants. Yet, it is not clear if they help hospitality companies find employees who are interested in staying with the property for the long term. Managing and retaining human capital has been a challenge for hospitality companies. The turnover rates in this industry can reach 158% for front-line employees and 129% for managers (Poe, 2003). These numbers are incredibly high for an industry that emphasizes service consistency and brand loyalty. Such turnover rates can be costly for a company. A new hire of a college graduate could cost a company up to $5000 (Evans, 2010). As a result, research on how effective social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, is used in attracting and engaging candidates could be important to hospitality companies.

Overall, the Internet can be used to increase communication outlets and influence potential employees. Using the Internet for communication purposes can lead to an increase in the number of job applicants a company can receive. In addition, an applicant can develop a lasting positive impression of the organization through the company's official web page. Although these studies address traditional Internet websites, the forms of communication mentioned are exercised on social networking sites.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper is conceptual and review in nature. Data collected for this paper is basically from secondary sources. This paper critically examines the role of social media in the recruitment of employees. A range of recently published works, which aim to provide practical advice are examined to aid the research.

SOCIAL NETWORKING AND ITS BACKGROUND

The recent influx of social media platforms offers new opportunities for those seeking employment to access those who make hiring decisions. A wealth of non-scientific articles suggests ways for jobseekers to enhance their chances of employment by making the most of their presence on online networking websites, such as LinkedIn. However, little evidence exists to determine the extent to which social networking websites actual influence the decisions of hiring managers. As such, jobseekers are left to wonder whether their efforts to efforts to build up their professional reputation online are merely futile attempts to advance their careers or might actually help them to catch the attention of corporate recruiters. Furthermore, preexisting research is silent on the application of this topic to the advertising and public relations industry. Such an observation is surprising, given that this industry in particular relies heavily on social and online media for a significant portion of its everyday functions. Because no comprehensive research on this topic has been documented, the ubiquitous articles that offer jobseekers advice on using social networking websites to land their dream jobs are nothing more than well-formed hunches. The forthcoming research sets a firm foundation for an understanding of how social networking websites are used in the hiring decisions of managers at major advertising and public relations firms.

The rise of the internet has revolutionized the way in which individuals communicate, both privately, and, increasingly, with one another and with organizations in a work-related context. Some research even suggests that employers are under pressure to embrace this trend in order to stay up to date in their recruitment practices. For example, Smith and Rupp (2004) argue that:

The Internet has drastically changed the face of recruitment. Employers must now actively market, themselves by instituting a well-implemented e-recruitment program to find better quality candidates and improve hiring decisions, all in less time and at a lower cost." (Smith and Rupp 2004)

E-RECRUITMENT THE BUZZ WORD

E-recruitment, where employers use the internet in some form to aid conventional recruitment process, has a number of important advantages compared to more traditional form of recruiting, according to Smith and Rupp (2004). Firstly, it allows companies to shorten hiring times through an increase in information flow and an acceleration with recruitment process. Secondly, it can help reduce recruiting costs, hiring times and employee turnover as processes are generally job-specific and offer computer assisted screening interviews and statistical prediction, "Shifting hiring process from the paper and time intensive manual method to an automated one saves time and money and boosts productivity by leaving positions vacant for shorter periods of time. In addition, the cost associated with posting on a job board compares favorably with placing job ads in newspapers, and, in some cases, maybe more cost-effective" (Smith and Rupp, 2004). Moreover, it gives employees the opportunity to hire staff both locally and globally, significantly extending the reach of more traditional staff recruitment. Thirdly, e-recruiting offers companies and prospective employees a number of important features and specific abilities such as:

- "The ability to initiate interview requests and order background checks.
- Unlimited cost information tracking for all activities associated with the hiring process.
- Customized e-mail notification of recruiters for both active and passive candidates. Improved integration of recruiter-specific communications activities.
- Dynamic creation of an employer's job page.
- Extensive ability to personalize the candidate experience by allowing employers to tailor the candidate and recruiter interfaces." (Smith and Rupp, 2004)

In terms of deciding on an approach to e-recruitment, companies can choose among a variety of options to reach suitable candidates. They can make use of job sites which can be either generalist in nature (websites such as monster.com, hotjobs.com, headhunter.net) or focused on specific industries (such as dice.com or computerjobs.com). Another option is to make use to private recruiting exchange (companies such as Career Engine or Workplace Diversity offer such tool).

