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Title The effect of social media platforms on recruitment methods and activities of

recruiters in Ireland

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Degree Course MA Human Resource Management 2011 – 2012

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the MA in HRM

Abstract

Traditionally, recruitment methods varied between press advertising through newspapers, magazines and through recruitment agencies However, since the new millennium online job Boards and company websites have paved the way for a new era of recruitment methods Recruitment methods have become effective with messages getting communicated faster, candidates being found quicker and roles being filled swifter

However, since the economic downturn and subsequent recession there has been an increase in unemployment which has led to an influx of users on job boards and job postings on websites This has resulted in vacant positions receiving hundreds, and in some cases thousands of applicants With this noted, it has now given both employers and employees alike the initiative by which to differentiate themselves from their competitors and their work colleagues

With the evolution of websites such as LinkedIn, recruiters have now been given a new way by which to find candidates This dissertation will look at the effect which both LinkedIn and the other main social media platforms have had on recruitment methods and activities

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the extent to which social media has affected the recruitment activities and methods A selected number of recruitment professionals were questioned to ascertain their views on social media and the manner by which its evolution has affected their day to day work With the responses from the interviews and the related literature review, a list of findings were compiled by the researcher which it is believed will give some bearing on how social media has affected recruitment methods and activities

Acknowledgements

The creation of this dissertation has been one of the most difficult undertakings I have had in a long time It is imperative that the following people be mentioned as without their help, this would not have been possible

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Glossary

HR   =   Human Resources

HRM   =   Human Resource Management

SHRM =   Strategic Human Resource Management

IHRM   =   International Human Resource Management

Contents

1. Introduction

1 1 Background

'' As part of an organization's recruitment strategy, social media is compelling It is also still in the stages of being formulated, being adapted, and being adopted, which for many adds a layer of angst and apprehension And yet, in this climate of slow economic recovery, companies have a need to get it right when it comes to hiring decisions, and they have a need to get it right in a way that is cost-effective and efficient'' (Sherrie, 2011 19)

This research is undertaken in the knowledge that the standards and practices of recruitment professionals have changed from the traditional methods of press advertising and job boards (online) of old Recruitment is required to hire the best candidate or candidates for a role or team Social Media has provided a new platform from which recruiters can actively source and hire the most talent employees who are known as 'passive candidates'

1 2 Title/ Research Issue

Title 'The effect of social media platforms on recruitment methods and activities of recruiters in Ireland

1 3 Aims of the research

This research aims to outline the impact which social media has had on the activities and methods of recruiters and the extent to which they use social media as part of their day to day work for both sourcing and networking

1 4 Potential Significance

Since the start of the recession in 2008/2009, there has been an influx of candidates applying for all jobs on the market With this in mind, recruiters now have a large market from which to source from Currently, the use of social media is on the up and is providing a shift away from the more traditional methods The significance of this piece of research will be to improve both the organisations and the researchers' knowledge of the varying approaches which companies in Ireland have towards using social media as part of their recruitment strategy

1 5 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this statement is to identify the extent to which social media is now used in recruitment methods both from a sourcing and networking view point and to determine in part if these new methods are effective in attaining better results in recruitment and if there are any downsides to using them

1 6 Overall Research Objectives

The dissertation will look at the effects which social media has had on targeting candidates in companies in Ireland It will focus on the importance which recruiters place on social media despite a worsening economic crisis as well as looking at the changes from the traditional advertising of jobs such as online and paper based job boards

The research questions are

1   To identify the effect which social media has had on recruitment methods being used in both agencies and in-house recruitment

a) To identify which of the social media platforms is the most popular for recruitment purposes

b) To analyse the main perceived benefits which companies have of using social media in recruitment

c) To analyse the potential drawbacks of using social media in recruitment

2 To study the effect which social media has had on companies

a) For sourcing candidates

b) For employer branding purposes

3 To establish the importance which recruiters place on social media as part of their recruitment strategy?

a) How much emphasis is on the War for Talent?

b) How are social media activities monitored and measured by organisations

4 To examine the extent which recruiters use Social Media to perform background checks on candidates

1.7 Research Objectives

To develop a solid understanding about the use of social media in recruitment activities and methods used by recruiting professionals

1 8 Purpose of the research

The purpose is to determine how social media has benefited recruiters from a sourcing and networking perspective as well as also looking at the extent to which recruiters use social media to perform background searches on candidates

1 9 Process of the research

The process of the research will be qualitative in the form of semi-structured interviews

1 10 Logic of the research

The logic is to develop an analysis of the impact which social media has had on recruiting both from a sourcing and networking perspective in order to enable them to find top quality candidates in the marketplace

1 11 Outcome of the research

The outcome is to improve the understanding and knowledge on the impact which social media has had on the methods and activities by which recruiting professionals work with It is envisaged that a number of benefits will be identified from this research which will allow recruiters, directors and other hr professionals to ascertain as to what is the best methods which they should use in their own strategies for recruitment and to also help identify weaknesses in the use of such platforms

1 12 Limitations of research

This research is concerned with the social media methods and activities used by recruiting professionals It will concentrate on a number of key industries in Ireland however, there is not a big enough sample from each industry which to make generalisations from and

therefore more research is needed in this area As well as this, there were also 3 scheduled interviewers which had to be cancelled due to scheduling conflicts

1 13 Delimitations of research

This sample represents a proportion of recruiting professionals, both at a junior and senior level as well as independent recruiting consultants, in the Republic of Ireland There may be organisational restrictions or limitations on the amount of resources being allocated to recruitment and the research will not take account of this factor at this time

1 14 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter one (1) introduced the area of the proposed research and its significance in the context of recruitment and the impact which social media has had on a recruiter's ability to source and network effectively It states the purpose and objectives of the research, a summary of the research methodology used to achieve the aim of the study, together with the desired outcome of the research

Chapter two (2) places the research issues in context and the population under study A review of the literature surrounding the broad area of recruitment and the use of social media within recruitment is discussed m relation to its findings The benefits of using social media platforms in recruiting will be explored as well as the possible disadvantages there might be in adopting the use of social media This section will initially justify the theoretical perspective for this researcher The current research literature will be reviewed and the methodology utilised for this study will be justified within this context   The areas of research will be analysed in relation to the existing literature and a summary of the discussions will be given

Chapter three (3) introduces how the research strategy was employed and how subsequent data analysed Initial findings will be detailed and discussed with reference to their relationship with the questions posed The data display used will be used to summarise the findings discussed in each area

Chapter four (4) will discuss a summary of the results of the study, detailing the main findings and their relationship to the research objectives and questions Findings which may be generalisable will be listed The implications of the research for recruiting professionals and their effectiveness at their job are discussed The issues of reliability and validity of the research conducted are discussed in relation to the sample, followed by a discussion on the limitations of the study The report also concludes with a suggestion of issues deemed to be relevant for research studies

Chapter five (5) will draw conclusions from the data gathered from the research interviews and link them back to the main themes of the literature review and also the research questions

2. Literature Review

2 1 Recruitment Theory

Grimshaw (2009 7) defines recruitment as the 'process of bringing a person or persons into the organisation, whereas selection is defined as 'the process of deciding between a group of one or more candidates who is most suitable for a particular role or organisational profile' Gardner (1997) supports this by stating that recruitment is the search for potential job applicants in sufficient numbers to enable the organisation to move to the stage of selection Gardner (1997) goes on to say that this search has the goal of finding the ideal candidates or candidates, whereby candidates can be screened for selection The process of finding ideal candidates vary depending on the type of industry, however there are common tools which organisations use to source candidates Torrington, Hall & Taylor (2008) describe traditional methods such as recruitment advertising, where job ads are placed on suitable media such as newspapers, magazines and in recruitment agencies However, since the new millennium there has been a sharp rise in the popularity of e-recruitment Torrington et al (2008) support this by stating that the area of online recruitment has had one of the most striking developments

2 2 Traditional Online Recruiting Methods

Borstorff, Marker & Bennett (2007) states that online recruiting tools include four identified techniques including company websites, general online job boards, online newspaper classified ads and job postings through specialised job boards or certification websites Borstorff et al (2007) goes on to explain that the two most popular forms are websites and job boards This is in part due to the large uptake in users, especially from

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the so called Generation"Y" (which will be explained further on) Vasquez (2010) supports this by stating that most young professionals seeking jobs begin their search by looking at online job boards However, as Russo (2011) explains, job boards are neither as cheap nor as efficient as they once were, in part due to the explosion of users As well as this because of the economic downturn and resulting cost cutting measures, companies are keen to save money and replace humans with technology which has meant they have had to turn to technology However, this has also created problems Russo (2010) supports this by stating due to the ineffective screening process of software, the popularity of job boards is waning Not only are organisations having issues with screening applicants but they also having trouble identifying and targeting their ideal candidate Due to the fact that job boards are open to millions of users, their inability to target industry/ trade specific jobs or professions shows how ineffective these systems have become

2 3 Social Media Study

Henderson, Bowled (2010 239) define 'social media as collaborative online applications and technologies that enable participation, connectivity, user generated content, sharing of information and collaboration amongst a community of users' Henederson, Bowley (2010) goes on to explain that traditional online media was statistics based and although users could read content online, the opportunity to engage in long-term conversations was missing However, unlike this social media allows users to interact, contribute to discussions, hear and view streamed videos and give feedback In looking to reach their target candidates better, businesses have now had to turn to other methods, such as social media in order to find better quality candidates Ashling (2007) supports this view by stating that social media encourages user to participate, providing a channel to give feedback and share information The resulting participatory and collaborative culture

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created allows users to feel comfortable expressing themselves, creating and sharing creations and communicating with a variety of people across the world In applying this to business, Foux (2010) notes that the benefits of implementing a social commerce strategy include increasing engagement and creating profitable conversations Reiter (2010) explains that social media can be extremely helpful for all professionals (from entry level to executive) both for managing their careers and for networking with their professional colleagues It is networking which is of vital importance to employers in looking to better target candidates Vasquez (2010) notes that in a recent Harvard study, it was found that up to 80% of businesses do not advertise job openings Part of the reason for this is because many jobs are now recruited for internally However due to the specific nature of some jobs, being able to effectively source and attract quality candidate's means employers have to be pro active and build relationships in order find the right people Reiter (2010) explains that social networking can be very successful as a means of generating contacts and making initial introductions in the pursuit of filling open positions It is the issue of companies targeting their candidates better through social media which will be explored further in this study

2 4 New Recruiting Standards

Employers are now much tighter about how they are recruiting and the amount of resources they are making available to effective recruitment of candidates Zappe (2010) explains that employers are looking for more ways to distinguish candidates Thus, as is explained by Zappe (2010), there has been a sharp rise in skills testing as the pressure to make the right hire has increased dramatically since the start of the recession In looking to find better quality candidates, employers are now looking to social media to target more quality candidates As stated above, the traditional means of recruiting through media such

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as job boards is currently yielding poor results as the user base is too big Employers are then left with a big stack of resumes, some of which are not related or targeted to the position available

West (2011) explains how social media is no longer a trend, it is a phenomena here to stay Sambhi (2009) supports this by saying that social media is a long term prospect and it is now up to organisations to adapt Therefore, incorporating social media/ networking into recruitment strategies is essential for employers to succeed today Kohnle (2009) explains that social media has become more than just a way of chatting and interacting and has evolved into an important job search and networking tool Sherrie (2010) supports this by stating that several years ago it was acceptable for organisations to pass on Social Media, however due to the changing nature of technology and the manner by which people interact, businesses have had to adapt Sherrie (2010) goes onto say that activities such as job boards or job fairs are proving less valuable to organisations and so the need to change is ever present for organisations who have not yet undertaken social media activities Therefore the importance of social media activities is vital for successful employer brands, in particular for 'Generation Y', which organisations are currently trying to target Parker (2011) states that the new generation of young talent have grown up with Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter and it is these natural outlets which they use most commonly Dickey, Lewis (2010) supports this by stating that social media presents marketing professionals with a vehicle through which they can be relevant and meaningful to the demographic that is 'Generation Y'

In order to understand better the opportunities which social media offers to businesses and employers, a thorough analysis is needed of the most common types of social media For

the purposes of this dissertation, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter and blogging will be analysed

2 4 1 Facebook

Decker (2006) describes Facebook as a college centric social networking website developed to allow users to interact with friends, create professional profiles, post photos and messages Businesses can do likewise in setting up a profile for themselves where they can build a brand Information on their page can include a short history, contact information and what the aims and goals are of the organisation The number of users has exploded as can be seen from Appendix 1 With the amount of users Facebook holds, this gives companies an ideal user base upon which to build an online presence and connect with candidates Parker (2008) explains how companies such as PWC, KPMG and the Royal Bank of Scotland are creating 'Facebook Groups' for university students and interns who have an interest in working with them in the future Parker (2008) goes on to say how once these groups are made, jobs and opportunities within the organisation can be posted to these groups so that the users are made aware of the vacancies

However more recently, the development of Facebook has led it to its use as a powerful sourcing tool Light (2011) explains how more and more companies are trying to tap into Facebook's vast user base in order to find new employees thus threatening the traditional job boards and competing with LinkedIn Although the amount of total hires is currently very low on Facebook, it is still a growing trend and is a cheap comparator to job boards As a sourcing tool, Facebook is very powerful, given its huge user base Light (2011) explains how some companies are now hiring recruiters to source solely on facebook As Light (2011) explains, VMware Inc hired their first full time recruiter dedicated to

working on social networks (in particular facebook) Thus, the social media activity has resulted in less job postings on job boards online

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Not only is Facebook is a powerful tool for sourcing, it can also be useful for spreading awareness of jobs currently available Zeidner (2009) explains how businesses are going beyond the usual boundaries of having a basic facebook page and are now offering the facility to users to spread word of jobs and rewards for successful hires based on this Zeidner (2009) explains how advertising agency TMP Worldwide created an app which establishes a link between a worker's facebook page and their employer's career's site This ''work with me'' app then rewards workers for successful hires which were made through their page This in effect is a win win situation for both the worker and employer and is a powerful tool for spreading awareness effectively of job openings

2 4 2 LinkedIn

Vermeiren (2009) explains how LinkedIn is the largest business network website worldwide containing users from all industries and a large variation of job titles As can be seen from Appendix 3, their user base has grown dramatically in the last few years Vermeiren (2009) goes on to explain that LinkedIn is a platform to give you visibility, connect with others, help others and be helped by them Kelsey (2010) explains how LinkedIn is one of the most important business and professional social networks in existence and that it is considered a crucial tool for workers to strengthen relationships and establish a network that can help them in their current job and to find a future job Therefore, we can say that the two most powerful tools which LinkedIn has, is its ability to allow users to network and also for users to source effectively for other candidates

Siliker (2011) highlights that one of the most popular trends amongst recruiters on LinkedIn to look for new talent is active head hunting Silliker (2011) goes to explain that LinkedIn provides them with an appropriate and professional platform to reach out to prospective candidates Reaching out involves sending an initial compliment on previous work experience or achievement and from here, further questions can be asked about what they do On the other hand for job seekers, LinkedIn can be useful for increasing their online presence Kelley (2011) explains how by being consistently active every week on the site, Google's algorithm will notice your regularity more and thus place further up top in results lists Kelley (2011) goes on to say that increased activity will allow you to become more prominent and better known in your network As well as this, another key advantage of LinkedIn for both users and recruiters is the groups which it offers Millard (2012) supports this by stating that groups can have thousands of members both domestically and internationally Recruiters can post jobs which can be beamed instantly to thousands of members Millard (2012) explains that job postings on these groups are not only archived by LinkedIn but are also sent via email to all members of the group Likewise for job seekers, they also can get information on jobs available through these groups

However, the one pitfall of LinkedIn is that, although growing, it's still not as big as Facebook Morrisson (2009) explains how if LinkedIn wants to avoid being swamped by Facebook, it will need to figure out ways for the user to log on more

2 4 3 Twitter

Wilkins (2009) defines Twitter 'as a mix of texting and blogging' Wilkins (2009) goes onto explain that Twitter enjoys the immediacy and simplicity of texting while being a fundamentally public service According to Heaps (2009) Twitter provides the ability for

companies to communicate directly, interact and create and maintain relationships From Appendix 2, it can be seen how quickly the number of registered users has jumped dramatically within the last year, thus showing its significant growth

