

Using social media to recruit a diverse workforce



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Studies of competitiveness throughout the world have found that societies that underutilize their educated minority groups by preventing them (directly or indirectly) from working in professional and managerial positions lose billions to reduced productivity and efficiency each year (Sayers and Wilson, 1997). Many organizations are becoming aware of the growing diversity in the communities they do business and are responding by developing strategies for hiring and retention in which diversity is linked to the organization's mission and business objectives (Miller & Katz, 2002).

Typically, the evolving mission is to increase market share with a diverse client base, enhance relationships with the diverse community, increase diversity within the employee population and enhance the success of existing employees through development and mentoring programs (Miller & Katz, 2002). In terms of addressing employee diversity within their organizations, increasing numbers of organizations have begun to examine opportunities for recruiting employees presented by the growing popularity and ubiquity of Social Media.

Social Media, Social Networking, Blogging and Online Communities are a few of the terms that collectively have become known as Web 2.0 (Leader-Chivee & Cowan, 2008). As Kaplan and Haenlin (2010) suggest, Web 2.0 was an ideological shift in which content on the Internet was opened to modification and commentary by all users instead of being created and controlled by a single entity. As noted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), the popularity of Social Media tools has resulted in user registration counts exceeding the populations of entire countries in South America and Europe.

Leader-Chivee & Cowan (2008) suggest that the popularity of Social Media rises from people's attraction to posting personal information and commentary in public forums for millions of other users to view. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) point out that despite earlier trends, growth is not limited to teenagers and that increasing numbers of Generation X (aged 35-44) are joining and actively engaging in Social Networks.

In order to put the use of Social Networks into a perspective that takes the full potential of cultural diversity into account, it is necessary to study statistics on overall use of the Internet. By December 2008, 1 billion unique visitors were online, with over 41% in the Asia-Pacific region, 28% in Europe a little over 18% in the United States and 7.

4% in Latin America (Netpop, 2009). As the Netpop study (2009) went further to reveal, the United States currently has more Internet users than any other country but will be surpassed in 2012 by Asian, specifically Chinese users.

This international growth will create more opportunities for workers who are increasingly using the Internet as a medium to market themselves to recruiters and human resource personnel via Social Media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter (Roberts & Roach, 2009). Despite this growth however, the question arises as to whether the increase in use of Social Media has any correlation with the growing demand for qualified workers.

Leader-Chivee & Cowan (2008) cite a recent study in which 75% of 400 human resource executives from 40 countries reported concerns about their ability to attract, retain and develop future leaders and that despite the

<https://assignbuster.com/using-social-media-to-recruit-a-diverse-workforce/>

economic downturn, that a shortage of qualified talent to run businesses is looming.

To complicate matters, Leader-Chivee & Cowan (2008) cite the US Board of Labor Statistics that reinforces that as the American workforce ages - by 2014 employees aged 55-64 will grow by 42% - that younger employees entering the workforce will not have the skills needed to take on roles for which they are needed.

Add to this an observed tendency of younger workers to spend less time in the same job as previous generations - 72% of educated workers will stay in the same job less than two years - and it becomes clearer to organizations that they must engage students and younger workers in dialogue through outreach on Social Media sites and online communities (Leader-Chivee & Cowan, 2008).

According to Gensing-Pophal (2009), Human Resources departments are increasingly using Social Media sites to find job candidates with a survey suggesting that of interviewed hiring managers, 75% used LinkedIn, 48% used Facebook and 26% used Twitter to research candidates before extending offers. An equally interesting survey was conducted by Elmore (2009) that surveyed Management Information Systems students aged 18-25 and found that 73% of them had used Social Media sites to search got internships and jobs, 43% wanted to used Social Media to find a job, compared to only 8% who preferred a company website and 13% who would use a career fair.

To understand how each of the most popular Social Media sites is used by recruiters, it is important to first understand the purpose and focus of each.

LinkedIn is one of the most popular Social Networks with a focus on professionals that facilitates expertise requests and business inquiries while including job boards, research tools and special interest groups (Leader-Chivee & Cowan, 2008). As of August 4, 2010, there are over 75 million LinkedIn members across the globe (LinkedIn, 2010).