Companies may also choose to post job openings on their own website, which is very cost-effective for small and medium sized companies. They might also choose to set up their own corporate recruitment web pages which may or may not include the option of incorporating existing social media websites.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND PEOPLE HIRING

Specifically, Social Networking Sites (SNSs) allow users to create web-based profiles where individuals can interact, using social media tools. While initially designed for socialzing with friends and family, these networks have come to be seen as an important professional tool, particularly in the field of recruitment. Here, they serve two main purposes. The first is as a marketing tool; jobseekers can use SNSs to market themselves to potential employers and vice versa. This is recognised by the three case study organisations in our research. The second is as a screening mechanism; employers can use information available via SNs to cheaply and easily gain a broader image of a potential employee than that available through traditional recruitment methods. The recent growth of SNSs as a recruitment method reflects its potential in this area. However, this also raises a number of questions which have yet to be resolved. These include:

- the accuracy of information available on SNSs.
- their accessibility across the pool of potential applicants;
- the effects of the broader range of information they offer on commitments to equality and diversity in the hiring process.

Ad Davison, Maraist and Bing (2011) note, "these sites can be valuable 'friends' for HR, but also have the potential to be dangerous 'foes' if used improperly". Although under-researched, from the perspective of the job seeker, the risks posed by SNSs are typically associated with poor conduct on social media websites, resulting in negative consequences in term of employment. As Bohnert and Ross (2010) show, unprofessional behaviour, for example related to alcohol consumption and/or drug abuse, displayed on a SNSs might significantly hurt a candidate's chances of being hired and can even result in a lower salary offer. Companies, on the other hand, find themselves confronted with legal or privacy issues linked to incorporating social media information into candidate evaluations and might want to formulate a coherent social media strategy in order to prevnent any possible negative outcomes.

EXCEEDINGLY USED TOP 10 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND TOOLS

Blog: A discussion or informational site published on the internet that consists of entries ("posts") typically displayed in reserve chronological order, i.e. the most recent post appears first. Until 2009 blogs were usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often covered a single subject. More recently 'multi-author blogs' have developed, with posts written by large numbers of authors and professionally edited. Blogs consist of regular entries of commentary and descriptions of event (blogging). The content of a microblog is smaller in size.

Facebook: A social networking service where users create personal profiles, add other users as friends and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their own profile. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organised by common characteristics (e.g. workplace). Users can instant message each other through the website.

Google: An American multinational corporation specializing in Internet related services; most famously its core search engine, but also a large chain of products including Google+, the second largest social networking site in the world (as of January 2013).

Linkedln: A business-related social networking site mainly used for professional networking. Users maintain a list of contract details of people with whom they have some level of relationship, called connections. This list of connections can then be used to build up a contract networking follow different companies and find jobs, people and business opportunities.

My Space: An online community of users' personal profiles. They typically include photographs, information about personal interests and blogs. Users send one another messages and socialize within the MySpace community.

Podcast: A type of digital media consisting of a series of audio, video, PDF, or electronic files subscribed to and downloaded or streamed online to a computer or mobile device.

Twitter: A popular micro blogging service enabling its users to send and read publically visible messages called tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the user's profile page. Users may subscribe to other' tweets.

You Tube: A (Google-owned) video-sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. A wide variety of users-generated video content is displayed, including film and TV clips as well as amateur content such as video blogging. Media corporations including the BBS also offer some of their material via the site. Most videos enable users to leave and exchange comments. Organizations are increasingly using YouTube as a way of sharing information about their company and its vacancies with potential applicants.

Wikipedia: A collaborative web-based encyclopedia project; its 18 millions articles have been written collaboratively by volunteers around the world, and almost all are articles are freely editable by any visitor. A prominent web 2.0 site but not an example of social networking site per se.