Silıker (2011-1) underlines how Twitter can help companies create a personal touch in reaching out to candidates who might be interested in working the company Silıker (2011-1) outlines how Warner Bros in particular does this by responding to queries and questions from candidates In this regard, the candidate does not feel like their application is being submitted through another job board In particular with Twitter, Warner Bros regularly provides advice for potential candidates, such as interviewing and resume writing tips and also directs them to interesting articles (Sihker, 2011-1) By increasing their activity on social media, including Twitter Warner Bros saved roughly 40% on job board costs

2 5 Increasing Use of Social Media – Job Seekers

Smith (2011) explains that candidates seeking employment are now frequently using social networking sites, such as LinkedIn to make professional connections and to search for employment opportunities Although LinkedIn does offer candidates the opportunity to apply for jobs directly, it is the freedom which it gives both them and employers to network and approach each other in a professional setting that gives the platform an advantage This bodes well for the majority of job seekers as more and more companies are now utilizing social media to vet prospective job candidates Not only are employers utilising this tool but government organisations are also turning to social media to spread awareness about jobs HR magazine (2011) explains how through a joint operation between Facebook and the US Department of Labour, a social jobs partnership was created to facilitate employment for America's jobless through social networking

From a job seekers point of view, the main aim of using social media as a tool for job hunting is increasing your online visibility for potential employers Kohnle (2009) explains that people who can demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of a particular industry or whose name appears consistently in web searches are far more likely to become noticed first Kohnle (2009) stresses that posting content online (which is original) is powerful way to show a keen interest or passion in a specific subject or area

2 6 Increasing Use of Social Media – Employers

According to Hunt (2010), the use of social media among businesses to recruit viable candidates is on the increase There is now an expectation among candidates for employers to be on social media sites Hunt (2010) notes that those businesses not present risk losing out on quality candidates With this said, even if employers don't want to source via social networking sites, they must consider building a profile for their organisation Stamper (2010) explains how for some businesses, engaging in online networking communities might fit their overall strategy for attracting quality candidates Social media tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube give companies the opportunity to communicate in a more open format

Henderson, Bowley (2010) emphasise how Social media are a collection of new internet applications that emphasise participation, connectivity and engagement, information sharing and connectivity Henderson, Bowley (2010) go on to state that these applications have shifted internet services from being consumption based towards becoming interactive and collaborative Cain, Scott & Smith (2010) supports this by stating that social media is a connective technology which allows communication and information to

be shared in a mediated public setting In looking at the many applications available for social media connectivity, Unisys (2010) explains how the 'ideal' social media elixir includes using tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and that by doing so this enables firms to reach a number of different demographics

2.7 Benefits of Using Social Media for Employers

Borstorff et al (2007) explains that businesses are finding many favourable reasons to use online recruiting including increased efficiency, lowering recruitment and hiring costs, attracting more qualified candidates and simplifying the entire selection process Foux (2010) notes that one of the potential benefits include bolstering the brand by embracing social media and being ready to listen and being able to address issues by demonstrating that the company is paying attention to the concerns of customers and shows that they care about addressing them One of the biggest strengths of using social media platforms in a recruitment strategy is the cost effective nature of it, particularly in relation to sourcing candidates Sherrie (2011) explains that social media has become part of a more cost effective hiring solution and a faster way to get jobs posted in a timeframe which the recruiter controls Examples of this include tweeting a vacant post, where a tweet can be re-tweeted an unlimited amount of times thus spreading awareness quickly and more effectively then job boards Sherrie (2011) stresses however that job boards and social networks can work together In the case of CareerBuilder, a facebook page was created for their client Dan Temps, which was linked to the CareerBuilder website This resulted in an increase of 500% in applications

Another great benefit of utilising social media for recruitment is the wide scope which it gives organisations to source candidates from Parker (2011) states that social media offers organisations a powerful tool with which to proactively source candidates, even if they are not necessarily looking for them The objective is to build relationships with prospective candidates Quish (2010) states that this process is known as 'Recruitment Relationship Marketing' where companies use social media tools such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook to cultivate relationships with potential hires over time Quish (2010) goes on to say that forming these deep relationships before hiring, logically leads to more of the right people being recruited

By proactively searching for candidates, companies are giving themselves the best opportunity of finding and attracting top talent Doherty (2010) supports this view also by stating that proactively looking for these candidates is facilitated with social media tools Doherty (2010) goes on to say that traditionally, candidates are reluctant to approach a new employer as they are not prepared nor do they have the time to update their CV However, despite this candidates do have a wealth of information stored on social media sites which can be harnessed by HR departments and this is something which recruiters have easy access to More interestingly, Doherty (2010) also explains how applying for vacant positions through LinkedIn will become a thing of the future

2 8 Significance of the Passive Candidate

Whilst all of the benefits discussed above give social media a strong advantage over traditional methods, there is one other benefit which social media has that puts it ahead of the rest and it can be found primarily on LinkedIn – this is the access which the

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platform gives to the 'passive candidate' Dekay (2009) states that passive candidates are persons who are currently employed in a position and not seeking a career change Dekay (2009) goes on to say that many HR professionals maintain that passive job seekers are especially desirable because they are an untapped pool of potential candidates who are not already associated with placement agencies or any other recruiting professionals As well as this, passive candidates are said to be safe employees who are stable in their jobs (Dekay, 2009) Winkler (2011) supports this by stating that LinkedIn's users aren't actively looking for employment however recruiters know that the best candidates often are already in jobs Winkler (2011) goes onto note therefore that LinkedIn's vast crop of passive job seekers is particularly fertile Silliker (2011) also supports this and highlights how if an organisation uses products such as LinkedIn Recruiter, Jobs Network and Talent Direct, they are given access to 70 million passive candidates on LinkedIn

However despite this key difference, there is one disadvantage to targeting candidates such as these and that is that they may require more convincing to move job than with active candidates Dekay (2009) notes however though that the extra effort is worthwhile because of the quality of the individual and the payoff which the recruiter receives for placing the candidates The significance and value of the passive candidate cannot be underestimated Dekay (2009) indicated from a study of 200 linkedin members, over 94% of respondents indicated that they wish to be contacted for reasons related to job seeking This ultimately highlights a major advantage of using social media as it is something which traditional methods cannot offer

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2.9 Problems with Using Social Media in Business

Although companies are keen to invest money in social media to use it as part of their recruitment strategy, there are still some common mistakes being made by employers and some drawbacks to using social media Stamper (2010) explains that companies can get caught in the trap of thinking that social media will replace the traditional interpersonal interaction and can also expect too much too soon from implementing social media strategies In particular with the latter, Stamper (2010) explains how companies can sometimes not recognise the time which is needed for a social media strategy to deliver results Sherrie (2011) supports this by stating that social media is neither a quick fix nor replacement for existing tools Moreover social media should be used as an extension of an organisation's existing strategy Elliot-Yeary (2011) notes that connecting with customers through the use of social media can build loyalty and community Stamper (2010) supports this statement by saying that it takes time to gain results from social media as building relationships with customers is something which needs to be done over the course of a few months and beyond However, it is the employers' inability to acknowledge this process that hampers successful implementation of social media strategies

Not only do companies seek quick results but they also find it difficult to measure the effectiveness of social media strategies Pearson (2009) explains that this may be in part due to fact that social media recruitment and marketing is still a relatively new strategy However, Doherty (2010) explains how social networks should not be used solely for recruitment purposes as despite their increasing popularity worldwide there are still a lot of people who do not use them Therefore, as Doherty (2010) points out, it is still

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important for companies not to neglect these groups at the risk of missing out on top talent

Companies engaging with prospective employees through social media must also be aware of the ethical issues involved in doing so as this is another grey area for employers Pearson (2009) explains that companies have to be cautious about approaching candidates through certain social networks, in particular Facebook Pearson (2009) goes onto explain that candidates view Facebook as their 'personal space' and that attempts to engage with them can ultimately damage an organisations brand, should not enough care be taken Doherty (2010) supports this view by stating that due to the increasing use of social media, the boundaries between professional and private information are blurred and that this raises questions over moral and ethical obligations In this way, businesses must be very careful when using public, non-professional information to support any hiring decisions Similarly, Light (2011) explains how candidates can be averse to being contacted through facebook as they find it invasive This can cause the candidate to develop a poor image of the organisation trying to reach them

Another common issue for using social media strategies is whether the organisation can dedicate enough resources to deal with it In looking to engage more with prospective candidates, having the right resources to interact with them can be difficult for companies to have, especially given the current economic climate West (2011) notes that one of the biggest success factors for social media marketing hinges on the organisation having someone who can reply promptly to remarks or questions left on sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter and who enjoys doing this As well as this,

another problem is whether the organisation has got the resources to train employees on how to interact with candidates O'Brien (2010) supports this view by stating that due to the circular nature of social media, job seekers who use social media often use informal and inadequate dialogue in order to communicate with employers O'Brien (2010) goes on to say that employers and business owners find it difficult to find the time to get back to these job seekers due to time constraints and also the inability to communicate with them O'Brien (2010) adds that business thrives in the world of formal and professional communication Therefore, it is sometimes difficult for employers to communicate with a generation so tuned into social media Parker (2011) describes how interaction between the employer and employee is challenging on social media as operating a traditional one way street will not bring success Parker (2011) states therefore that interaction must be engaging and must provide helpful insights or advice in order to drive traffic

However, the use and application of social media does not only yield problems for organisations, but it also creates some potential risks for job seekers Rainey (2012) explains that to determine and learn as much as possible about a potential candidate, hiring managers are now undertaking a practice known as 'social media background checks' Rainey (2012) goes on to say that social media background checks are commonly known to include sourcing photographs and other personal information such as beliefs or interests Segal (2012) supports this by noting that just from a candidates social media profiles, HR professionals may learn information which candidates may assume is the basis for an adverse reaction in the future Rainey (2012) explains however, that checks go far beyond checking pictures Hiring managers will seek to find information such as status updates, determining if there are any negative comments which previous

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employers have had to say about them and also cross referencing their educational and previous work experience matches that of their Resume As well as this, hiring managers are also interested to see if the candidate would be a good fit for the organisation based on how they portray themselves online

2 10 War For Talent

Although overall recruitment has decreased since the beginning of the economic recession, companies (and multinationals in particular) are still keen to hire and improve their brand image despite the poor climate McCartney (2010) describes how companies are using the recession to enhance their company profile and brand Organisations are now actively spending time enhancing their profile to become a preferred employer and strengthening their relationship with local talent This has resulted in organisations using more proactive strategies involving social media Sherrie (2011) supports this by stating that strategies are shifting from saturation on job boards to a mix of job boards and social networking sites so that recruiters can source top talent in a more targeted and efficient manner

The goal for organisations in this instance is to find more 'qualified' and 'talented' candidates, whilst improving their online image Cheese (2010) supports this view by noting how organisations are entering a new era in the 'war for talent' Cheese (2010) goes on to explain that there is renewed focus on employee value propositions These new value propositions are part of the so called 'Generation Y' Elmore (2011) states how Generation Y are masters of social media and are active users of sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn Elmore (2011) goes on to explain that this is part due to the familiarity which they have with the internet and technology With this in mind, it is crucial for organisations to harness the power of social media effectively in their recruitment strategies There is some

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evidence which proves that despite the economic downturn, companies can still see the benefit of keeping a strong employer brand which is backed by a strong social media strategy. Philips (2008) explains how employers are keen not to remove graduate programmes as this will result in the company having a lack of talent a few years down the road. Employers have learned the importance of attaining talent for the future and the importance of marketing their brand through the use of social media.

Stoller (2012) explains that HR departments now use social media not only to help them learn about prospective employees but also to promote their companies so that they can attract top talent. This is becoming more and more common among organisations and is a key factor in the war for talent. Doherty (2010) supports this by stating that when integrated successfully, social recruiting can enhance the company's recruitment brand at a time when it is needed most and give an organisation a modern identity with which it can prepare itself for challenges which lie ahead.

2.11 Using Social Media and Perform Background Checks

Although a relatively grey area, the significance of using social media as a screening tool cannot be underestimated. With access to the internet only a click away, employer's can now easily access and search for data directly related to candidates. Millard (2007) explains that due to the popularity of online communities, the information stored in profiles, blogs etc can be very revealing. Millard (2007) goes on to say that this is very revealing to employers who are now taking notice of this and making online searches part of their background checks. In comparison with traditional background check methods, searching content online can also be relatively cheaper. Sawyer (2011) explains how the

Internet has made the screening process simpler and less expensive in comparison with traditional methods.

It is due to the personal and social information of social media sites which has led to a surge in their use as a screening tool also. Social media sites have given employers specific channels of information to research from. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and blogs provide employers with databases of information on potential candidates. It is the extent to which they are used however and the degree to which it affects the recruiter's final decision that is a critical issue. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and blogs are some of the top social media portals however the type of user and more importantly the type of content varies for each. Davison, Maraist & Bing (2011) explains that there are differences in applicants across different websites given their potentially different clientele. Davison, Maraist & Bing (2011) go on to say that LinkedIn is a professional network whereas Facebook is used more for social connections. This is very important for employers to note as how an employee wishes to be seen in a professional environment could differ from that of a personal / social environment.

However, Siedsma (2012) notes that while many HR industry leaders say social media plays an important role in today's hiring process, employers and recruiters must be careful about how they conduct social media background checks and what information they decide to use to influence their decisions. Social Media can reveal a lot of simple but basic information about candidates. Humber (2012) explains that a background check on Facebook can reveal a person's race, religion and marital status, which possibly opens the door to human rights complaints if an applicant is unsuccessful. Sawyer (2011) supports this by stating that whilst employers have the right to check specific information when performing background checks, these rights are not unlimited. Employees in this regard

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are entitled to privacy in certain areas and any infringement can results in legal action
(Sawyer, 2011)

However, in saying this, background checks are an important part of the recruitment
process Humber (2002) notes how background checks are a critical part of the hiring
process with criminal checks, verifying education credentials, contacting references and
credit checks, all appropriate tools in the recruitment tool box Most importantly, these
issues are all legitimate in performing background checks unlike the more personal
information

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology and instrumentation used in the study discussed The aim of this piece of research is to investigate the current social media activities and methods which recruiters are using for recruitment When undertaking a task as this, it is important to ensure that the research methodology most appropriate to the field of research is identified and used However, in employing this methodology, there are a number of different factors which first need to be considered including the research philosophy, approach and data analysis which will be adopted in conjunction with the purpose of this research

3 1 Research Philosophy

It is important to remember that the research philosophy undertaken by any researcher is one of the most important components in the overall research methodology which is used To this extent, it can affect greatly the overall findings of their work Saunders et al (2009, pg 107) state that 'research philosophy is the overarching term relating to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge in relation to research' Conclusions drawn from any research topic are a combination of theory and practice which are fundamentally driven and shaped by the perceptions of the researcher This refers to the researcher's 'worldview', human factor, theories and data collection methods According to Popper's three 'worlds' (1934) these are

- Subjective Bias and the perceptions a researcher may bring to research

- Theory Aspects that can be argued are part of the existing literature and proved to some degree

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- External Those in which the outcome may be affected by external forces or things beyond the control of the researcher

Lindsay (1995) explains that this can be divided into seven aspects of the perspectives of researching which are

- The ontological perspective – these are made up of the beliefs, values and assumptions that combine a researcher's view of what is or not in terms of reality

- The epistemological perspective – these define how a researchers ontological perspective on reality relates to the theories for each of the analytical and theoretical proposals adopted by the researcher

- The Theories – which support and are used in the researcher's practices and conclusions

- The methodological perspective – This gives the assumptions which cover the choices of a researchers research methodologies As well as this, it also provides links which may exist between theory and the research

- The research methodology – This is the researcher's choice of research methods and techniques

- The research methods – This is the process of gathering data and the analysis techniques used

- The Data-gathering and analysis techniques – The practicalities of the research itself

- The theoretical perspective – This consists of the factors which shape the decisions that determine the researchers choice of analyses, background material, theories and research techniques

(Lindsay, 1995)

All of the decisions which a researcher makes about the elements of the theoretical perspectives chosen restrict their available choices in terms of data collection techniques The traditional research perspectives such as positivist, interpretive, constructivist and constructionist) are collections of coherent theoretical perspectives drawn from the choice of methodology to be used This gives an overall approach which the researcher can use to address the research questions that are posed by this dissertation Without this, the outcome would not form a coherent whole

Although there are a number of different research philosophies available, Saunders et al (2009) explain that the right one is very much dependant on the research questions which the researcher is seeking to answer There are three different approaches to research philosophy ontology, epistemology and axiology

3 2 Paradigm Assumptions

Creswell (1994) states that the assumptions which a researcher makes are a combination of five key areas

3 2 1 The Ontology Assumption

Saunders et al (2009) explain that Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and raises questions about the way the world operate and the commitment to particular views Similarly, Wetly (2003) states that Ontology is about existence and the kinds and

structures of objects, properties, events, processes and relations in every area of reality The central point to Ontology is whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that a reality external to social actors or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors (Bryman and Bell, 2007 22) Saunders, Torrington & Hall (2008) state that ontology can be divided into two aspects objectivism and subjectivism

Objectivism, according to Saunders, Torrington & Hall (2008) 'represents the position that social entities exist in reality to social actors Bryman, Bell (2007) support this by stating that it is a position which implies that social phenomena confront us as external facts which are beyond our own reach or influence When individuals hold a position like this, it is their belief that common entities (organisations) are all essentially the same, each one varying to a certain degree and all exist externally to social actors Where such a view is held, the organisation will have more of an influence on the individual than vice versa

However on the other hand, Subjectivism holds the view 'that social phenomena are created from perceptions and consequent actions of social actors' (Saunders, Torrington & Hall, 2008 111) Saunders, Torrington & Hall (2008) go on to explain that this is a continual process as the social interaction is in a constant state of revision Subjectivism allows researchers to interpret exchanges between themselves and the subject through methods such as interviews and focus groups The subject can express their feelings and ideas on a research matter and in doing so, allow the researcher to interpret it in a subjective manner

Given all of these facts, it should be noted that the research philosophy will be subjective by nature This is primarily due to the fact that all respondents of this research will have

different views and perspectives on the research topic. As well as this, due to the fact that respondents will also draw on their own professional experiences, there may be some bias from both positive and negative points of view.

