

Digital Skills Report

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STUDENT NAME: Rummyana Petrova

STUDENT ID: 2415920

GROUP: 7



Prifysgol Cymru

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

University of Wales

Trinity Saint David

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1. Introduction

Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook have become important tools for finding and hiring employees. These platforms are no longer just for staying connected with friends and colleagues; they are now key tools for businesses to attract talent, promote their brand, and simplify the hiring process. LinkedIn focuses on professional networking, while Facebook allows more casual connections and can help find candidates who may not be actively looking for jobs. However, using social media for recruitment is not without challenges. Issues such as privacy concerns, potential bias, and the accuracy of candidate information must be considered. This report looks at how social media is used in recruitment, including its benefits and potential problems, based on research and industry studies.

2. The Role of Social Media in Recruitment

Social media has changed how companies hire people. LinkedIn, as a professional networking platform, is a popular choice for recruitment. It allows companies to directly connect with candidates, review their work history, and evaluate their skills. According to Jeske and Shultz (2016), LinkedIn is widely used by recruiters because it provides access to a large database of professionals with detailed profiles. The platform also offers tools like job postings, company pages, and search features that make it easier to find the right candidates for a job.

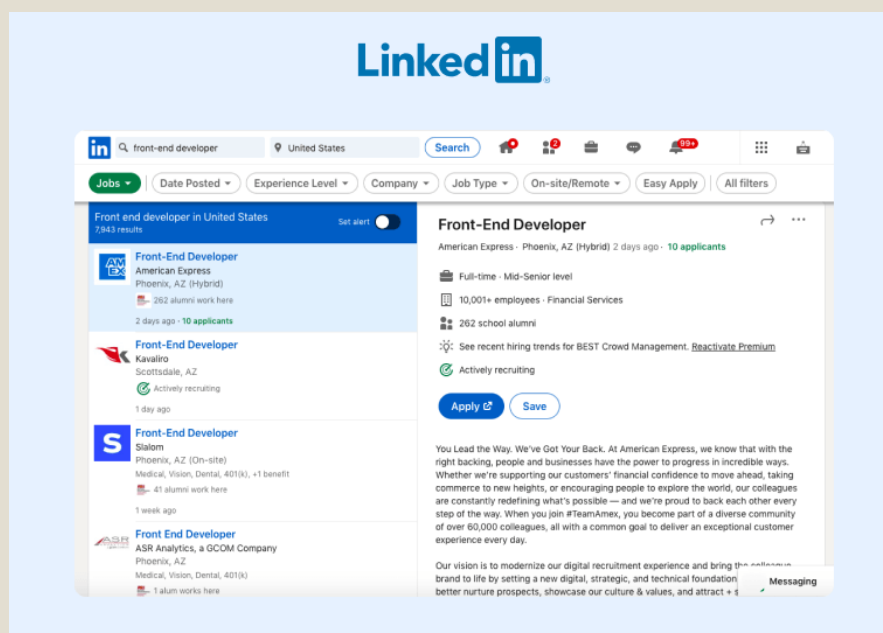


Figure 1. Job advertisement in LinkedIn

Source: <https://blog.gaggleamp.com/social-media-recruiting>

Facebook, on the other hand, has also become a useful recruitment tool, even though it is mostly a personal social platform. Companies use Facebook's job boards, ads, and groups to connect with potential candidates. A study by Nikolaou (2014) found that Facebook is good for reaching people who are not actively looking for jobs but might be interested in opportunities. This expands the talent pool and helps companies find skilled workers who may not be reachable through traditional methods. Furthermore, Facebook allows companies to engage with local communities, which can help in recruiting for roles that require regional knowledge or involvement.

3. Advantages of Using Social Media in Recruitment

Reaching a Wider Talent Pool

One big advantage of using social media for recruitment is the ability to reach more people, including those from different regions, industries, and backgrounds. Social media platforms are global, giving companies access to a diverse group of professionals. A study by Bondarouk and Olivas-Luján (2013) showed that companies using social media for hiring have a better chance of finding candidates with specialized skills. These platforms also enable companies to target specific groups of professionals based on factors like experience, industry, and even geographic location, making the search more precise and effective.

Lower Costs

Hiring through social media is often cheaper than traditional methods like print ads or job fairs. Posting job openings on platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook is usually free or costs much less, with the option to pay for ads to reach a larger audience. LinkedIn, for example, offers tools to target specific groups of people, making recruitment efforts more efficient. Melanthiou et al. (2015) suggest that using social media can save money by reducing advertising costs and helping recruiters filter out unqualified candidates faster. This cost-effectiveness is particularly helpful for smaller companies that might not have the budget for extensive recruitment campaigns.

Promoting Employer Brand

Social media also helps companies promote their brand and attract top talent. Platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook allow businesses to share posts, videos, and employee stories to showcase their work culture and values. A strong employer brand can attract candidates who align with the company's mission, leading to better hires and higher job satisfaction. Social media also allows companies to engage directly with potential candidates, answering questions and sharing insights about the workplace, which helps build trust and a positive image.

4. Disadvantages of Using Social Media in Recruitment

Privacy Issues and Bias

While social media can be helpful, it also raises ethical concerns, especially around privacy and discrimination. Recruiters may see personal details on a candidate's profile, such as age, religion, or hobbies, which could unintentionally affect their hiring decisions. This creates a risk of bias and unfair practices. Broughton et al. (2013) point out that employers might judge candidates based on personal information that has nothing to do with their professional skills. To address this, companies need to set clear ethical guidelines for using social media in recruitment.

Unreliable Information

Another issue is that the information on social media profiles may not always be accurate. Unlike resumes, social media profiles are often self-created and might not provide a complete or truthful picture of a person's skills or work ethic. Candidates might present themselves in an overly positive way on LinkedIn, which can mislead recruiters. Since social media lacks standard processes to verify information, it becomes harder to identify genuinely qualified candidates. Recruiters must balance

what they find online with other hiring methods, such as interviews and references, to ensure a fair assessment.

Excluding Certain Groups

Using social media for recruitment can unintentionally exclude people who are not active on these platforms. For example, older candidates or those with limited internet access might miss out on opportunities. This “digital divide” can reduce diversity in hiring. A study by Brown and Vaughn (2011) suggests that relying too much on social media could lead to discrimination against people from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are less tech-savvy. Companies must recognize this limitation and ensure that traditional recruitment methods are also used to avoid excluding talented individuals.

5. Conclusion

Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook have transformed how businesses hire employees. They provide access to a wide range of candidates, allow companies to showcase their values, and offer cost-effective hiring solutions. Recruiters can connect with both active and passive candidates, making these platforms essential for modern recruitment strategies.

However, social media recruitment comes with challenges, such as privacy concerns, potential bias, and the accuracy of candidate information. Over-relying on social media could also exclude certain groups of people, which may harm diversity and inclusivity. To use social media effectively, companies should set clear ethical guidelines, address potential risks, and ensure they are reaching a diverse range of candidates. By doing so, businesses can take full advantage of social media to build strong and diverse teams.

6. Reference list

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