SOCIAL MEDIA: AN ULTIMATE PLATFORM FOR EMPLOYER BRANDING

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Abstract
A strong and authentic online presence can mean big things for Organizationsr company's employer brand—from driving employee engagement to showing potential candidates how awesome Organizationsr culture is? Growing recognition of the role of social media, mobile apps or responsive sites, a variety of media and personalization of messaging are all increasing in consumer branding and marketing. The same approach should be applied when communicating employer branding. The purpose of this paper is to make a conceptual review of the: use of social media for employer branding, different social media that can be used for employer branding, need for social employer branding development, social media employer branding process and social media employer branding benefits.

Introduction
The advent of Web 2.0 has created new ways to communicate, collaborate and share content (Enders, Hungenberg, Denker, & Mauch 2008) which also pave the ways for various social media as Visibility and interaction online is essential to attract top talent to your organisation. People want to work for an organisation they've heard of and a name they trust. When information about your company and industry is readily available online, promoting your brand across digital channels is essential to engage and connect with existing and future employees. Organisations attempt to influence job seekers' application intentions and decisions favourably through several ways. In a global labour market, the key to success is attracting and retaining the best talent, and brands are considered critical in attracting the best employees (Cappelli, 2001). Employer branding focuses on creating the image of organizations as potential employers (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004) and organizations deploy various employer branding tools to generate and maintain their image in the mind of prospective employees. Major external employer branding tools used by organizations include campus reach, case study competitions, pre placement talks, campus brand ambassadors and participation in the best employer surveys (Saini, Rai, & Chaudhary, 2013). The recent tool in this basket is social media. Social media is increasingly used in employer branding and for recruitment purposes, and companies are increasingly investing resources in the use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn (Davison, Maraist, & Bing, 2011; Sivertzen, Nilsen, & Olafsen, 2013). For example, about 44 percent recruiters used social and professional networks for hiring quality talent in 2014 compared to 36 per cent in the previous year, as per the LinkedIn survey covering over 4,125 talent acquisition leaders globally (Business Line, 2014). Also, 73 percent of recruiters plan to increase their investment in social recruiting in 2014 and about 83 percent of job seekers flock to Facebook and LinkedIn (Jobvite, 2014).

Objectives of the Study
- To study the need of Social Media for employer branding.
- To explore how to use social media for employer branding.
- To study different social media platform for building employer brand.
- To study the social media employer branding process.
- To study the benefit of employer branding using social media.

Research Methodology
The research methodology is descriptive cum analytical in nature. It draws from secondary research and review of available literature on the use of social media for employer branding and its emerging trends.

Review of Literature
Review of literature is an essential part of any research work. I have consulted plethora of academic journals, studies, reports and books to present an exhaustive view of the existing literature on the research theme and other connected issues. A brief review of some of the studies is attempted here:

1) Sharma 2002, following the advent of the internet, business marketing companies have started to appreciate this tool as a value-adding channel that enables companies to provide information, to accommodate connectivity, community and transactions, and to share cost reductions.
2) Along similar lines to Sharma (2002), Walters (2008) advocates three value-adding strategies when using the internet, namely information rich strategy, relational exchange, and joint learning strategy.
3) Collins (2007) suggests that the knowledge about an organization deeply impacts the interest or intention to apply for a job.
4) Coyle & Thorson, 2001; Vries et al., 2012, Research shows that a medium degree of interactivity of social media content leads to positive attitude towards a brand.

5) Davison, Maraist, & Bing, 2011; Sivertzen, Nilsen, & Olafsen, 2013 found that Social media is increasingly used in employer branding and for recruitment purposes, and companies are increasingly investing resources in the use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

6) Business Line, 2014, About 44 percent recruiters used social and professional networks for hiring quality talent in 2014 compared to 36 per cent in the previous year, as per the LinkedIn survey covering over 4,125 talent acquisition leaders globally .

7) Jobvite, 2014, About 73 percent of recruiters plan to increase their investment in social recruiting in 2014 and about 83 percent of job seekers flock to Facebook and LinkedIn.