3.2.2 The Epistemology Assumption

Bryman et al (2007:16) explain that 'Epistemology concerns the question of what is regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline'. Within Epistemology, there are three distinct positions: positivism, realism and interpretivism.

Positivism, according to Saunders et al (2009:113) reflects a position where 'you will prefer working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law like generalisation similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists. At the core of this perspective is the notion that the factors being researched in the social world should be done so using objective methods while the researchers' findings must be free of any sensation, reaction or intuition. Easterby-Smith et al (2008) support this by stating that knowledge is only relevant when based on observations in the external reality.

On the other hand, Realism is that what the senses show us as reality is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind. At the core of philosophy of realism is that there is a really quite independent of the mind (Saunders et al, 2009:114).

In contrast to positivism, the Interpretivism of epistemology is considered to be a direct opposite. Bryman et al (2007:17) state that the subject matter of the social sciences – people and their institutions – is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences. In this way, the study of the social world therefore requires a different logic of research procedure, on that reflects the distinctiveness of humans as against the natural order. The

interpretivist approach, according to Saunders et al (2008) emphasizes the difference

between conducting research on objects and on actually human beings and accordingly as

a result of this difference, these two social factors cannot be researched and interpreted in

the same way.

In relating this to the research topic, it can be said that the research topic will have an

interpretivist point of view. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, interpretivism

emphasises the difference of conducting research on humans as opposed to objects. This is

particularly relevant to this research as the respondents will be humans and their answers

will be based on opinion and experience and in this way cannot be quantified (which is

likened to the positivist approach).

3.2.3 The Axiology Assumption

The third and final approach to research philosophy is axiology. According to Saunders et

al (2008:116) 'this is a branch of philosophy that studies judgments about the role of

value'. Heron (1996) explains that researchers who are able to articulate their values as a

basis for making judgements about the research they care conducting (and how they are

going about it) are thus demonstrating an axiological skill. Researchers who hold this

philosophy would therefore be better suited to conduct interviews as part of their research

as by doing so, they feel they will be able to gain more insight to the subjects (opinions/

values). This is particularly relevant to the research topic as the researcher will conduct

interviews as part of their research in order to ascertain the value which respondents put on

the topic in question (social media in recruitment).

In looking to choose between the positivist and the interpretivist research philosophy is

difficult as many argue that choosing one of the other in theory might be acceptable but in

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reality is somewhat unrealistic. Where this opinion is adopted, the individual or researcher is known as a pragmatist. Saunders et al (2009:109) state that the most important determinant of choosing between epistemology, ontology and axiology is the research questions as one may be more appropriate than the other. Easterby-Smith et al (2008) support this by stating that in the social world there are no pre-determined theories or frameworks which shape knowledge and understanding and that this is central to a pragmatic approach. In such circumstances, a researcher may look to performing both qualitative and quantitative research.

3.2.3 The Rhetorical Assumption

This is ensuring the language of the research itself. Researchers whom have a positivist approach are objective and detached from the research itself. This type of researcher uses formal, passive questions and statements. Researchers adopting the interpretivist view believe in informality and the use of qualitative words and are part of the research itself.

3.2.4 The Methodological Assumption

This is t ensure the process of the research concerned, Positivist researchers believe in deductive processes, prediction have context-free generalisations and accurate and reliable results through validity and reliability.

3.2.5 Paradigm Statement

The researcher will adopt the approach of the interpretivist. Saunders et al (2008) explain how interpretivism advocates that is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans as social actors. Interpretivism in this way emphasises the difference between conducting research among people as opposed to objects. Saunders et al (2008) also explain how the heritage of this strand of interpretivism comes from phenomenology

and symbolic interactionism Interpretivism is the concept of induction The interviewee must consider this issue

- The researcher must adopt an empathetic stance with the research subjects and understand their world from their point of view (Saunders et al, 2008)

3 3 Types of Research

Types of research can be classified according to the function they perform in the overall research process There are

- The purpose of the research – why the researcher is conducting the research

- The process of the research – how will data be collected and analysed

- The logic of the research – whether to move from the general to the specific and vice versa

- The outcome of the research – what the researcher is trying to achieve, solve a specific problem/issue or make a general contribution to knowledge

(Hussey and Hussey, 1997 9)

3 4 Purpose of Research

Saunders et al (2009 139) explains that the 'classification of research purpose most often used in the research methods literature is the threefold one of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory' In acknowledging this, it is important that when conducting any form of research the research must first clearly establish what exactly the purpose of the research is However, it is also important to recognise that a piece of research may have one or more than one purpose in the same way that a researcher can hold both a positivist and

interpretivist research philosophy (pragmatism) The choice of research is determined by the researchers own paradigms, culture and belief about the topic in question There are a number of options available to the researcher These include

- Exploratory Research – Little research carried out on the problem

- Descriptive Research – Describes phenomena as they exist

- Analytical research – Discovering and measuring causal relationships

- Predictive research – Develops hypothesis to generalise to other occurrences of phenomena

As well as this, the available techniques for getting the information would need to be considered For this research, the options available are qualitative and quantitative Cormack (1992) explains that although different techniques both hold the primary purpose of contributing to knowledge about a particular subject The main difference between them, as outlined by Cormack (1992) is that quantitative methods rely on acquiring data which is numerical in value where qualitative methods are concerned with in-depth study of human phenomena in order to understand their nature and the meanings which they possess for the individuals involved Not all qualitative research involves hypothesis testing This is because data from large scale statistical survey only describes opinions, feelings and aspects of people's lives Talbot (1995) explains that the fundamental difference between the two methods is that quantitative approach is considered a scientific approach, while the qualitative approach is generated from humanistic disciplines such as history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology and psychology

Both approaches are concerned with knowledge development in any discipline. Cormack (1992: Burns et al, 1993) note that quantitative research is forma, objective and systemic in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the world. Talbot (1995) on the other hand states that qualitative research explores phenomena about which little is known and that cannot easily be quantified or categorised. In other words, things such as feelings, viewpoints and experiences are examples of things which can't be quantified.

The author has analysed the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and in doing so has chosen the qualitative approach to best fulfil the aims and objectives of this study.

3.5 Logic of Research

In looking at the logic of the research, the aim is to decide if it is inductive or deductive.

3.5.1 Deductive Theory

Saunders et al (2008) explain that researchers using the deductive theory will seek to use existing theory to shape the approach which you will adopt to your qualitative research process and to aspects of data analysis. Bryman et al (2007) explain that the deductive theory represents the commonest view of the nature between theory and research. In using a deductive approach, the researcher develops a theory or hypothesis and applies a research strategy in order to test it. In this way, this type of research is often associated with quantitative research.

3.5.2 Inductive Theory

Bryman et al (2003) explain that the inductive theory involves creating theory which is the outcome of research as opposed to the opposite with the deductive theory. Saunders et al (2008) explains that in using this method, the focus is on one occurrence of the

phenomenon and from the results of the research a theory is developed which is then applied generally to the phenomenon occurring elsewhere Bryman et al (2003) supports this by stating that when a researcher applies the inductive approach they form their theory around their research Saunders et al (2008) explain that the inductive allows researchers to gain an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events placing less of an emphasis on the need to generalise (in comparison to the deductive theory)

3 5 3 Combined Theory

However, in dealing with both of these approaches, there are no rigid rules which state that the researcher must choose one over the other Saunders et al (2008) explain that not only is it possible to combine both inductive and deductive approaches in the same research but it can also be advantageous to do so However, although the researcher will be looking at recent issues surrounding the research topic, the approach will be created from an inductive theory As well as this, there are also time constraints for the researcher and with this in mind the inductive approach will be used

The researcher has chosen to use the inductive theory for this research The inductive theory would be more relevant to this research topic for two reasons Firstly it is qualitative in nature as interviews will be performed Secondly in conducting interviews, the researcher is seeking to gain an understanding which respondents place on the research topic and the issues around it As well as this, the researcher is not using any pre existing theories by which to shape the approach which they will adopt

The author reserves the right to adjust, modify or to amend the design as the research evolves, as it is impossible to predict with accuracy likely further topics or issues that may occur during the research

3.6 Outcome of the research

As research is an organised and systematic approach to find solutions to given questions, it is envisaged that the outcome of this research will add to the knowledge of all of the areas related to social media in recruitment It is hoped that the research will give an accurate account on the extent to which social media has influenced the methods and activities of recruiters It is also intended to show organisations within the industry what the benefits of adapting a social media strategy are and how they can effect an organisations overall recruitment strategy

3.7 Rationale for selecting a Qualitative Approach

In qualitative research, investigators must be completely objective and try not to influence a study with their own values and perceptions (Burns, Grove 1993) Applying objectivity minimises the risk of bias, a problem which can seriously threaten and damage the validity of a study By implementing measures to achieve objectivity, confidence will be increased that the findings from this research will reflect the reality of the situation being studied

3 8 Descriptive Research

The author has chosen the descriptive research design as part of the qualitative research study to address the objectives and aims of the study Bulmer (1977) explains how the aim of descriptive research is to discover new facts about a situation, people or activities Bulmers (1997) goes on to explain that this is achieved through the systematic collection of information about the area/ topic of interest and forms an essential part in the development of knowledge in any discipline As well as this, it also provides the foundation for research to be conducted in the future generating questions which require further study (Burns, Grove, 1993) There is no attempt in descriptive studies to alter or

manipulate variables, establish causality, modify or control the situation under study (Paradoo, 1997) This means that the results are based on measureable information from which the author can use to summarise This will facilitate the outcome of the research as descriptive research goes further than exploratory research and is therefore more accurate which allows the author to also be more accurate in the outcome

3 9 Interviews

Data collection is an essential part in conducting research O'Leary (2005) states the collection of credible data is a tough task, and because of this it is worth remembering that one method of data collection is not necessarily better than another Taking that into account, this would suggest that whichever method of data collection is used, the outcome depends on the goal of the research and the advantages and the disadvantages of each method available

One method, which this author utilised are interviews Interviews are a systematic way of talking and listening to people (WHO, 2008) and are a method of collecting information through open dialogue

According to Kyale (1996) Interviews are a type of exchange of views between two or more people on a particular topic of mutual interest in which the interviewer asks the questions to elicit appropriate and valid responses Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2004) explain that the questions being asked by the researcher must have dual goals of motivating the respondent to give full and precise replies while avoiding biases stemming from, conformity, or other constructs of disinterest, social desirability

Predominately, the reasons for using interviews, as espoused by Gray (2004 214) are

- The requirement for highly personalised data

- Probing is possible

- Rate of response is important

The researcher must prepare well for an interview, and the needs to ensure that respondents have

- A clear outline of what is being asked

- Some information on- the purpose of the research project

- An idea of the approximate length of the interview and the method of recording the interview

- A clear idea of where the interview will be held

(Gillham, 2000 8)

In addition, the interviewer needs to be effective and this requires the following skills

- An ability to listen

- An ability to be non-judgmental

- A good memory

- An ability to think on their feet

(Mongash, 2008)

In looking at the types of interview available to the researcher for interviewing there were a number of types to choose from

- A structured interview

- A semi-structured interview

- An unstructured interview

- A non-directive interview

The author has decided to use the semi structured interview for this dissertation Semi structured interviews, which are synonymous with qualitative research, will be used with the sample of recruiters Saunders et al (2008) note that semi structured interviews are non-standardised and are often referred to as qualitative research interviews Saunders et al (2008) go onto explain that in semi-structured interviews, the researcher will have a list of questions and themes to be covered, some of which may vary between interviews Additional questions may also be asked in order to explore the research question and objectives set out This will allow the researcher to directly uncover the effect which social media is having on recruitment strategies and the extent to which it is affecting a company's ability to target and hire candidates Torrington, Lewis, Hall (2008) also note that semi-structured interviews will generally be audio recorded or note taking In this case of this interview research, the researcher has chosen to audio record all interviews as this will provide transparency

This approach falls within the interpretivism research philosophy Saunders et al (2003) explain that interpretivism advocates it necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans and social actors Saunders et al (2003) go on to explain how this emphasises the difference between conducting research among people as opposed to machinery Crucial to the interpretivist view is the need to apply an empathetic stance towards the recruiters/ HR professionals the researcher will be interviewing In applying this to the research topic, it is useful for the researcher to take this approach as every

respondent will have a different approach to the topic, depending on the industry their organisation is in In comparison with other methods such as structured interviews, the researcher notes that with this method, the responses received will be more structured and thus respondent won't have the freedom to add any additional comments or thoughts on the research topic

Saunders et al (2003) recognise that the method of induction is synonymous with using qualitative research It also allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the meanings which humans attach to events In the case of this research topic, each HR professional interviewed could have different understandings of the research issue Another key advantage of using an inductive approach (over a deductive approach) is that it is a more flexible methodology which allows for alternative explanations

3 10 Ethical Considerations

According to Domegan, Fleming (2007), ethical issues cluster around the researcher's integrity, fair and just treatment of clients and respondents and also the anonymity and confidentiality to respondents and clients alike Respondents of this study will be self selected and will reflect the diversity of industries currently in Ireland This research should not encounter ethical issues due to the nature of the topic being investigated

3 11 Data Collection, Editing and Coding

All research approaches can be classified into three general categories exploratory, descriptive and causal (Kumar, Aaker and Day, 1999) The choice of a research approach depends on the nature of the research being carried out A descriptive research was chosen for this study Malhotra (2004) notes that one of the main reasons why descriptive research is used in research is to describe the characteristics of key groups In applying this

approach to the research topic, the author intends to describe the main themes and approaches which companies have towards social media and the part it plays in their recruitment strategy The researcher will follow a semi structured style interview process which will require them to stick to the topic of recruitment

3 12 Qualitative Analysis

In looking to examine qualitative analysis, Saunders et al (2008) recognises that there are a number of different approaches available to the process of analysing qualitative data For the purpose of this research topic, a template analysis approach is considered most appropriate Saunders et al (2008) explains how template analysis is essentially a list of codes or categories that represent the themes revealed from the data that have been collected Adopting this approach means transforming the nature of the data collected in order to allow the researcher to

A) Comprehend and sort them

B) Integrate related data drawn from transcripts

C) Identify key themes and patterns for exploration

D) Draw and verify conclusion

(Saunders et al, 2003)

A key benefit of using template analysis, according to King (cited m Saunders *et al* 2003) is that it will help the researcher identify emergent issues that may arise through the process of data collection It is these issues which may not have been considered in the earlier stages of the research project Cassell, Symon (2005) also explain that template analysis is, m comparison with other methods, a more flexible technique with fewer

specified procedures The benefit to the researcher here is that they can tailor the technique to match their own requirements

