

Social Recruiting is here to be!

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We are living in an age where internet is ubiquitous and facebook, twitter and LinkedIn are a way of life, both for the youth and the professionals alike. Facebook, Friendster, MySpace are a hit amongst youth and Twitter and LinkedIn cater to a far more mature audience. These sites are actually virtual meeting places where a user can fulfill varied purposes-connect with friends, discuss, share, exchange files and pictures, look for a date, a soul-mate or just befriend a stranger. Professionals use it this as a platform to increase their visibility, get noticed, talk about their company, tell about their services, scout out potential customers, and learn about their likes and dislikes. Joining different communities provides access to latest piece of information related to that community. Experts render advise on issues that one needs to seek consultation and the best part is that all this comes free of cost, without spending a single penny.

Social Recruiting

Social recruiting is a form of head hunting where human resources can leverage social media to tap in the potential recruits. It is about engaging with the users and using social media tools to search, source and recruit talent. LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook have over 535 million user base and as a recruiter you would love to have the largest pool of applicants that are talented, qualified and committed. This implies a lot of potential talent for your organization, but the million dollar question is how to tap this seemingly large pool of incumbents. Burger King, Reckitt Benckiser, SABMiller, Accenture are the big names along with hordes of small organizations that are eyeing social networking sites for recruitment. A revealing fact is that the smaller companies find it easy to try with social recruitment as they have fewer and more flexible HR policies to grapple with. Secondly, in younger companies the founders are all tech savvy, belonging to the i-pod generation, and for them the social networks are a natural habitat. Research

suggests that only 10-20 % of professionals are actively looking for new employment at any one given point of time. Yet, there are always passive job seekers which fit in very aptly for the position that the recruiter is trying to fill. By using social networks, the recruiters are more likely to arouse the interest of passive job seekers and thus enlarging the pool to draw from. Social media undeniably serves an incredible opportunity for the human resource department.

Reppler, Social Media Monitoring Service, surveyed above 300 hirers to study how and when do recruiters screen job candidates on different social networks. The study revealed that more than 90% recruiters visit the incumbent's profile on the social network as a step in their initial screening process. 69% recruiters have confirmed rejecting a candidate based on his/her content on the social networking site and a whopping 68% have confirmed hiring a candidate for the same reasons.

Understanding the different social networks

LinkedIn-LinkedIn is an interconnected network of over 65 million professionals from around the globe, representing 200 countries and 170 industries. You can find, be introduced to, and collaborate with qualified professionals that you need to work with to accomplish your goals," states the company's website. One can find old pals and re-connect, power ones career and get answers from industry experts willing to share advice. Thus, one can find professionals, get introduced, collaborate, and consult.

Twitter-Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send text based posts called 'tweets' of 140 characters. It is better described as 'sms of the internet'

Retention Factor

Good retention goes hand in hand with good recruitment. The potential recruits get a feel of what

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the company stands for, its culture and what the job is all about. Besides getting a technical overview, the candidate also gets to have a cultural overview too. This minimizes the mismatch and thus results in higher retention. More often than not, they are referred by the current employee of the organization and this familiarity further strengthens the ties with the company.

Implementing a social recruitment strategy

All social networking sites are not alike and hence cannot be used in the same fashion. They cater to different audiences and hence should be used discerningly. This necessitates an understanding of the level and profile at which you need to hire and then tailoring the strategy for that particular group. For instance, a graduate is more likely to be on Facebook and a more mature and experienced professional on LinkedIn. A quick format of a tweet can be used to point a large group of people to a new blog post, where more information can then be given. One needs to have a following list on twitter because ones tweet would get unnoticed without any followers. Using the right hashtags ensures reaching the right audience. LinkedIn touts itself as a professional networking tool. This implies that it has all mechanisms set in to connect a company to its potential employees. The HR managers should be meticulous in posting the company profile on LinkedIn and checking that the profile ensures that the first impression the candidate is receiving is really the right impression. Company pages should be regularly updated to list the current employees, past employees, new hires and promotions and changes to staff. New job postings can be also be advertised there, as well as information on the company to help potential recruits. The company employees should be encouraged to be on LinkedIn for brand building and make use of their connections and contacts of their previous careers. Making use of industry/skillset groups on LinkedIn helps attracting staff with specialized skills, which are otherwise difficult to find and attract. A candidate looking for information on a company is sure to visit Facebook and this makes it essential that the company is well represented and the page looks loved.

Using LinkedIn

- ? Post the available jobs and look for prospects. It costs \$ 195 to post a job for 30 days.
- ? Can sign up for LinkedIn Talent Advantage-an exclusive array of tools for recruiters. It has to be paid for.
- ? Build connections with people that you already know-friends, peers, former colleagues, former bosses, local entrepreneurs, clients. You can really bank on their connections for a position that you are looking for.
- ? Join groups that help you connect with potential candidates. Suppose you are on the lookout for HR consultant, you can find and join an affiliated group on LinkedIn and start discussions with people in the group.
- ? Use your network activity box (Status Box) to broadcast that you are hiring.
- ? Evaluate the profile of the person whom you have identified as a possible good fit for the position to see the complete profile including the picture, recommendations from peers and colleagues, second and third degree connections of the person for a more personal referral.

Using Facebook

- ? Use Facebook Directory to search for users, pages, groups and applications.
- ? Post a job in Facebook Marketplace (its free). This ad requires the basic information pertaining to the job. This differs from a Facebook ad in its inability to target a specific audience for the vacant position.
- ? Build a Facebook Page for your company. Facebook Page is a public profile that enables sharing information about your business and products with facebook users. Post relevant and updated information about your company.
- ? Post a Facebook Ad. This platform has an edge over its rivals as it has a Laser Targeting ability and can thus help you identify the precise audience that you are looking for. The system asks you a series of questions on the

characteristics of people that you wish should see your ad-their age, gender, profile, specific keywords related to the position. Facebook then calculates how many users are a good fit for that position. You have the option of paying per click, per impression and set how much you are willing to pay.

Using Twitter

- ? Tweet the available jobs. "Looking for a sales executive in XYZ. Competitive salary. Apply at (include a shortened url)
- ? Expand your following by building network and relationship with clients on twitter.
- ? Run a quick search (search.twitter.com) for anybody discussing a specific keyword and surely you can get a deluge of contacts. You can search by location, by industry or interest, by hashtag, by popularity, by time and many more such options are available.

? Use hashtags, #, to make your job postings stand out. Hashtags enable filtering and finding information on twitter. Including a hashtag with a keyword in your tweet would make it instantly searchable. #job, # hiring, # NAJ (Need a Job?), #career are a few examples to mention.

? Having found a potential candidate on twitter evaluate their activity to see their following, how frequently do they tweet, quality of their tweets, are they only interested in posting updates or they actually respond by retweeting others?

The flip side

Social media is open and provides a platform for both the recruiters and candidates to have a dialogue. But the medium is largely uncontrollable. One has control over what is written on the website but cannot control what mediates and disseminates to millions through social media.