Yahoo: An American multinational internet corporation widely known for its social networking services and user-generated content online discussion boards (Yahoo! Groups), community-driven Q&A (Yahoo! Answers) and photo sharing (Flickr).

E-RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES

As social and online technologies advance, they continue to change the recruitment landscape for jobseekers and professional hiring managers alinke. Cober, Brown, Blumenthal, Devers pike, and Levy (2000) predicted that online recruitment efforts will continue to replace traditional methods such as job fairs, newspaper ads, word of mouth, and campus recruiting. The practice of online recruitment is on the rise, and an employer questionnaire distributed in the United Kingdom (Verhoeven & Williams, 2008) identified both advantages and disadvantages of this trend, as follows. Online recruitment allows for quick turn-around time, an increased number of qualified applicants, and an easier hiring process overall. On the other hand, the number of unqualified applicants also increases. Additionally, the online pool's wider geographical range result in practical and financial difficulties, as the pursuit of candidates who live farther away involves travel expenses and potential compactions related to relocation. The same study found that, while online recruitment tactics have not consistently cut costs or retrieved quality employees, they are more effective for certain job type and levels.

Two main tools used for online hiring are corporate recruitment websites and social networking websites. Corporate recruitment websites typically connect directly to the company's main website

and provide details about open position and the application process. In contract social networking website generally function as either personal networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) or professional networks aiming to connect applicants with potential employers (such as LinkedIn or Jobvite). A survey of 73 leading employers (Cober & Brown, 2006) revealed that the most prominent source of new hires in that year was organizational websites (21%), while social networking websites was the least prominent (5%). However, employers received more value in the recruiting process form their budgetary investments in social networking websites then in corporate employment websites.

Organizational recruitment websites, according to Cober et al. (2000), are inexpensive, time-efficient, and customizable, Applications and resume can analyzed, allowing for quicker and most meaningful information exchange. Social networking website possess these same benefits for online recruiters, with the possible exception of corporate customizability. In a survey issued by the Manpower Group (Employer perspective, 2010), employers in 35 countries and territories were asked the following question: "In what two areas do you believe external social networks can provide the biggest boost to your organization in the future?" (p.6). Fifteen percent of employers selected "recruiting new talent" (p.6) in response to this question. Twenty-one percent of employers in North and South America selected this answer, which was a higher rate than in the other regions.

Types of Applicants Reached by Social Recruiting in 2009, a nationwide survey (Rainie, 2010) found that 74% of American adults used the Internet. While the study did not detail the type of website accessed by these adults, demographics showed that 93% of the users were between the age of 18 and 29, and that use was positively correlated to both household income and educational achievement. These finding hold implications for the type of potential employees that online recruiters can access as they seek to fill open positions within their organizations. According to another study (Young & Foot, 2006), a jobseeker's opinion of corporate recruitment websites in general influences his response to online recruitment methods. The design and content of these recruitment websites were found to be significant in jobseekers' decisions to apply for certain positions, and it is reasonable to conclude that the design and content of social networking websites, as well as the page or profiles hosted by them, have similar effects.

A common assumption is that business-oriented social networking websites, such as LinkedIn, are frequented mostly by the desirable demographic of passive jobseekers. Dekay (2009), who claimed this assumption is not valid, defined the passive jobseeker as one who is currently employed and not looking for a career change, but who would be a valuable gain to an organization able to lure him away from his current position. LinkedIn was in instead found to consist primarily active jobseekers, which are defined as those who are currently employed but seeking new career ventures. Applicant attraction and person-organization (P-O) fit also help to determine the type of applicants who can be effectively reached through social recruitment methods. Through these new technologies, applicants can now provide information about their values and preferences, and potential employers can provide feedback regarding P-O fit before formal hiring techniques (e.g. interviewing) commence. A study (Dineen, Noe, and Ash, 2002) found that feedback about applicant potential fit with the organization enhanced their attraction. As could be expected, however, this study also found that individuals weigh such feedback against their own impressions rather than accepting it blindly.