3 13 Nature of Questions

Due to the nature of this research and the selected data collection method, the researcher will ask respondents to answer a range of semi structured questions The questions will be formed around the objectives set out Saunders et al (2003) explains how the questions asked will be primarily based on the themes and objectives which the researcher wishes to explore Saunders et al (2003) also recognises how in semi structured interviews, the order of questions being asked may vary depending on the flow of the conversation and the manner by which the questions are being answered by respondents The aim of this form of questioning is to obtain rich data from a small number of respondents to ensure all relevant areas are explored

3 14 Bias

The author understands that bias is possible by mis-interpretion of the results The author is aware of the fact that data collected can be distorted, and hence the resultant findings (Hussey & Hussey, 1997 157) The author will check with the respondents their responses to ensure that bias in interpretation is minimised

4. Findings and Conclusions

In this section, the researcher will discuss the information gained through the interviews which were conducted and present findings and conclusions as part of this. There were a number of findings which have been identified from the research undertaken. From the interviews performed, there were between 18-22 standard questions asked in total. As explained before, the interviews were semi structured in nature and so there were core questions which every respondent was asked. Then depending on the types of responses, a few other questions were also asked however these remained related to the core themes. By using semi structured interviews, this allowed the respondents to add any additional pieces of information which may have been relevant. The transcripts of these interviews can be viewed in Appendix 6

4 1 Summary Details of Interviewees

In total, 7 people took part in the interview research. 5 of the interviewees have all worked in agency recruitment whilst 3 (of the 5) interviewees are currently working in agency recruitment. 2 of the interviewees are currently working as consultants. There was a variety of industries which the interviewees came from – IT, financial services, business consultancy, healthcare and the drinks industry. 2 of the interviewees have held senior positions in their organisations, with one being the global sourcing manager for Microsoft and the other being a senior recruiter in Deloitte Ireland, (which is ranked as one of the top 4 consultancy firms in the world). As outlined in the previous chapter, there were 3 other interviewees who cancelled their appointments due to busy schedules. As stated before, the researcher recognises this as a limitation to the study

4.1.1 Interview Questions – Main Findings

1. Use of Social Media in recruiting: One of the first things the research identified was that all respondents indicated that they use social media in some way as part of their recruiting activities. All respondents indicated they use LinkedIn regularly as their primary social media tool. 3 interviewees noted similarly that the use of social media was becoming more popular and was surpassing more traditional methods of recruitment (such as job boards) in terms of effectiveness. Interestingly however, 5 of the respondents still said they use job boards in some way as part of their recruitment strategy. 2 respondents explained that they also used company facebook pages to engage with potential candidates. It was noted that this was more popular amongst the younger (graduate) audience.

2. Social Media gave a greater reach to candidates: 3 of the respondents explained similarly that social media gave them a much greater reach and allowed them to target wider audiences when recruiting. 1 respondent also described their ability to actively recruit across seas. This opened up the market a lot more when compared with traditional recruiting methods. The same respondents also explained how they could now target their audience better when performing searches online. In effect, recruiters were not only able to reach wider audiences but they were also able to focus on more specific areas, targeting candidates with specific skills.

3. Engagement with candidate: 3 respondents noted that one of the main benefits of using social media (in particular LinkedIn) was that it gave recruiters the ability to interact with the passive candidate in a professional and structured setting. 1 respondent described the passive candidate as a person who was in a job and though they weren't actively looking for a job they were however open to opportunities in the market if

approached. The same respondent noted that with social media, the market was now moving towards a point where there is going to be active poaching taking place between companies as they search for the most talented employees. 1 other respondent noted that the key to being successful is in your approach to candidates. Recruiters must be careful not to be too forceful and need to show 'an expression of interest'.

4. Speed of Social Media and Market Research: 3 respondents noted that social media dramatically increased the turnaround time for hiring a candidate and that it allowed them to get immediate delivery into the marketplace. This not only reduced costs but it also allowed recruiters to actively track the whereabouts of candidates so they could see which organisations they were working for and their positions held. All 3 respondents noted that this was done through LinkedIn.

5. Communication through Social Media: All respondents explained that the reaction they received from candidates when approached on LinkedIn was on a whole very positive. Candidates would receive offers of interest positively with a few minor exceptions. In the cases of negative feedback from candidates, respondents noted they tended to ignore advances from recruiters.

6. Quality of information of candidates on Social Media: 2 respondents noted that they were able to find more specific information on candidates from their profiles on LinkedIn. Both said they were able to monitor their social activity and view things such as their blog and twitter feed. These respondents also said that they could find specific information on what candidates specialise in. However, with this said 2 respondents explained that the information on candidates on social media sites was only as good as the data which a candidate put on their profile. Another respondent

noted that information sometimes went stale. This usually happened where a profile would become inactive for an extended period of time.

7. Usage of Social Media: All respondents noted that they had been using LinkedIn since at least 2009. All respondents said that it was LinkedIn which they used the most out of all social media platforms.

8. Influence of social media in finding top talent: 4 of the respondents indicated that social media gave them greater access to more talented candidates. 1 respondent explained that social media gave them access to the passive candidate who was seen as being a better quality candidate. The advantage to recruiters is that more traditional methods did not give them this type of access. 1 respondent noted that with traditional methods such as job boards or press advertising, the recruiter would have to wait until the candidate approached them. However, now recruiters have a tool which they can use to actively search for candidates with specific skills.

9. Measuring Social Media Success: 6 out of the 7 respondents all stated that they use one common measurement which was source of hire. The source of hire, as one respondent explained, refers to where a candidate applied from. In doing so, it gave them an opportunity to see where a candidate was sourced and more importantly if that candidate had been contacted through social media or related platforms. 3 respondents also indicated that they look at the cost of hire for each candidate. 1 respondent noted that this was very important as it would impact on which channels of sourcing they would use in the future.

10. Influence of Social Media in searching for specific skills: 2 respondents to the question of searching for specific talent indicated that social media was good to a certain extent

but it depended largely on the information that was being put up by users Respondents referred to LinkedIn in this situation and stated that if the user didn't create enough information about their skills or qualifications or experience it made them much more difficult to find when a search was conducted Another respondent noted that traditional databases such as monster ie or jobs ie offered similar tools as LinkedIn

11   Negative Feedback on Social Media

- 4 respondents had all similarly answered that negative feedback could come from users having poor experiences both through social media and with other dealings in the company Respondents noted that social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook had the potential to aid the speedy delivery of this negative information to the public 1 respondent noted that social media could allow the release of negative information on companies to spiral out of control and in this way was a major danger to organisations 1 respondent noted a specific event which occurred with one of his clients where, whilst operating a facebook page, they failed to show good customer service skills in getting back to queries and questions left on their page This, the respondent claimed impacted badly on the brand of the organisations, especially to potential employees looking at the organisation for employment

- 1 respondent also noted that LinkedIn gave their competitors the opportunity to research into what jobs were available in other organisations, in particular for recruitment agencies The respondent noted that competing agencies would see the job descriptions which they would post and then be able to figure out who the client was and thus attempt at making a sales pitch to them

11 Effect of Social Media in recruitment 2 respondents noted that social media in recruitment has become a trend which is here to stay, noting that it is now important for organisations and workers to be socially active in a professional manner Another respondent stated that the amount of investment (observed by him) going into the training of staff in new methods and techniques with social media proves that organisations see the value of it

- However, despite those two answers, 1 respondent stated they felt that social media was over hyped and that the main problem is that most users still can't maximise the benefits which they can get from using these platforms The same respondent noted that in their industry (financial services), traditional methods were still yielding better results than that of social media

- 4 respondents stated that social media did allow them to source a better quality of candidate Some of these respondents noted that this was primarily due to the fact that social media gave them more depth in candidate searches and allowed them to access markets overseas Another respondent also stated that social media gave organisations better tools so that they could target candidates with more specific skills

12 Social media & Background Searches 2 respondents said they actively perform background checks on candidates through different platforms of social media The same two respondents stated that they actively perform Google searches on candidates also 3 respondents (including 2 of the previous) stated they would regularly check a candidate's professional social media pages such as their LinkedIn, twitter and blog page One respondent noted that Facebook in particular had tough privacy firewalls which meant access to profiles was difficult and so not worthwhile 1 respondent noted

that they didn't perform checks like this and that the only way to do so was through reference checking with previous employers

12 Controversial material on candidate 3 respondents stated that finding controversial material on the internet relating to a candidate (specifically finding an embarrassing photo) would not influence their decision on whether to hire that candidate as it did not directly relate to how they performed in their job However, 3 other respondents said it would be a cause of concern and that it would depend entirely on the context of the photograph/ or other material as to whether it may influence their final decision

13 Future trends for Social media 2 respondents stated that they can see recruitment and social media becoming more mobile driven

- 1 of these 2 respondents also stated that nowadays organisations are beginning to employ more in-house recruiters as they have greater access to candidates on social media and therefore there was no need to employ the services of an agency Another respondent noted that the turn-around time was being reduced for candidates to be assessed and hired and this was going to continue

- Another respondent noted that in the end, recruitment in social media would be built around 1 or 2 major platforms (one of them LinkedIn)

5. Conclusions Based on Findings

5 1 Primary Conclusions

From the findings of the interview research, these are the conclusions

1   Of all social media platforms, LinkedIn is the predominant social media tool used

by recruiters both in- house and agency This is because it was found that 100% of

respondents all indicated they have been active users of this platform since at least

2009 Use of other social media tools varied between respondents with only two

stating that they had a twitter account Two respondents noted also that the

organisations they currently worked for also had a facebook page set up and that

this was predominantly aimed at the younger audiences who were graduating from

university

2   LinkedIn is one of the most powerful social media tools for recruiting for two

reasons

- This is due firstly to the markets it has opened for recruiters and the depth of

access which it gives to candidates for recruiters and vice versa 57% of

respondents noted that social media opened up the market to a much wider

audience than with traditional methods which had the potential to give recruiters

and organisations a global reach with candidates However in saying this, the depth

of these audiences varied, depending on the type of organisation, the skills needed

for the position and the resources available to the recruiter For example, one of the

respondents (who previously worked as the global sourcer for Microsoft) noted that

the company had the resources to find and attract top candidates to their

organisation from different parts of the world In contrast however, an agency recruiter based in Dublin stated they would only search for candidate's country wide around Ireland, as candidates based outside of this zone were too far out of reach

- Secondly, it is the speed at which social media can deliver data and information 42% of respondents noted that social media can dramatically increase the delivery of information to the marketplace and the turnaround time for candidates to be hired This is especially significant as it points to a dramatic change in the way recruiting operates With more traditional methods, the recruiter had to wait for candidates to approach them by directly applying for positions However, now recruiters have the tools to actively search for passive candidates One respondent in particular described how the industry has gone from the traditional approach of a 'fisherman dangling his hook' to a more proactive activity in which recruiters have been given the ability to become hunters

3   Like the previous point, the nature of recruiting has changed significantly as social media offers them the chance to engage differently with the candidate 42% of respondents noted that social media offers the chance to engage more with the candidate As well as this, 100% of respondents said that reactions which they receive from candidates (when approached through social media) were generally positive, provided they were approach in the right way

4   LinkedIn is one of the most powerful recruiting tools as it gives access to the 'passive candidate' 28% of respondents stated that social media gave them access to the passive candidate which was seen by them as being a better quality

candidate As well as this, 57% of respondents indicated that social media gave them greater access to more talented candidates The significance of this is enormous in recruitment as traditional methods did not offer this type of access to candidates

5   Social Media is a powerful tool for finding specific talent as 28% of respondents stated that they were able to source candidates with more specific skills through social media as opposed to traditional methods However, in saying this 42% of respondents noted that the ability to search specific candidates on social media depended largely on the information stored on user's professional profiles This presents a limitation of social media as although social media gives recruiters greater access to candidates, these candidates will only be sourced if they hold the right information on their profile page, such as specific keywords relating to their role or profession

6   Social Media's greatest benefit can also act as a major disadvantage for organisations and recruiters who use them This is because 57% of respondents stated that negative feedback created about an organisation had the potential to spread virally online very quickly In this way, just as much as social media gave recruiters the platform to feed messages out quickly, it also had the potential to spread negative messages about them One of the main platforms associated with respondents answers surrounding this was Twitter as it gave users the ability to relay short messages very quickly

7   Social Media is a popular platform from which to perform verification checks on

candidates but these checks are done mainly through a candidate's professional

profile on LinkedIn and Twitter 28% of respondents noted that they perform web

searches on candidate names but not with the aim of uncovering personal material

However, these respondents noted that if they did come across something

controversial in relation to a candidate that they would look further at it

Similarly however, when respondents were asked specifically about finding

controversial material about candidates, 57% of respondents said that this would

not influence their decision unless it was something drastic 57% of respondents

also stated that their intent when checking their profile on social media was to

verify their professional merits and not to catch candidates out

5 2 Link to main themes

In analysing the data collected, the researcher will now present the main conclusions in

contrast to the research carried out in the literature review In doing so, the main aim will

be to see where both pieces of research match or differ

1   New Recruiting Standards In the literature review, the researcher noted that there

was an explosion of users on job board websites which has led to organisations and

recruiters finding better ways in which to find candidates The findings from the

researcher's interviews complement this view as all respondents indicated they are

regularly active on the social media site, LinkedIn As well as this, 3 respondents

pointed out that social media was surpassing traditional methods such as job boards

and whilst job boards were still being used (by 5 of the respondents) its 'value' is

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diminishing This provides evidence of a shift away from traditional recruitment methods

2   Increasing use of social media - Employers Findings from the interviews undertaken by the researcher indicated that recruiters are regularly active in social media and use it to both source candidates and network This supports the theme in the literature review that there has been a huge increase in the number of employers (organisations) using social media to become more interactive and collaborative with candidates This is proven further by the researcher's interviews where it was found that 4 of the respondents noted that social media allowed them to engage more with candidates This supports Quish (2010) where they stated that the objective of using social media was to build relationships in a process known as 'Recruitment Relationship Marketing'

3   Advantages of Social Media in recruitment As stated in the literature review, Parker (2011) notes that social media offers organisations a powerful tool to proactively source candidates and this is supported by the researcher's findings in which 3 respondents noted that they regularly source candidates through LinkedIn Similarly Sherrie (2011) explained that social media as a hiring tool is more cost effective and a quicker resource than traditional methods Research from the interviews supports this statement as 3 respondents noted that social media dramatically increases the turnaround time for hiring a candidate As well as this, 3 interviewers noted that social media is a more cost effective method of recruiting

4   Disadvantages of Social Media in recruitment As was found from data obtained from the interviews, one of the main disadvantages which 4 respondents noted was that poor or negative information about organisations could be spread virally

through social media and affectively damaged the organisations reputation This view is not supported by the research gained from the literature review and possibly points to a new piece of research

5   Performing background checks Rainey (2012) explained that social media checks go beyond normal searches where they seek to verify information on candidates and now the employer looks for information such as status updates Data collected from the researcher's interviews does not support this however as only 2 respondents indicated they perform online searches on candidates However, 6 respondents indicated they would check a candidate's professional profile on LinkedIn to verify information on a CV The fact that respondent's noted they did not look for more information beyond verification highlights a significant flaw in Rainey (2012) literature

6   The Signifance of the Passive Candidate As highlighted by Dekay (2009), Winkler (2011) and Silhker (2011), the significance of the passive candidate and the access which social media sites like LinkedIn has given to them has provided the foundation for their success Findings from the researcher's interviewers support this literature 2 respondents specifically noted the importance of the passive candidate and how they actively target this type of candidate, noting that they are the strongest type of candidate As well as this, they also noted that traditional methods such as job boards do not give you the same depth of access This indicates the strength and depth of LinkedIn

5 3 Link to Research Questions

In order to answer this, the researcher will first list out each of the research questions and then give a response below

5   To identify the effect which social media has had on recruitment methods being used in both agencies and in-house recruitment

   d) To identify which of the social media platforms is the most popular for recruitment purposes

   e) To analyse the main perceived benefits which companies have of using social media in recruitment

   f) To analyse the potential drawbacks of using social media in recruitment

5 3 1 Response to Question 1

Part a) In looking at part A of this question, it is clear from the interview research that LinkedIn is the most popular platform from which recruitment is performed All respondents noted they have been using the LinkedIn platform since at least 2009 Other platforms discussed included facebook, twitter and blogs however these were mentioned sparsely