Site demographics reveal that 52% of members are male, 48% are female. 38% are between the ages of 35-49 and 32% are 50+.

26% are ages 18-34. 83% are Caucasian, 7% are Asian, 6% are African American and 3% are other. 78% have no children. 38% earn more than \$100, 000 per year and 31% earn between \$60, 000 and \$100, 000 per year (Quantcast, 2010). Facebook was originally started as way to connect college students and alumni and has since grown to 500 million registered members worldwide (Facebook, 2010).

At its core, Facebook is a Social Networking site that allows the sharing of text-based communication and the sharing of media like pictures, videos and music (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Facebook is appealing to companies both as a marketing and recruiting platform due to its high percentage of college educated users (53%), generally conservative profile content and customizable privacy settings (Leader-Chivee & Cowan, 2008). Site demographics reveal that 55% of members are female, 45% are male. 2% are between the ages of 18-34 and 22% are between the ages of 13-17.

75% are Caucasian, 13% are African American, 6% are Hispanic, 5% are Asian and 1% are other (Quantcast, 2010). Twitter is a real-time microblogging platform that allows users to send 140 character (a derivative of text message limitations) messages (or tweets) to a public forum (Twitter, 2010). Site demographics reveal that 55% of members are female, 45% are male. 5% are between the ages of 18-34 and 14% are between the ages of 13-17.

69% are Caucasian, 16% are African American, 11% are Hispanic, 3% are Asian and 1% are other (Quantcast, 2010). There are however, a growing number of niche Social Networks that cater to specific demographics. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) discussed a case in which the U. S. Army took its recruitment campaign to the Social Networking site, Univision to court its Spanish-speaking Hispanic audience.

Aside from the obvious advantage of more directly reaching its target audience, the Army also preferred Univision's policy of moderating comments posted to the site over Facebook's open, unmoderated commenting system.

With an understanding of the nature and uses for the most popular Social Media sites, Gensing-Pophal (2009) claims that there are 3 primary ways in which Social Media can be used in the recruitment process. The first method mentioned is to post (tweet) available jobs using a dedicated Twitter account that links back to the organization's career website (Gensing-Pophal, 2009).

When using LinkedIn, Gensing-Pophal (2009) suggests that one way to narrow the scope of the job posting in order to make more meaningful

<https://assignbuster.com/using-social-media-to-recruit-a-diverse-workforce/>

connections (to be more true to the essence of Social Networking) is to post a link on their career website that takes the user to LinkedIn and asks them if they already know anyone working at the organization. If the user has a LinkedIn account already set up, connecting with the person they know is easy and translates into more corroborative referrals (Grensing-Pophal, 2009).

The next method mentioned involves “trolling” for potential candidates by using LinkedIn to discover whether a recruiter’s former colleague might be in a position where they are looking for a new job or are in possession of needed skills.

Further, trolling is an effective method to prevent resume overload that often accompanies posting a job especially in the current economic situation where so many candidates are competing for a smaller pool of available jobs (Grensing-Pophal, 2009).

The third method described is the “checking out” approach in which recruiters use LinkedIn in addition to traditional background check processes in order to see what other people are saying about the candidate. As LinkedIn provides a recommendation feature that allows users to comment on their opinions about current and former colleagues, this information can be useful in understanding if a candidate has the skills to work well with others (Grensing-Pophal, 2009). Another benefit noted by Grensing-Pophal (2009) is that Social Media sites tend to be less expensive to use than traditional methods of recruitment.

In fact, sites like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter are all free to set up and use. Also, the community-driven nature of Social Media sites translates into less promotion and marketing needed to draw attention to them. Users of all three services opt-in to following other users pages or profiles and automatically receive updates based on customized notification settings. However, despite the positive aspects of Social Media in augmenting the recruiting process, Grensing-Pophal (2009) notes that it will likely not replace more traditional methods of recruitment in the near future.

As Elmore (2009) suggests, Social Media can increase the potential talent pool from which to engage and recruit talent, but it cannot replace face-to-face interactions.