Important Social Media Sites for Employer Branding

There are numerous social media channels that can be used for branding, but it is not practical or necessary to utilise all of them. Examine the tools available in conjunction with your message and audience to decide on a social media strategy that plays to the strength of organizations brand. For instance, if cutting edge office environment is to be highlighted, then recording can be done and video on Youtube can be posted that showcases it. To increase engagement with this post encourages the staff to comment on their experience working for the company. With more than 500 million members in over 200 countries and territories, LinkedIn is no doubt one of the world's largest social and professional networking sites, making it a great talent attraction channel to add to recruitment marketing machine. Other resources that potential employees turn to when checking you out include:
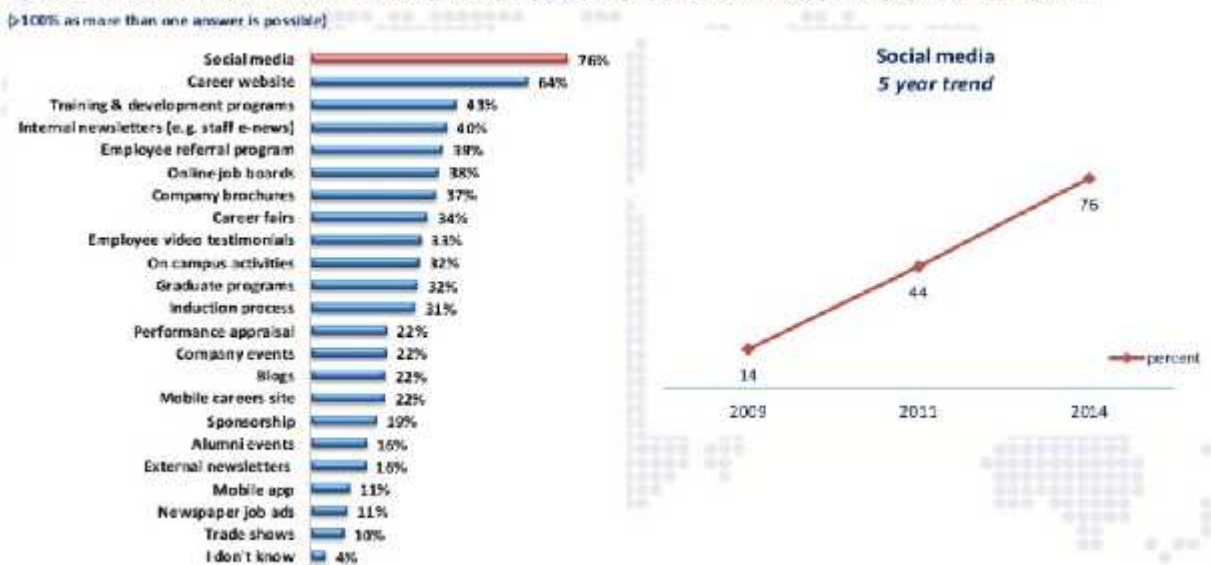
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Blogs (both corporate and individually authored)
- Youtube
- Instagram
- SnapChat
- Organization's career site

Need of Social Media for Employer Branding With Emerging Trends and Process of Building Strong Employer Brand

Having a social media presence for Organizations is no longer a feature — it's a requirement. Millennial and Generation Z job seekers are digitally savvy and spend several hours a day on social media. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and youtube are just a few of the channels where Organizations potential employees are spending their time and learning about the companies where they might want to work. Organizations need to be on those channels if they're going to compete for top talent. There are various employer brand communication medium as given in the following figure:

Employer brand communications

Figure 10: What is the main communication medium your company is planning to use to communicate your Employer Brand during 2014?
(>100% as more than one answer is possible)

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As per the study done by Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2012, the social media contents can be classified into three categories: entertaining content, informative content and interactive content. The following Figure establishes relationship between social media marketing, employer branding and prospect employee.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

To be successful on social media, Organizations need a strategy for their organisation employer brand that goes beyond just talking about Organizations's products and services. Organizations need to generate accessible, directed content that speaks to individual candidates. Here's how:

1. Utilize a **multitude of channels and mediums** to engage the audience: from videos on YouTube to photos on Instagram, great content on purpose-built Careers sites through to employee reviews and testimonials on third-party sites
2. Draw on the own employees as **brand ambassadors**, showcasing 'on the ground' experiences through case studies, testimonials, videos and encouraging employees to promote their lives at work on social media
3. **Connect directly to the pain points, wants, attitudes and concerns** of the target demographic, answering questions and providing solutions
4. Be **"employee centric";** following a trend towards "consumer-centric" marketing, these brands include a notable focus on "You" (Your training and development; your career) as opposed to exclusively focusing on "Our" (Our business, our success)
5. Just **go beyond the job**, including insights into social events and culture, CSR, values and areas in which they can offer **work-life balance**, flexibility or investment into employee development outside their core role responsibilities