Part b) There were three main benefits which respondents noted from the interview research Firstly, the use of social media gave recruiters greater access to candidates 3 of the respondents explained similarly that social media opened up the market to more candidates and most importantly to the passive candidate and allowed them to target wider audiences when recruiting 1 respondent described their ability to actively recruit across

seas and this highlights a significant advantage which social media has over traditional recruitment methods This is that social media has the same platform globally which makes it recognisable and easy to use for both candidates and recruiters In contrast, there are hundreds of different types of job boards all of which have multiple user interfaces

Secondly, social media has given recruiters faster access to the market As stated before, 3 respondents noted that social media gave recruiters quick and immediate access to the marketplace and also allowed them to decrease the turnaround time for hiring The greatest advantage for recruiters with faster access is that they can actively recruit and fill positions in less time The real benefit though is that they can fill these positions with quality candidates

Thirdly, recruiters now have access to the most talented employees (passive candidate) which is something more traditional methods did not give access to The effect which social media has had on this (in particular LinkedIn) is that it provides a semi formal and professional setting from which to engage with candidates The objective of approaching candidates in this manner is to show an expression of interest

Part c) From the findings of the research, 6 respondents noted that the only real disadvantage was if negative feedback was spread virally through the social media platforms However, provided recruiting activities were dealt with in the right way (like for example, approaching a candidate or engaging with a candidate on facebook) then organisations can minimise this risk

1   To study the effect which social media has had on recruiters for sourcing candidates and their ability to target talented candidates in the marketplace

5 3 2 Response to Question 2

Social media has had a huge impact on the ability for recruiters to source candidates As mentioned previously, this impact has largely hinged on the ability which social media gives recruiters to approach the passive candidate Not only has it given them a greater audience from which to choose from but it has also improved the quality of candidates from which recruiters can source from As respondent noted in their interview, this has meant that the recruitment market is heading towards a position of 'active poaching' between companies of talented employees The potential effects of this could be huge as it will mean that talented employees will have less commitment to organisations and be more likely to leave if they do not feel looked after

2   To establish the importance which companies place on social media as part of their recruitment strategy?

      c)   How much emphasis is on the War for Talent?

      d)   How are social media activities monitored and measured by organisations

5 3 3 Response to Question 3

Part a) From the interview research, 4 of the respondents explained that social media gave them greater access to more talented candidates (generally whom were passive candidates) As stated earlier, this has meant that there has been a big emphasis placed on sourcing and hiring the most talented candidates As one respondent noted, the implications are massive with companies entering a phase which will see them actively

poaching each other's most talented employees with the aim of gaining a competitive advantage

Part b) From the interview findings, it is clear that most commonly used metric is the source of hire Although the use of social media in recruitment is on the up, organisations do have a number of options available to them when they want to begin hiring, from agencies to job boards to press advertising 6 respondents noted that in order to find which method was most effective, they would monitor where the candidate was sourced from Moving forward, this allowed them to track where candidates were applying and which method of recruitment was the most effective

3   To examine the extent which companies use Social Media to perform background
      checks on candidates

5 3 4 Response to Questions 4

It is clear from the interview research that recruiters do check a candidate's professional profiles such as LinkedIn or Twitter primarily with the objective of verifying information on their CV However, only 2 respondents noted that they would regularly conduct online searches on candidates (but not with the intent of uncovering private information) As stated above, this contradicts with the literature of Rainey (2012) who explained that organisations were pushing the boundaries in looking for more private information on candidates

5 4 Implications on Recruitment Industry of research

There have been a number of implications from the findings of this research

5 4 1 Effect on Recruitment Methods

Social Media is playing a crucial role in allowing recruiters to source better quality

candidates more quickly, from a wider pool of candidates, whilst improving a company's

competitive advantage (by hiring more talented employees) Social Media in effect has

allowed recruiters to be more effective at their jobs by allowing them to be more proactive

in building relationships with key candidates and then offering them a position when an

opening becomes available All of this is done in a safe, professional and semi formal

environment

5 4 2 The War for Talent

One of the biggest implications is the war for talent that social media has created

Organisations are now entering a phase where they are monitoring the employees in each

other's organisations and looking at ways in which to attract their most talent employees to

their company This will force companies into finding better ways by which to attract and

maintain their workforce

5 4 3 Social Media Background Searches

From the interview research, it was found that majority of searches performed were limited

to LinkedIn with only a couple of respondents noting that they perform Google searches

This would indicate that most recruiters believe in separating a candidate's personal profile

from their professional profile Moving forward, this might suggest that the best way in

which to gain knowledge on a candidate is through reference checking with previous

employers

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5 5 Validity of the research

This researcher believes that the research questions and the objectives set have been sufficiently achieved to justify the validity of the research It is hoped this dissertation has shown that the data substantiates this Also, that the chosen methodology caused analysis of the data to produce an accurate reflection of the changes and overall effect which social media has had on recruitment methods both in-house and agency

5 6 Reliability of the research

The findings indicate a view that social media is impacting largely on recruitment methods and activities In view of the previous methods of recruiting professionals, the way in which they have adapted to new methods and the relationship to the literature review, it would be correct to conclude that the answers given do correlate effectively in some ways However, as will be discussed in the limitations, the researcher believes that the sample is too small from which concise generalisations can be made

This would suggest that the dissertation's reliability is medium

5 7 Limitations of the research

Research concentrated on the new techniques and methods which social media have given recruiters including the extent to which social media is used for sourcing, background checks and networking as well as the implications they have had for the industry as a whole Whilst every effort was made by the researcher to organise an appropriate sample consisting of recruiting professionals from a variety of different industries, the researcher believes that there is not enough of a variety to make generalisations for the recruitment industry as a whole Although there were a number of industries covered including IT, Healthcare, Agency Recruitment, Business Consulting, Drinks Industry and financial

services, more industries need to be researched in order to get an accurate account of the effect of social media in recruitment

Examples of other industries which need to be researched include Marketing, Legal, Not for Profit organisations, Government Organisations and Media & Press More research is needed in this way

The respondents were located nationally All except one were based in Dublin There may be views and perceptions of some respondents which are affected by the industry which they work in In particular, there were 3 respondents who were in the IT industry As social media is facilitated by technology, these respondents would have a natural inclination to support this type of media

5 8 Implications of future research

This research highlights the need for recruiters and recruitment professionals to constantly be training up on new methods and practices, specifically with technology It would be beneficial for organisations to investigate

- Other metrics from which social media can be measured

- Alternative ways in which to retain top talent in their organisations to prevent them from leaving to competing organisations

- Where their ideal candidates search for jobs and alter the strategy to accomdate this

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Facebook User Statistics 2012

Source - http://www.justsocial.com/facebook-updated-stats.html/
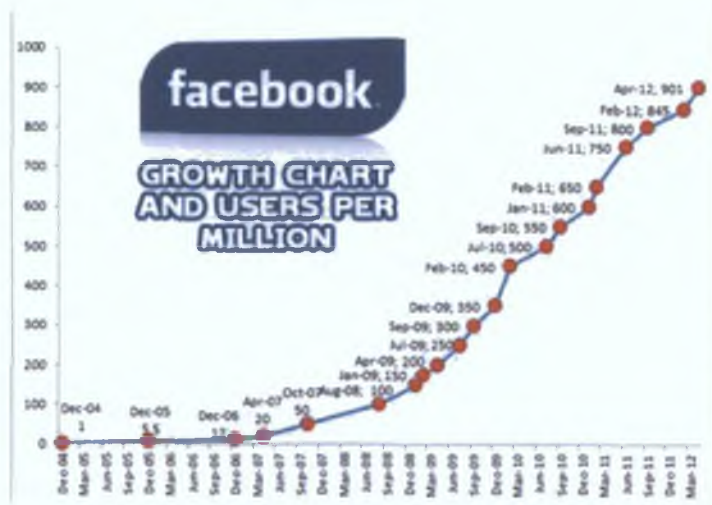
Appendix 2

Twitter User Statistics 2012

Twitter - Total Registered Users
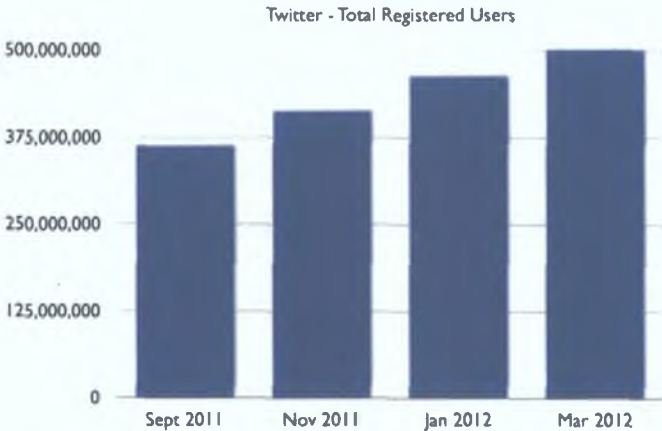
Source - http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/twitter-active-total-users_b17655

Appendix 3

LinkedIn User Statistics

Source - http://www.socialrabbit.net/2011/12/4-things-you-didnt-know-about-linkedin/

Appendix 4

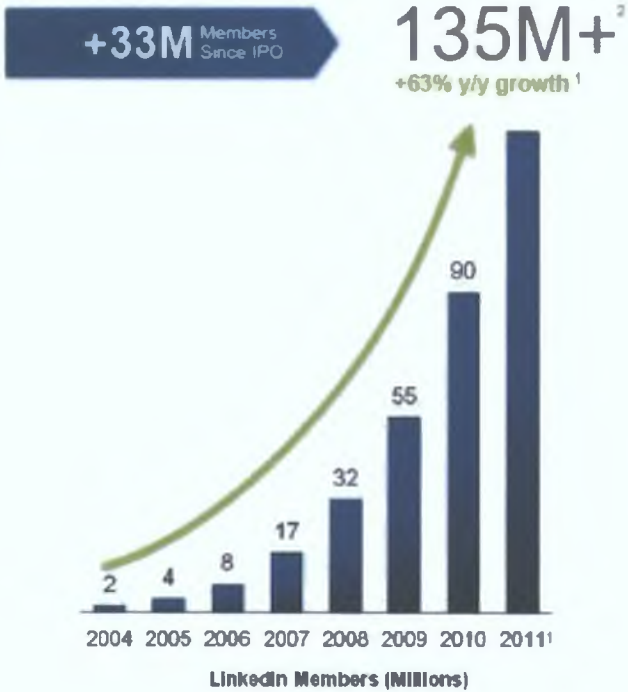|	Int.1	Int.2	Int.3	Int.4	Int.5	Int.6	Int.7
Qs.1	Global and Regional Brands Sourcer (recruiter)	Agency Recruiter - Temp desk, right across board - marketing, IT, administration, sales	Blueprint Agency Recruiter - IT Division	CEO of Recruitovate. Previous to this I was recruitment manager in Microsoft & Linkedin	Talent Acquisition officer for state street. Currently working on internal recruitment team	Currently doing career coaching, before I was a recruitment manager in Sigmar recruitment	Senior recruiter in Deloitte
Qs.2	Actively Hiring at the moment	Very busy, actively hiring. Generally high end & General roles	Been good overall, has gone against downturn. Been a real boom and demand for IT specialists	Yes, there's about 25 positions open at Microsoft at the moment	Yes, average number of roles at any one time is 60-70 (internal & external)	Sigmar were continuously recruiting - were also setting up a base in Singapore	Constantly recruiting - also have a graduate recruitment scheme
Qs.3	Linkedin - No Agencies	Linkedin, monster.ie, jobs.ie	Relying more on S/M - twitter, linkedin etc - still using traditional sites such as jobs.ie	Most popular is Referrals. Then it's pro active sourcing on linkedin using boolean search strings. Then it's careers website, job boards and agencies	Jobsites, careers website. Also use Linkedin for a lot of my recruiting. We would try to build long term relationships with potential candidates online	Job boards. Linkedin was also very popular particularly for banking and finance	Use full spectrum, direct applications (referrals, agency recruiters, job boards and social media, including Linkedin)
Qs.4	Engagement with candidates - its a more proactive method of recruiting	Becoming a growing trend - must stick with trend. Becoming more popular than traditional methods	Gave me a greater reach and power to reach people I needed. Great way of getting message out to people. Allowed me to network and build connections	Greater engagement with candidate. Specifically with groups on Linkedin.	Because of how it's evolved - number of users has increased dramatically. Also gives us an indication of what our competitors are doing - able to see what candidates you've missed	I found it was becoming the next job board. People on Linkedin wanted to be seen to be credible. Very good for networking also	Quickest and most user friendly way to get to candidates. It's everywhere we look at the moment and in all sorts of marketing and branding
Qs.5	Linkedin mainly, however it depends on the region your recruiting in - must understand the demographic	Linkedin	Rely heavily on Linkedin. Use platforms which aggregate job postings to all forms of S/M. Boolean Searching	Microsoft has multiple facebook pages for different geographies as well as twitter, linkedin	Linkedin because people are on that to be seen (looking for a job). Take part in groups, discussions. Link twitter with linkedin	Linkedin Mainly	Linkedin and twitter mainly - facebook page for graduates
Qs.6	Engagement with passive candidates, being able to contact them in a professional environment	Gives a wider audience - majority of younger people are on facebook etc. Huge emphasis is now on mobile access - where we do a lot of advertising	Interacts with much more candidates. Find, track and follow movements easier. Traditionally you waited for candidate to come to you now its the other way round. Must be good at interacting nowadays	Allows you to engage more with the candidate in groups on linkein for example. It's a whole new way of interacting	Linkedin now provides recruiter resource (to search better). You can view appropriate candidates for appropriate roles now. You can also post jobs on linkedin now	You can target your audience a lot better now, can target some globally. Gave a much wider audience from using traditional methods	It's more immediate and allows us to focus on candidates which we are more interested as opposed to a scatter gun type approach. It also helps to manage costs more
Qs.7	Nothing definitive however we doe use Response Rates on twitter, facebook, linkedin	Source of Hire - where the candidate applied from. Find out whats the most popular form of applying	Source of hire - where candidate comes from	Quality of hire, time to hire, cost of hire and source of hire	Source of hire, cost of hire	Source of hire, where the person was applying from	cost per hire and the source of hire
Qs.8	Engagement with passive talent	Wider audience, speed of access - can get information on a candidate immediately	Faster turnaround. Can reach out to people in real time an get feedback immediately	Reduces cost of hire, wider audience. The past it was using press or agencies now its easier to advertise a range of positions or pro-actively source through multiple regions	Monitor and track movements of candidates. Market research and recruitment	Presence on the web, people were able to find you and you were able to brand yourself	immediate delivery to marketplace. Very quick way for candidate to interact with us and its more cost effective
Qs.9		Since 2009	Since 2009 mainly	Since about 2004	Since about 2008	Since about 2009	Since 2008 roughly
Qs.10	Generally quite positive with a few exceptions	Generally quite positive with a few exceptions	Positive is approached in right way	Usually quite positive. Linkedin RR is 60-70% which is 20-30% higher than email	Depends on how they're approached. Generally it's a good way of contacting people - confidential and professional	Usually curious and would generate further interest	Usually very positive - your not forcing them, your only showing an expression of interest
Qs.11	Information on CV database could be stale or not updated. However there is more enthusiasm from active Candidate	There is a challenge with conservative information that can mean people are less active	It's not as good but it's getting better. Not the best way of getting true picture of person's abilities. Can view their social activity but it doesn't compare to CV	Very good as you can view a person's social activity on the networking sites. A recommendation is just someone's information stuff we couldn't have before	It depends on the detail and data which someone puts on their profile. Can be difficult sometimes to assess a person's skills on S/M	Your able to find the CV's without having to wait for them to come to you which is how it was done traditionally.	It allows us to target in a more productive way and gives a better idea of where the candidate is coming from
Qs.12			It does in a way, companies now emply SEO team to make sure there listings come first in searches		If your looking for a senior position its not helpful as it would have a negative impact on the brand. All senior managers in financial industry tend to know each other so it can lead to problems		