❖ Key Pillars to Business Success: Strategy Innovation & Technology

SOCIAL RECRUITING - THE TWO SIDES OF THE COIN

Issues

- Advertising jobs: Many employers use social media to advertise and recruit new employees: for example, posting job vacancies on websites or using smart phone to attract interest from specific target audiences.

- Screening applicants: Employees are often unaware that their social networking pages are being used by employers as part of a screening process before offering interviews. They may be looking for evidence of what they consider inappropriate' behavior or language.

Benefits

- Saves time and money: There are clearly huge savings for employers using free, electronic for recruitment. They can also reach more potential recruits quickly -social networking sites have huge audiences.
- Less bureaucracy: A new generation of employees are using social media to job hunt by making direct contact with potential employers and HR and recruitment officers, often bypassing traditional recruitment processes. This trend - referred to as the 'death of the gatekeeper' — means that employees can be better informed about possible employers and more creative about how they promote themselves.

Dangers

- **Social exclusion:** Recruiting or assessing potential recruits using social media can exclude people who do not have access to these facilities. In 2009, 30% of the population were not using the internet (down from 41% in 2003) and around 9% of businesses with ten or more employees still had no internet access.
- Discrimination: Laws protecting people from discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, disability, race, marriage, religion and belief, and sexual orientation start at the recruitment stage. Employers could face employment tribunal hearings if they refused to interview someone as a result of a judgment they made based on a social networking profile.

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Social media has clearly proven its worth in building brands and fostering communication between organizations and their audiences. In the recruitment process using social media is relatively new, and in some cases can bring value to the process, but it can also hinder an otherwise proven and fast moving practice. Finding the best professionals is important to every organization, with many companies seeing social media as another avenue to finding, talent. However, our research shows social media isn't as effective as proven, more traditional methods professionals and organizations trust. The habits of passive candidates with iv demand skill sets must also be taken into account - they aren't actively looking for a new.

Job and will need a more personalized approach. Using social media to screen candidates is peppered with ethical, moral and privacy issues. Even more concerning is that by screening based on aspects unrelated to the role, hiring managers may be excluding top talent from the process,

eliminating a candidates chance to prove they are right for the organization. It is important that prior to launching a social media recruitment initiative companies take time to listen to the market. It should be evaluated whether social media is the right channel to reach the intended target audience, identify the investment of time and money, and decide if the resources used will be worth the return. Social recruiting is another strategy your organization can use to find the best candidates, but it is not a complete solution. It must complement your other attraction strategies.

It's clear that social media tools are transforming the way we work and will continue to do go in ways we can only imagine. It is critical for Human Resource professionals to understand what these tools are used for an assess the risks and opportunities they may present to an organization. Social media is redefining how companies innovate by connecting people and ideas in way that the previously not been explored. Organizations now have the ability to utilize knowledge from external audiences around the globe that they could never reach before.

It is changing the way we do business today. Additional benefits include the ability to enhance your public image, improve interactions with customers, and promote employee engagement. But it is not without internal and external risk.

Human Resources has always grappled with issue of reaching out. The last decade has provided the HR fraternity with this tool called social media which provides immense reach. It is up to the Hr fraternity to tap in to this. However, at the same time one needs to ensure that one is not too reliant and compromise on the hygiene factors of employee relations. Multiple websites provide the genuine views of the employees (careerblipss.com, blackdoor.com) and they really need to be taken seriously than Face Book or Twitter. Employees are speaking about their organizations on different platforms; it's about where one is looking. It is about looking in the right direction. One may provide the best of technology and platforms to keep in touch with employees, but then there is nothing better than being there. In the world of technology organizations becoming faceless, this is a classic mistake which should be avoided.

Employees should review the access settings on their social networking sites, to guard against invasion of privacy. Many commentators have drawn a parallel between the interaction that takes place on social networking sites and social gatherings in cafe's or pubs-both may be used to 'let off

steam' but electronic meetings often leave behind a permanent record of what was said and give employers the opportunity to eavesdrop in a way they would not have in the past.

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