Benefits of Employer Branding

- **Social Recruiting - Market Job Offers & Culture where Talent Spends Time:** Market job offers and employer reputation in channels where prospective hires spend time. Recent facts show that 50% of Facebook users go to Facebook daily and 1/4 go to it five times a day. More importantly, if an organization wishes to be perceived as innovative and cutting-edge, it's best to be visible in social media in a space where younger generations are active.
- **Private Social Networks – Use Alumni Groups for Boomerang Hiring:** Create a private group of VIPs, like an alumni group. It's a brilliant way to stay in touch with ex-colleagues and a perfect channel to use for boomerang hiring, which is known to be more cost efficient and profitable for organizations than recruiting someone completely new to the organization. A great example is J.P. Morgan's Continuum where they have 20,000 professionals and are able to constantly fill vacancies.
- **Social Referrals – Leads to High-Quality Hires:** Great people know other great people. If an organization has done a brilliant job in recruiting some top performers, it's highly likely that they know other highly skilled and competent people. Organizations should use their employees' networks and personal contacts to recruit other key players. The quality of hire is much better with an employee referral program than if HR goes out into the wild alone and misguided.
- **Social sourcing – Use Social Media to Recruit top Candidates:** HR can use social media for candidate profiling and to reach potential job seekers. Moreover, recruiters can filter out candidates according to industry, job level and

location among other specifications. EY (Ernst & Young) is a good example of a professional service firm interacting, engaging and recruiting recent graduates via their Facebook pages. Another important tool, among others, is LinkedIn Recruiter that allows people to search the entire network for passive candidates and connect with anyone who has an interesting profile.

- **Social Reputation Management – Join and Positively Influence Conversations:** There are a number of reputation management tools on the market that enable HR people to monitor public sentiment about an organizations reputation. The main benefits of these tools are that it helps HR to take part in important dialogues and address both current and prospective employee needs. Organizations should use a social reputation management tool to monitor and build their corporate reputation online.
- **Big Data Benchmarking – Empowers HR to create attractive Job Offers and predict Employee Behavior:** HR professionals can benchmark an organization's salary levels for different roles to other companies in one or many industries. For example, an HR department wanting to provide an attractive job offer, with a competitive salary and benefits package, can use such information to help them attract, recruit and retain hard to get talent. Big data can also be used for predictive analytics to understand such factors as employee satisfaction and performance and determine how long an employee might stay or how much they expect to earn based on employment history.
- **Social Performance Management – Use Performance Feedback to Motivate Employees:** Social media can be used as a perfect forum to showcase and congratulate different employee achievements, which in turn can create a positive environment. Furthermore, managers can get a better understanding of team collaborations and what activities and teams are producing the best results. Social media can therefore be used to manage performance and foster an environment of business growth.
- **Social Learning- Offers a Fun and Interactive Method of Professional Development:** Via rating, gamification, reviews and discussion forums of various learning programmes, employers can engage their employees in learning initiatives and can encourage personal development. It also offers a perfect forum for people to share knowledge and experiences and give the opportunity for new hires and junior staff to learn from top performers.

Conclusion

Employer branding through social media isn't just delivering a message, it's a conversation between organization, its employees and the wider market. The employer brand helps organization, and the opportunities, stand out amongst the rest— and social media helps to get that employer brand in front of candidates. The benefits of a consistent approach to branding on social media won't be seen overnight, but implement a tracking process from the outset so that you can measure the success of your strategy. Although crucial for candidate attraction, ensuring positive employer branding also plays a big part in the engagement and ongoing retention of your top talent. Candidates who turn into employees have done so, in part, because of their positive experience of your brand. Using social media for employer branding allows Orgnisations to put best foot forward while candidates are researching opportunities. Employer may even capture someone's attention who isn't looking for a new opportunity! If Employer want to build a strong talent pipeline and hire the best candidates on the market, employer branding is non-negotiable. By using technology to improve employee experience and create a culture of cooperation, an organization's management can more easily deliver on business objectives.

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