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Qs.	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
Qs.13	Not a big difference - too s are only as good as the information in them	Linkedin is good to a certain point but it doesn't have information on things such as Salary expectations which can be useful	It can be yes. However it's all about knowing what your doing and going about searching. If you know how to perform search on Linkedin you can narrowdown results. Can be quicker & deeper	Give a lot more access to passive candidate. The people who aren't looking for a job but are open to one	I still prefer job boards as people tend to put a lot more detail on their CV's. Keyword searches are stronger on these databases	I found it worked quite well for more senior positions mainly but the junior positions was word of mouth	It can be if people represent themselves properly on linkedin than the search then
Qs.14	30-40 people whilst in Linkedin (in 1 year) - higher end jobs. Only started with new company so it's early days	Temp jobs - 40-50 per month through S/M	13/14 jobs so far this year through S/M. Would be 90% of personal candidates are through social media	75 over the past five years. Half of which are senior positions. For teams I've worked on, about 250	About 40-50 people (5%) of all the people we've placed	About 10 roughly	Annually about 10-12 would be hired through Social Media
Qs.15	Big risks as marketing/ branding tool- can turn into a marketing disaster	Competiton with other agencies. By posting job ad - competitors can guess where the role is based and target them - track your movements	Yes,can create a backlash from a marketing perspective. If someone is unpleased with outcome of process etc.	Yes, if you say the wrong thing online it can spiral out of control quickly. Usually damages the brand of the organisation - can go viral	Yes, you can waste a lot of time searching for people if people don't have enough information. Tend to get a lot in-mails on linkedin which are not important (people trying ot get specific information on the market so they can get something better)	I have never come across any sort of disadvantage no. It's been mainly quite positive	It's becoming very noisy, there's so many messages being delivered to the candidate on a daily and hourly basis. Things are now only being half read when it comes to recruitment messages
Qs.16	Gone from being the traditional fisher and dangle to a more proactive activity where people can become hunters themselves.	[illegible]	Massively, there has been huge investment into the training of consultants on linkedin, twitter, blogging etc. in the hi-tec sectors its where you need to be. Job boards are used less and less nowadays		Feel it's been slightly overhyped. Traditional methods are still more effective at the moment. People still don't know how to use linkedin and get the best out of it. However this will change as linkedin adapts better. Linkedin will account for 30-40% of all hires in next 10 years.	[illegible]	
Qs.17	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Depends on candidate on the social media footprint. Certain sectors have a better digital footprint like IT/ Marketing. Sectors like Public sector will have less of a footprint	I don't think so. It's just a different way of approaching the candidate but not the quality. It does however improve the depth of candidates - like international ones. Looking for skills which aren't in local markets - can go look outside this	Well it's opened up a larger pool of people. However it depends quite heavily on the type of role they're recruiting for	[illegible]
Qs.18	Yes, I have done so however not in social media - I just do general searches online (google)	[illegible]	[illegible]	Yes, all the time. Will view the linkedin profile and perform a google search on candidate name	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Qs.19	[illegible]	[illegible]	It puts a thought in your mind but unless it's something related to professional life then it doesn't matter. I am against looking at facebook, twitter etc	Depends on the context of the photo - if you see someone do something illegal it may get you to rethink about hiring the person but I've never found material like this. Overall I will look for professional content	[illegible]	It would depend on the nature and what they had up on the web. If it was something minor it wouldn't bother me	I would prefer not to comment on this as it's a policy matter
Qs.20	Depends on how people adopt and use social media. It's down to the developers ultimately	[illegible]	I would question if it can continue to grow - at some point the bubble must burst. It depends on where facebook, twitter etc go	[illegible]	Will be one or two well established social networks. linkedin will be one of them. Linkedin will become the norm and you will see a shift away from job boards. Been a huge rise in use of linkedin, especially with our competitors	I definitely see it becoming more of a trend (social media)	It will become a major part of recruiting rotten. Think the different strands of social media will begin to define themselves with the different levels of talent. Facebook works with graduates, as you go up the skill set, twitter and linkedin is more popular. Challenge for recruiters is having a different kind of presence now, something which is unique. People looking for jobs wish to be dealt with in serious manner but with some humour also nowadays
Qs.21	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Qs.22	There is a desire in Ireland to adopt social media but people are scared of getting it wrong - serious concern in how people will invest in it	The area is constantly changing and evolving. very hard to predict where it's going to next	No. I think we've covered most things	Time to hire will be incredibly important in the future. There might be a backlash to S/M also as it is now being ambushed with data. there's only so much people can take at one time	Open to abuse, especially with recommendations on Linkedin. Quality of recommendation will become important. Also up to linkedin to ensure they get their data correct - giving false impressions of candidates etc etc	Recruitment methods seem to be constantly evolving. It's gone from press adverts to job boards to social media. It's important for a recruiter to keep up with this	I think Social Media is here to stay end play an important part but we have to be careful in how its managed and not flogged to death. We must make sure we are visible and unique

Interviewer uses social media as part of their recruiting tools

Interviewer said it's a great way to meet people as it gave them a wider access to candidates

Use LinkedIn as their main social media tool

Ability to interact with the candidate more

Able to target audiences a lot better

Interviewee who use source of hire as one of their main metrics

Interviewers who stated they had a positive reaction from candidates when approached through social media

Interviewee said they were able to get more specific information about candidates from their profiles on LinkedIn

Interviewee said that it was the quality of data which was on social media which made the difference in it being more effective as screening tool

Interviewee said it gave them better access to candidates when searching for top talent

Interviwee said looking for specific candidates depended on the information on Social Media

Interviewee said social media can backfire if the wrong information gets out there. For example, if something negative is said

Interviewee said Social Media had become a new trend

Interviewee said it does help them find a better quality of candidate

Interviewee said they don't perform background searches on LinkedIn

Interviewee said seeing something embarrassing would not affect their decision on whether to hire them

Interviewee said they saw a shift more towards mobile recruitment

Respondents said it was due to size and level of recruitment in the organisation - the bigger the company., the wider the candidate base that was needed

Respondents who have used social media in recruitment since at least 2009

Appendix 5

Interview Questions

1 Explain where you are currently working?

2 What is the recruiting like currently in the organisation?

3 What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

4 What social media tools do you use?

5 How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment methods?

6 What benefits do you see of social media tools?

7 When did you start using social media tools?

8 By what sort of systems (if any) do you measure results/ return on investment with social media?

9 When did you start using social media tools?

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via social media?

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find social media as a screening tool?

12 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social media been in its results compared with traditional methods? Can you give an example?

13 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

14 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool? What are those disadvantages?

15 How do you think social media has affected recruiting?

16 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better candidates?

17 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis?

18 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

19 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

20 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

21 Any other comments / insights

Appendix 6

Interview Transcripts

Int 1

Brian Kearns, Talent Sourcer/ Recruiter – Drinks Industry

1   Explain where you are currently working?

- I am responsible for the sourcing for the global and regional brands in Ireland It's

still to be confirmed whether it'll be for the full life cycle from sourcing to making

offers or whether it'll be just sourcing candidates, interviewing and presenting

candidates I'll also be working with the company on social media brand and how

to utilise social media effectively as they don't really use social media to its full

capability at the moment

2   What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- During this period, I moved from agency recruitment to in-house, so in that way

it's quite different Social media has really taken off now in recruitment, it's gone

from a 'nice to have talked about tool' to in my mind an essential tool that

employers and recruiters are still way behind the curve on in Ireland in particular

There's a lot of work for employers and agencies to get to grasps with Currently,

my organisation would be actively hiring

3   What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

- In my new organisation, I'm still getting used to their style of recruitment,

however when I was in LinkedIn, my preference was to use LinkedIn We haven't used any recruitment agencies in general

4   Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

Its the engagement with candidates and its to hold people accountable as well It's very easy in an agency to mislead / miss represent candidates using social media and there was never really any consequence In terms of social media, it's all out there (and the little black book is now wide open on the net through LinkedIn/ Facebook and Twitter) It's now a more proactive way of engaging with passive talent

5   What social media tools do you use?

LinkedIn is the main one however, depending on the region there are many other social media sites which I use You may use others such as Zing, Gdale Likewise in Brazil you would use Orchid or China you would use Ren Ren Whilst working at Microsoft, we used Twitter and Facebook So, it depends on the nature of the business and the region you are targeting If you use Social Media intelligently, if you understand your role and your business and your target demographic, the social media strategy you choose will choose you, it will be self selected

6   By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social media?

-    There would have been response rates in terms of in mail sent or tweets responded too etc However it's still very early in terms of measurement,

there's no one way of doing it There are different tools available like for example Google analytics There is nothing which you can say is really definitive however

7   What benefits do you see of social media tools?

-   It's the engagement I mean ultimately, if you look at any multinational company, any person who wishes to interact with passive talent is potentially the hiring manager It's someone from within the industry who recognises the market and who is a taught leader within their industry So having a recruiter trying to engage with passive talent just doesn't work and anyone that tries to do it is a bit stupid Realistically, the best people to engage and network within an industry are the people within that industry If I was hiring a recruiter, the person I could talk to would be a recruiter but if I want to hire a sales manager, the best person to hire would the person who will make the decision or its people within that team who understand the role and who understand the daily grind of the position That's one of the key things about linkedin, it allows managers and hiring managers to partner effectively with recruiters in a streamlined way

8   What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via social media?

-   It's usually quite positive There has only been a couple of occasions where people have reported me to LinkedIn for approaching them so it's usually very positive to perfectly honest with you and that's basically because of the strategy

I've put in place in terms of working with management and the team in engaging the talent

9 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find social media as a screening tool?

- I suppose you have to look at from a certain view, like when you have candidates stored on a database, its not real time information, its not live The information could be stale or old Also, there's a difference between the type of candidate, there's a passive candidate and an active candidate So when you're dealing with active candidates, there's an enthusiasm and an eagerness for a role or for any sort of engagement but ultimately, they may not be 'tier one' candidates So what social allows you to do is it allows you to identify leaders in their industry to target them specifically and strategically and then to try and approach them and make them interested in joining your team The other thing you need to think of as well from an employer's perspective is if you en employer and you've targeted a leader in a competitors organisation, not only are you taking that competitors knowledge with the potential candidate but your also weakening a competitor's position and strengthened your own within the market So it really is a fundamental change in the way business and recruitment is done when people do it properly

10 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

- There's not a huge difference to be honest, I mean with social media again with twitter, linkedin and facebook there still only tools and the tools are only as good as the information thats presented So if a candidate doesn't present the information, they're still going to be difficult to find when your working off a database So its a case of – the information is really key, effectively LinkedIn is a massive database but its still only as good as the information within it

11 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- Within LinkedIn, I would have placed 30-40 roles Whilst in the agency, it would have been mainly through direct applicants or using sites such as monster databases I don't think thats fundamentally changed, I still think if you look at recruiters there's still a way in which talent is structured and I think in agencies, your still going to get a huge amount of direct applicants Ultimately however, its up to organisation to discern between an agency candidate and a direct social media candidate It's all about quality and if you can get a direct applicant which is of higher quality over that of social media However the quality of candidates which an agency will get will not fundamentally change because of social media Tier 1 talent always uses their social media to network, they never have to apply for jobs

12 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool? What are those disadvantages?

- As a recruitment tool, there isn't really As a branding tool and as a marketing tool, there are huge risks involved We had a client I had engaged with on a free

lance basis and the recruiter got engaged with a graduate candidate on facebook Their conversation was there for the whole world to see and it really was a poor candidate and marketing disaster from the company because the recruiter was quite dismissive and said that we will get back to you when we can, we're a bit busy here When you see that from a candidates perspective, its bad cause it just gets shared through social media From a candidate experience perspective, its a disaster

13 How do you think social media has affected recruiting?

- It gives people the tools to become hunters if you like A traditionally analogy for recruitment, would be that you'd sit there as a fisher and dangle your hook until someone takes a bite out of it and that s how it traditionally worked unless your the head hunter However, now social media gives the tools to move from being a fisherman to being a hunter and specifically target individuals for specific roles and to try and go and capture that individual for the role So it's fundamentally changed the way people approach the role and the process

14 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis?

- Yes, I have done this I didn't use facebook specifically, I was more inclined to perform a search on the internet on specific people Specific to social media, I wasn't actually at looking at their twitter or facebook but more what they'd done in terms of blogs and their LinkedIn page My view on it however is

quite simple, if someone puts something out there in the public domain, its in the public domain So I don't have a problem with it I have heard of people losing their jobs because of updates they've made on facebook Ultimately, if you stupid enough to make those comments, you probably deserve to lose the job anyway So I think whatever people are comfortable putting in the public domain is up to them You can see from my twitter and linkedin pages, a lot of the stuff is used for my professional life My facebook page is constantly locked down as best as it can The only issue with facebook I have is whenever they make a change, they mess up their settings So even if you do have your privacy settings set to the maximum somebody shouldn't be able to find information which you don't want them to have But again, like I said –if its in the public domain, then you really put yourself out there

15 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- No, it wouldn't have any impact Ultimately, I look at their ability to do the job and how they engage with the client and how they will engage and represent the organisation If they had a topless photo or a guy streaking down the road, unless its going to have a direct impact on your business down the road, so in the case of my current organisation it would- unless its specifically relevant to the business then an embarrassing photo wouldn't have any impact I have however heard of instances m America where companies trawl through the internet to present that type of evidence to potential employers but I do think it's silly You judge people on their merits and achievements If people do

narrow gap between professional and social, so using LinkedIn more as a personal tool than I would be concerned, especially at a high level

16 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

- It depends on how it develops For example, social media in Germany is way behind social media in Ireland and we would be behind the USA It depends on how people adopt and use social media Ultimately, if social media goes down the route of intelligence search and conceptual understanding, that's going to again fundamentally shift the way by which social media works, in terms of the way people work and also how we engage So for example, if facebook is to continually grow and it adopts a search functionality which keeps people on the one platform again that would change the platforms which recruiters use to source So again, it's really down to the developers to decide how to move forward and that will then determine how to adopt the usage policy

17 Any other comments / insights

- I think in terms of social media in Ireland, when I left LinkedIn and before I joined my current employer, I took some courses in social media training – one of the key things is that there's a desire to adopt social media but people are very scared in terms of doing it wrong There's also a serious concern in how people are going to invest in it, in terms of time effort and money and what I found is that a lot of companies are really eager to do it but I think at this point they don't know how to do it and with social media your better off not doing it

as opposed to doing it wrong I think, especially using that example I gave

earlier

18 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are

mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

- I actually don't know, I think there's an element of fear I think there's a fear of

what if we do it wrong As I said before, Germany is behind us and America is

ahead of us in Social Media We're in a unique position however where we can

see if from both sides – we can see where social media is going

Int 2

Joanne Duffy – Agency Recruiter, Grafton Recruitment

1 Explain where you are currently working?

- I'm working for the Grafton employment group I'm working on the temporary

desk that would deal with all commercial recruitment – thats right across the

board, secretary, accountancy, finance, sales, marketing – right across the

board

2 What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- Generally, it's busy In the current climate, it's generally high end roles At the

moment there's seems to be more of these coming in that the more general

roles

3   What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

    -   LinkedIn is number 1 I think We would also use monster, jobs ie Anything to

        do with the searching tools which are considered the standard

4   Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

    -   I think you're out of the game if your not using them I think everyone is

        turning to social media, so if you're sticking with this trend, you're not going to

        be able to source the right candidates or keep up with your targets There's not

        a company out there which doesn't have a huge amount of technology, so

        anybody interested in social media tend to be very IT literate and usually very

        well educated and so social media is of a higher standard in comparison with

        traditional methods Things like newspaper ads are dead and you would rarely

        advertise in the paper at all nowadays

5   What social media tools do you use?

    -   The most popular one for me would be LinkedIn

6   How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment

    methods?

    -   Well, you have a wider audience The majority of younger people are on

        facebook and there's also a lot of older people too They're also able to access

        this through their mobile nowadays so they'll be first to see any jobs which we

advertise With newspapers, your only targeting the audience which actually

purchases those newspapers, so social media is a lot more effective

7 By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social

media?

- We do We have a system called broad bean If anybody applies through social

    media, the progamme will tell us where they came from, for example jobs ie/

    monster This gives a breakdown of where everyone has applied from and gives

    us an indication as to what is the most accurate form of advertising for a job, so

    we keep a record of that and use it for the future LinkedIn is obviously a little

    bit different, this would be more personal

8 What benefits do you see of social media tools?

- You have a wider audience At the touch of the bottom, you can get

    information on candidates such as where they're working, their previous

    experience/ education A lot of companies are looking for 3rd level education so

    you can incorporate that into the search or do a search on education alone You

    can also do searches on graduates, this is very popular at this time of year You

    can do a search by location It's hugely beneficial

9 When did you start using social media tools?

- I have been using it actively for the past 3 years (2009)

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via
   social media?

   - Generally its quite positive You do get the odd person who doesn't want to be
     contacted and they may have you blocked but in general the reaction is quite
     good I think if your contacting a person, your complimenting them (by looking
     to connect with them on LinkedIn) The additional benefit is that your gaining
     more connections through that person so you if you get a good candidate,
     they'll tend to have friends or work colleagues of the same calibre, so this
     opens a recruiter up to a new market

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find
   social media as a screening tool?

   - Well nothing beats face to face for interviewing However for screening, there's
     an awful lot more information which could be there (on social media) like
     referees or more information about their education and their talents LinkedIn
     gives different information in what they specialise in and their connection list
     (friend list) will also give more information on who they know in the industry

12 In terms of searching for top talent and the war for talent, do you find social media
   helps?

- Yes, it does help overall However you have to be careful from an agency point of view that your not upsetting any of your clients But apart from that, I definitely think it helps

13 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

- LinkedIn is good to a certain point but I really prefer using the other traditional sites such as monster ie / jobs ie because you pin point information such as salary expectations compared with years of experience This is beneficial if a client knows they won't pay more than a certain amount and a candidate is expecting more than that You're able to save time From that point of view, LinkedIn wouldn't be very strong

14 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- I would have a lot of referrals Social media would make about 85% of the candidates Because I'm in temporary jobs market, I would have anything between 40 – 60 jobs filled every month These could vary from a few days to a year's contract however The amount would vary also and work on seasonal demand

15 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool? What are those disadvantages?

- There's nothing I've come across which has made it a disadvantage From a competition point of view with other agencies – by putting up a job ad, competitors can guess where that role is based If a company is able to figure this out quickly, they may be able to poach the job or they can see your movements more so from LinkedIn This is the only thing I'd be careful with

16 How do you think social media has affected recruiting?

- I think it's very important If any company is not using social media, they won't survive (with recruitment) I think it's hard enough to keep up with technology and I believe now that the app for recruitment agencies is now becoming very popular This is something we are looking at ourselves

17 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better quality candidates?

- Absolutely You can also search people from outside the country if you have a very specialised job It opens up internationally

18 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis?

- No, but I have heard of other situations where companies have

19 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- Personally, it wouldn't I would tend to look at a candidates experience and their ability to do the job However, there are some companies that would delve deeper into certain information I don't think its a big problem though

If you heard something controversial about one of your candidates, would this affect your decision?

- Well it depends on how serious it is If it is serious, than yes, that wouldn't be someone I'd like to recommend In this regard, yes if I did find something out about my candidate it would affect my decision

20 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

- I think there'll be a big move towards to mobile recruiting especially using the agencies apps I think companies will look to have more in-house recruiters and this could put pressure on agencies because of the fact that they would have the access and to the technology that's available I think there are more companies going in-house because they have such easy access to searching people

21 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

- I think obviously because of the calibre and the way you can pin point people a lot quicker by simply putting in key words I think for more junior jobs like administration companies will use the traditional job websites databases but for more specialised and more senior roles, they'll use social media They can also recruit internationally a lot easier The calibre of candidate is much higher in this regard

22 Any other comments / insights

- Not really but I just think it's an area that's constantly changing and evolving and in a way it's hard to predict where it might go to next!

Int. 3

Darren Bayliss, Agency Recruiter, ICT Divisional Manager

1 Explain where you are currently working?

- I work for a company called Blueprint appointments which is the specialist IT division of grafton employment group and my position is divisional manager so I manage the IT recruitment division

2 What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- From an IT perspective I guess it would be fair to say that in 2008 and 2009, everybody saw a downturn but in IT, certainly within the last couple of years if anything its gone against the economy There is a real boom in that area and there is real demand for talent and for people and our biggest challenge is actually finding the people to meet this demand There hasn't really been any slowdown in this recruitment sector in the last couple of years

3 What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

- I think its fair to say the market has changed completely It's gone from where pre-downturn, there was a glut of candidates and it was a company driven market Now it's the other way round and it's very much a candidate driven market The traditional methods of recruitment, IE the job boards, your own website (company website) typically don't give you the returns which they used to We still use the likes of monster, jobs ie etc for advertising and around websites but we are relying more and more on the likes of linked and twitter and facebook which is where the market has moved and where you can reach out to candidates

4 Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

- Before I joined blueprint, I was out on my own for 3 years working for myself and because of the type of people I was looking for, social media gave me that reach and the power to reach the people I needed I was looking for people all over the US, the UK Social media was a great way of actually getting the message out there and reaching people There was also private interest – it allowed me to

network and build my own connection list The group pages on linkedin are

brilliant also as its a great way of generating candidates In this day and age in

recruitment, if your not leveraging social media to its fullest your kind of at the

races

5   What social media tools do you use?

- I use LinkedIn and network very heavily and would use it a lot, as would the rest

of my team (who would use excessively) Aside of that we use a service called

'Bolan Reach' which basically allows you to aggregate job postings, not only on

that side but it also aggregates them onto your twitter feed and to your hnkedin and

facebook etc etc Outside of that, we use typical Boolean searching, trawling the

web and trying to be one step ahead of everyone else and get to the ideal candidate

before everyone else does

6   How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment

methods?

-   The big difference is that beforehand candidates would come to you and you

    could very easily post a job advert and get a list of good candidates Nowadays

    you have to find the candidates The traditional ways of recruiting like through

    the job boards aren't effective anymore Social media is the way in which you

    will find, track and follow candidates with forums, blogs etc You can interact

    much more now with candidates than you could before This is again compared

    with before where you could post something and wait for them to come to you

    Social media is also good for building a good reputation, which is very

important today You must show you are knowledgeable and good at
interacting with people and social media allows you to do this

7   By what sort of systems (if any) do you measure results/ return on investment with
social media?

-    We have started to record where are candidates have come from In the last
quarter, 22% of our hires have come from LinkedIn alone, however it could
also have been from other social media postings which went out through bull
horn etc It's a significant increase and will continue to grow as we are now
putting more and more emphasis and energy into it We are constantly ensuring
that the team knows the best methods by which to search, the groups they
should be in etc By the end of year I would say about 50% of all hires would
be coming from social media

8   What benefits do you see of social media tools?

-    I think it gives you a faster turnaround You can reach out to someone and in
real time get a response or feedback from them Whereas with the old methods,
email or job posting – it would take more time for someone to get back to you
and then you respond to them It does work in some sectors but it doesn't in
mine (IT) So I think social media gives you a much more faster and speedy
punch and basically enables you to get to candidates much quicker When I
came into today, I had searched for a number of roles and was able to present a
number of potential candidates by the time I left the office Whereas the old
traditional routes, it could take a couple of days

9   When did you start using social media tools?

  -   I really started using it in great deal in 2009 I really started to see the benefit,

     even though I had used it before I had never really gotten into it Up until 2009,

     I was at about 200 connections, whereas now I'm on about 8,500 I found with

     the US market, twitter was very successful, especially if you used the right hash

     tags etc I swear by this now in recruitment

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via

    social media?

  -   I think most people if approached in the right way are open to it and very

     accepting of it As long as you go about it in the right way – if the person who

     approaches a candidate approaches them and states they know they are

     contacting them cold but they think they might be interested and skilled and

     knowledgeable etc, would they be interested in discussing it further, most

     people are very receptive If you do it in a way in which you are 'stroking the

     person's ego' it works well

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find

    social media as a screening tool?

  -   It's not as good, though it's getting better LinkedIn is getting better in terms of

     profiles But it's not the best way of getting a true picture of getting a person's

     abilities However, at a base line, it is a good way to reach out to a person

who's in the right area In LinkedIn, you can get a very good feel from a

person' profile of what they've done and you can also get a lot from the kind of

company's they've worked for and the blogs they belong to etc and from this

you can get a good idea of where they're at in they're career So if used in the

right, it can be useful but it does not compare to having a CV in front of you

12 In terms of searching for top talent, do you find social media helps?

-   I think it does Most agencies have an SEO team, trying to make sure that their

    website comes up to the top of the list and also that their job postings are

    getting out there also I think we are a little bit behind the curve ourselves

    However used the right way in can help We ourselves are putting more time

    now into using this in the hope that we can get ourselves a little bit beyond

    where the competition is at the moment

13 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social

media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

-   It can yes, however it is all about knowing what you're doing and how to use it

    (go about searching for candidates) There are certain things like hashtags on

    twitter and if you use these in the right, you can find people who use these

    hashtags in their tweets, can find people who are advertising themselves or a

    certain skill they have They could even be talking a skill they have on a blog

    like java for example If you know how to use LinkedIn with searching you can

    narrow down the amount of results you get so that you're getting precisely what

you're looking for and from here you can then contact them So it can be way of performing very quick and deep searches on the market

14 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- Where I am now, I made 65 placements – all of which came through social media as I didn't use job boards at all In my current job, its about 13/14 jobs this year which would have been directly placed As well as this, the majority of candidates whom I am in touch with would have come through social media in some way (facebook, twitter, linkedin etc etc) It would be for candidates at lower levels with which we use job boards Outside of that, 90% of my personal candidates would come through social media

15 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool? What are those disadvantages?

- Great tool for getting the message out there, building a community and reputation, great for spreading the word In terms of disadvantages, you can get people who would not be pleased with the outcome of a process, system etc and the backlash to that is dangerous So yes, there are dangers like this but if they're dealt with in the right way then they can be avoided

16 How do you think social media has affected recruiting? Please explain

- Massively There has been a huge amount of investment which has gone into the training of consultants on linkedin twitter, blogging etc etc In the hi-tech sectors, its where you need to be People will still use job boards but less and less nowadays

17 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better quality candidates?

- It allows you to source the serious contenders So it takes away the lower level candidates who aren't quite there – people you typically get from job boards I think social media allows you to reach the 'middle of the cream / cream of the crop' It weeds out the lower level candidates who are not up to date with social media It certainly gives a better quality or better reach

18 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis? Ethics

- No and I wouldn't When it comes to doing a reference or checking on a candidates, there's only one way of doing that and that's checking with past employers I'm not a believer of checking facebook etc What they do in their social life is up to them

19 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- It does put a thought in your mind but unless it's something to do with their professional career / life, I think common sense dictates you have to draw a line with what someone does in their personal/ private life You have to be able to separate the two I am strongly against companies who go in and search people's facebook page, twitter feed etc because they may be a totally different person when it comes to work and to be fair so are we all So no, I don't think it would

20 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?
- I have to question if it could continue to grow At some point the bubble has to burst I am constantly think of thinking of this as to where it's going or what'll be the next big thing/ platform etc that we turn to but I'm not sure exactly where it will go I think it will be the mainstream for the time being though however it does depend on where the likes of linkedin, twitter, facebook will go

21 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?
- I think it's because of the recruitment activity and the level of recruitment which those multinationals do, they're looking for candidates who are typically very hard to find in the market The big guns like Google, ebay etc are always looking for candidates with a language for example some of which are a premium in Ireland, so a company's thinking on it is that we need to be where people are and spending time and people are on social media When you look at

the statistics also on the amount of time a user spends on a company website

compared with social media, you can see it's social media that they spend time

on the most by far so it's logical for companies to go down this route with their

strategy

22 Any other comments / insights

- I think we've covered most things so I don't have anything further to add

Int. 4

Declan Fitzgerald , CEO Recruitovate and Previous Global Sourcer, Microsoft

1 Explain where you are currently working?

- I am the CEO of a company called recruitovate which is a recruitment and HR

technology consultancy I help companies build recruitment strategies and help

them with their employer branding and their social media campaigns I'm also

doing some recruitment around recruiters and HR and I'm also building Ireland's

first aggregated news HR platform Before this I was the recruitment manager of

LinkedIn for one year and before this I was recruitment manager in Microsoft for 6 years

2 What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- I am working at Microsoft at the moment and there is about 25 positions open which we are trying to recruit for, most of which are a mixture of sales and software development

3 What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

- The most popular method is referrals (being referred by an employee) After this, it is through pro-active sourcing using LinkedIn, writing Boolean strings There's also quite a lot of activity on our careers website through Microsoft and than there's also job boards and then finally agencies

4 What social media tools do you use?

- Microsoft has multiple facebook pages for different geographies and different disciplines such as diversity – which would be a good example of one for women They also use Twitter, LinkedIn groups and there using LinkedIn's recruiter license as well

5 How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment methods?

- I think it allows you to engage with people differently in terms of the tools are now there to interact with people in groups (through LinkedIn) There are profiles which are publicly out on the web now and these never used to be there up until 2005/2006 So, its a whole new way of interacting now with candidates

6   By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social media?

  -   There's four main things as a recruitment manager you look for when your looking at ROI It comes down to Quality of Hire, Time to Hire, Cost of Hire and Source of Hire Quality of hire is where you reach more pro active people - for example with people who are not active There is an argument to say that maybe those who aren't active are being looked after and maybe they're being looked after because they're really good at what they do So potentially there is an argument there for potentially getting better quality of people Time to hire – you can reduce your time to hire using social media because you can move incredibly quickly in terms of accessing groups and accessing and advertising jobs for free whereas other traditional mediums you need to get a PO off the finance team and wait a few days and then actually post the job ad So in this regard, it is much easier and cheaper to post a job ad on your own linkedin page in comparison Cost of hire – this refers to the access you can get to such a vast amount of people – this may prevent you from going to agencies and this would reduce your agency costs Source of hire – recruitment managers track this, they are looking for various different ways of having diversity within the channels that they source from Things such as referrals can be super charged through using social media, where you get everyone within the company to post

ads as a unit (advertising jobs on their profiles) The whole idea of using

multiple channels is that it allows you access to multiple markets very quickly,

so in these cases, big companies such as Google or Microsoft will focus on

diversity For example, they may want more women or a more diverse group

Linkedin and other social media allows you to achieve this

7   What benefits do you see of social media tools?

- It firstly reduces the cost of hire, secondly the time of hire and it also allows you

to source from different geographies through the world In the past, it might have

been a case of using traditional techniques, maybe press or agencies whereas now

its quite easy to advertise roles or proactively source for roles in multiple

geographies around the world using different sourcing channels Not just LinkedIn

but also Viadeo, Zing or Hius

8   When did you start using social media tools?

- I first started using tools such as blogging about 8 years ago, so since about 2004

I started sourcing for candidates in 2004

9   How has the organisation benefited so far from using them?

-    I think it's been a sea shift in the last year Social Media has disrupted the way

things have been Companies now have the ability to brand to millions of

people using platforms like YouTube, LInkedIn Whereas in the past it would

have been very expensive to reach these audiences, now if your clever enough

with an iPhone – you can create campaigns which have the potential to go out

to millions of people so things go viral now, so its just a whole different

channel of communication

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via

social media?

- It's usually quite positive The response rate on LinkedIn is quite high in

comparison to a standard email You can get up to 60-70% response rate on

LinkedIn whereas you would only get 40-50% through email

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find

social media as a screening tool?

- It's great in comparison as for example on LinkedIn you can see what

conversations people are having on around, if they are joining debates online

You can also view content on their profiles which is different from just a static

CV So you get to see things such as they're twitter feed, recommendations and

you can also sometimes see things such as powerpoint presentations embedded

into their profile

12 In terms of searching for top talent, how do you find social media helps?

- It gives a lot more access to people who you may not have access to before

think it opens up the market to the passive candidate I think roughly only about

16-17% of the market is active at any given time and by active I mean looking

for an actual job or considering a job if they were approached The rest of the

market – those that are generally happy with where they are unlikely to

acknowledge an approach unless it's a very significant one So you get access

to them because you can see their profile and send them an email So these

people may not want a job but they are open to possibilities

13 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

-   In the last five years alone, I would say directly about 75 but for teams I've

    managed I would say about 250 Half would have been senior positions

14 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment

tool? What are those disadvantages?

-   Yes, I think you can have problems if you for example say the wrong thing

    online It can easily spiral out of control and become a PR issue very quickly It

    usually damages the (employer) brand of the organisation so if you're saying

    the wrong things online and other people pick up on it, it can go viral very

    quickly so I think it can be catastrophic

15 How much more accurate is social media in sourcing better quality candidates in

comparison to traditional methods?

-   I think it depends on the candidate and what information they have on their

    social media footprint Generally, if you are hiring candidates from the

marketing or IT field for example you will find that they have more of a digital

footprint so it gives you more information to make your assessment, so in

saying that I think it's much more accurate I think however with sectors such

as the public sector (doctors/ nurses) and tradesmen have less of a footprint

In another way though, yes it has helped dramatically As I said before, you can

reach out to candidates who are proactive and those who are being looked after

more in companies because they now have a digital footprint and most of these

candidates do not turn off the privacy setting function (on LinkedIn) which says

that you can contact them

16 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate
analysis?

- Oh yes, I do it all the time Before anyone comes in, I will view their CV and

  their LinkedIn profile I will also sometimes take their name and Google it to

  see what else would come up I do however have a personal preference of not

  checking anyones facebook page cause I just think it's a social tool and its

  nothing to do with business Whereas most of the other data points, I will look

  at and I will make that decision as I see fit If there is photographs of them on

  the internet travelling - I don't really see that kind of material as being

  relevant

17 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this

affect your final decision on that candidate?

- I think it depends on the context of the photo, in terms of what was actually being done Obviously if you see someone do something illegal, it might get you to rethink about hiring that person However, I have never found any material which has prevented me from hiring someone I check everything though mainly – blog, linkedin and twitter People need to realise that its a public medium, in the sense that any data that is out there, its in the public forums so I'm happy to review that data and I'll make a discretionary decision based on the context of the information I find However, I would very much be leaning towards the candidate, in terms of understanding that there is a world out there full of social activity which you can use the web to share things about your family or private life and not just your professional life I will be looking for the professional content but I find anything else, I won't ignore it

18 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?
- I think we've only started I thinks its still early days If you look at the statistics, there is only 160 million linkedin users at the moment – thats got a long way to go When I was working in there myself, they had a target of 600 million people so there's still a long way to go, possibly another 5-10 years of growth We'll be in a situation very soon where users accessing and applying for jobs on their mobile will become very prevalent – I think we're about 2-3 years away from that It's becoming very popular in the USA and we're following this now We're also in a world now of Big data, so people are getting bombarded with information and its about how do you filter that information and how do you make it more productive So they are three key

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trends that I'm looking at – social media growth, in terms of the expediential of having instead of 1 3 million groups on LinkedIn, what happens if you have 10million groups – how do you navigate all of those Where is the value in terms of the actual quality of the groups Mobile and big data are big topics as I discussed also and these will be very important in the years to come

- The tools are now supercharged for companies to be able to actively poach employees People can be accessed much easier than before I think it raises the bar in that employees are now demanding more from their employers in terms of challenging work and better environments I think we are moving into a situation now where the employee will have the ability to turn on a switch which says they are looking for work and then have ability to turn off that switch and go into 'silence' mode I think we will see a whole variety of tools which will come out in the next decade which will facilitate this and allow job seekers to interact with recruiters in a variety in ways such as location based activities where you might pass a building and get an update on a job whether its more much tailorised settings on linkedin whereby you say you only want o be contacted by a fortune 500 company between 3-5pm It's gonna be harder for employees to keep people and its going to be easier for them to find people to work in their companies I think there is lots of dynamics there

- I think we are coming to a situation there whereby people are going to want to have 3 or 4 different jobs or a portfolio of jobs People may also want to have multiple jobs at the same time Charles Handley is a visionary when it comes to workforce in the future planning or future managing He talks a little bit about portfolio management and I'm a big believer of that, there's no reason why you

can't work three days in one company and one day in another and one day in a charity and have multiple different things happen at the same time I think those type of future situations may start to happen in the next 10-15 years a lot more than what we're seeing now, sort of portfolio skills and portfolio jobs

19 Any other comments / insights

- I think time to hire is going to become incredibly important in the future – where you get a world where maybe you can access a lot more people in the cough of maybe matching them So it may get to a place where linkedin can give you a 99% match of the criteria your looking for and then they can give you 50 results in one/two/five days and charge multiple costs for that It will be interesting to see what way that pans out I think there will be a bit of a back lash to social media also – its so new people are getting used to it but people can't consume huge amounts of information Most people can't consume 50 articles in one day however people are trying to do that, they're reading so much information I think your going to see people choosing their sites and investing in 2/3 platforms or reducing the amount of information they're reading in the hope of finding more quality rich information in the form that I want and how they want it presented

Int.5

Fintan Lawler, Talent Sourcer/ Recruiter, State Street Financial Services

1   Explain where you are currently working?

  -    I'm the talent acquisition recruiter for State Street in Ireland State Street is a

       large financial institution US bank based out of Boston Our main business in

       Ireland is fund administration- this is the administration of head funds, mutual

       funds, pension funds etc for mainly off shore clients My role is within the HR

       team, the talent acquisition team We are the current internal recruitment team

       for all of the operations in Ireland We would look after the irish offices of

       which there is 6 sites, which we have 2,500 people – Dublin, Naas,

       Carrickmines, Drogheda, two in Kilkenny

2   What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

  -    They're very good I've been here for over 2 years and during that time, we

       have had an average number of roles on at one time of 60-70 This would be

       split between internal and external of course That would be the average

       number of roles open at any one time so we would be one of the most active

       employers in the market

3   What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

  -    Well my background is in agency recruitment So I would have bought those

       skills into the job The methods in terms of direct search – we post roles on

       websites like irishjobs, e-financial careers and sites like that which would feed

       directly into our own recruitment system We then have our own recruitment

       portal called state street careers which people can access through the website

       In terms of direct search, we would have access to certain databases so we'd

have access to the monster CV database and irishjob CV database We would

also use LinkedIn quite a lot for my recruiting This allows me to directly target

people, though we would never really head hunt people We would definitely

try to build relationships on a long term basis however in terms of building a

relationship online and then when a role does come about, they know that if

they're interested in State Street, they can come directly to me At this stage

also, because I would have hired most of the people who are here, we would

also get a number of referrals from internal staff – people they know in the

industry

4   Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

-   It has just evolved over time I've been a member of linkedin for about 5 years

    now and initially I would have used it sparingly however as the number of

    users has increased, its become far more effective So, if for example I'm

    looking for a senior compliance manager, I'll be almost guaranteed that if I do a

    search for this in Dublin, I'll find someone who fits the role and is in a

    competitor's organisation So it's very good for market research also Our

    direct competitors would be bank of America, northern trust etc so it gives an

    indication of whats going on in the market and lets you know if someone has

    moved jobs internally in a competitor In this way, you're able to see candidates

    you may have missed out on As a recruitment resource it's good however for

    market research it's also very powerful

5   What social media tools do you use?

- LinkedIn is the biggest one as it is the most effective in comparison with others It's very good because people are on there for that specific reason that they want to be seen It's a professional way to contact someone Most people tend to stay in a professional manner when on LinkedIn and this is important so that it's not used a facebook type tool I would directly contact people on linkedin and also take part in discussion groups also I also use twitter a little bit too I have it linked to my linkedin so if I post a job, it will appear on my twitter feed Now, I don't use it very much so I'm not sure how effective it is, however I do know from the market that its effect is limited in comparison with linkedin

6   How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment methods?

- I think a few years ago when facebook and linkedin were becoming popular, they're usefulness was a bit over hyped Since the number of users has increased I think it's gotten better On LinkedIn they now provide a recruiter resource service which is similar to a more traditional job board search except instead of searching for CV's, you search for profiles You can also view appropriate candidates for appropriate roles now You can also post jobs on LinkedIn now too which I think is the most effective because when I post a job all of my contacts will see it and so will all of their contacts So I find it to be the most effective

7   By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social

media?

- We would track how many people we've hired and look at where the source

was and then compare it to the cost of using an agency So the cost in

comparison would be the recruiting we pay for on LinkedIn For example, if we

were to hire 4/5 senior people in the year using LinkedIn, this would by far

outweigh the cost of using an agency Hiring a senior candidate using an

agency can cost anywhere up to 15,000 euro up to 30,000 euro Whereas the

LinkedIn license is much cheaper So, for us it's justifies the use of the tool

We get a very high hit rate on LinkedIn Nowadays, we generally put jobs on

our linkedin page first before submitting them to agencies etc

8   What benefits do you see of social media tools? You mentioned before that you

were able to contact candidate etc but could you dive a bit deeper into this?

- Well, it can be difficult to get an overall view of the market and a view of your

competitors and the jobs market in our sector However, within LinkedIn your

able to see if, for example large amounts of people are moving from say Citi to

BNY That triggers a thought process which we look to investigate more and

research more into Why is this happening? Can we get these people in? We

might also look at why people are leaving State Street and see where they're

going However, through LinkedIn you can figure this out, so from that point of

view it's very useful Generally its very useful for recruitment point of view but

also for market research for example with new companies coming on the

market So to a large corporate player like ourselves, this is very beneficial as we can then adapt our organisation accordingly

9   When did you start using social media tools?

- I've been in recruitment for 6 years Since about 2008, I've been a regular user of LinkedIn as it was more effective due to the increase in the number of users From that point of view, it was useful

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via social media?

- I think it depends on the way you approach them I send a general message introducing myself and stating who I am etc and say I'm looking to connect with them If I have a role straight away, I might put it past them or ask if they know anyone but sometimes I'll send a traditional linkedin message It's fine if they don't, I'm not trying to be heavy handed at all The idea is to become a contact and if they have a need for you in the future well then they have you there to contact It's very much an easy option for them to come to you It's a trusted and comfortable service to use as well Everyone knows that conversations on linkedin are of a confidential nature I very rarely get a abrasive knock back If somebody doesn't want to link with you, that's fine as well But I think it's a nice soft method of approaching somebody When you compare it to headhunt calls in agencies, it can be uncomfortable for both parties really, especially if the person is not interested,

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find
    social media as a screening tool?

    -   Well it can be difficult and it really depends on the amount of detail that a

        person puts on their profile Some people just put a job title or who they're

        employer is so from that point of view it can be difficult in comparison to a

        search on jobs site where you'll have someone's full CV It can be difficult to

        assess what level the person is at and also what kind of knowledge base they

        have For example, if I'm looking for a senior role, I would often look at CV's

        and try to see what product knowledge they have and that can be difficult to get

        from a social media point and you can sometimes end up wasting your time

        contacting someone who eventually (once they contact you) this is not the fit

        you needed From that point of view, it can be a frustrating search, I always tell

        people if you're going to put yourself on LinkedIn, they should at least give

        enough detail so that that the recruiter can make an educated call on whether to

        approach people

12 In terms of searching for top talent, how do you find social media helps?

    -   I would say, if you're looking for a very senior vp for example, I don't think its

        effective trying to approach them on linkedIn You will find in social circles

        that those kind of people would generally like to wait until there's an

        opportunity and then apply themselves So I would post very senior roles in

        LinkedIn and I would get applications from senior candidates but I wouldn't go

        around approaching people like MD's of companies etc through LinkedIn It's

        not really welcomed here and would impact on our brand The senior directors

of companies like citi, state street all know and talk to each other They all

know each other So you have to be very careful It can be seen as a head

hunting call and can cause all manner of problems So it can be less effective at

that level

13 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social

media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

- I still prefer the jobs boards to be honest because I think like I said before,

  people tend to put a lot more detail into their CV's on job boards so when I do a

  keyword search the accuracy of what I'm looking for is always stronger on the

  jobs boards for that particular reason

14 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- About 40-50 That would still pale in the amount we get from jobs boards, its

  nowhere near It's about 5% of all the people I've placed Some would say it's

  an out of date method but the recruiters I know still use traditional methods

  You can also lose a lot of time if you're not careful There's good and bad to it

15 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment

tool? What are those disadvantages?

- Yes, I think you can waste a lot of time searching for people, especially if

  people don't have enough information I think if somebody really wants a job,

  they will upload their CV to jobs boards Whereas I see people on LinkedIn as

  trying to get an overview of the market and trying to get information A lot of

time, there just seeing if there is something better but they're not always actively looking to be recruited and so I tend to get a lot of in mails which are not important Most of the time they're just random questions Nowadays I don't have the time to answer of all of those in mails Within certain groups as well, I find there are some recruiters that spend far too much time on them It begs the question, why are you on it so much? So, a lot of time can be wasted but if it's used in the right way As they hone the product, it's only going to get better

16 How do you think social media has affected recruiting?

- Well it's definitely had some impact I think the impact has been slightly overhyped If you spoke to a lot for the recruiter in house for many of the corporate companies inside Ireland, I think they would say that it hasn't had the impact we expected With a tool like LinkedIn we probably only use that for about 5% of our hires The traditional methods are still more effective because they're more direct So people who apply through jobs boards generally know what they're looking for and how to get it whereas with LinkedIn you get a lot of people who don't know how to use it and what's the most effective way to use it However, I think this will change as you can see now that LinkedIn is trying to make themselves look more like a traditional jobs site but it's much more polished This is brilliant as regards how jobs are laid etc I can only see it as getting bigger I think that LinkedIn will account for about 30-40% of all hires within the next 10 years However at the moment, it's only of benefit to

more educated users It's only used by certain professionals but it could become the norm like they way facebook did

17 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better quality candidates?

- I don't think so It's just a different way of approaching the candidate but not improve the quality of candidate The only thing I will say is that it does improve the depth of candidates For example, I get much more approached from international candidates on LinkedIn than I would from others From that point of view, it does allow us to attract a greater quality of candidate when we need it Certain skill sets are difficult to find in Ireland but through the use of tools like LinkedIn, we're easily able to find candidates as international candidates will tend to contact me more through linkedin than any other tool So from that point of view, it can be very effective

18 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis?

- No, I've heard of it being done I've been to talks about it being done, whereby its spoken of people looked at your people's facebook page or being asked for their password for their facebook page But it's not something we would do anyway

19 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- No, I don't think so It's never really come up as we're not actively looking for it I know some companies will use agencies to find as much information as possible about a candidate but it's not a method that we would employ We take people on their own merits in their professional profile not as 'joe bloggs' What people do in their personal lives really, in my view, should remain that way Once somebody comes in and does the job properly, it shouldn't be a problem My opinion is that you must be careful what you put on any social media site anyway because you never know who is looking at it But in general terms we do not actively look for it

20 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

- I think in the end, there will be one or two established social networks I think LinkedIn will be one of them It's hard to say which other one may emerge I think eventually, this will become the norm of how people present themselves when they're looking for a job with a professional profile – very much like the way now you have to put together a CV, this will be the norm It will be something you have to have in order to get a job with a corporate I think certain things like recommendations can be dangerous as some people abuse it but having a profile would be the norm Eventually you will see a move away from the jobs boards as companies use tools more and more like LinkedIn It seems to be the trend, we put a lot of jobs out on LinkedIn and we see a lot of our competitors doing this also at the moment Obviously, it works for

ourselves and works for others too

21 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

- Well it's difficult for me to talk about branding as I'm not from the marketing department as such! We would always be cautious about how we're seen in a global context so we would tend to put minimal information regarding the company on job descriptions etc but it would still link you back to our company web page However, the fact that you have a globally recognised brand mainly In comparison to traditional jobs boards, it allows you to manage your brand a bit better on a global level If we're advertising a job in different countries, it all looks different on all of the jobs boards however if your using social media like LinkedIn , it allows for a lot of harmonisation for advertising globally which allows for the brand as well So applying for a job in State Street in Ireland is like applying for one in India or China

22 Any other comments / insights regarding social media and recruitment

- Well as I said, I think it is open to abuse which would be of concern Even I myself have recommendations from people I've worked with on LinkedIn and I see people using that as a tool to recruit people So they will look at it and say 'oh they have really good references on LinkedIn' however you have to remember that these references are purely on a voluntary basis and you don't know what the relationship is outside of work I find that it's usually a friend or someone they've had a social relationship with, so when they're asked to give a

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recommendation, they're uncomfortable not to do it So I think certain parts of it like that are open to abuse It's very much like doing a review of a hotel on trip advisor – how much can I trust this review? I think for social media to reach its 100% effectiveness, there needs to be tighter controls on it LinkedIn needs to use more verification tools around referencing Also, some profiles may go idle For example, if I left my job and didn't update my page, my linkedin page would continue to say I still worked there for years to come So it can give a false impression of what someone's current position actually is I think it's up to LinkedIn to get their data correct which I'm sure is a huge challenge to them but it would ensure the integrity of the tool and would protect their own brand there are checks which need to be done If someone doesn't update their page for 6 months to a year, then it should be put onto an inactive status or something similar From this perspective, I can see a weakness I understand though that it is a new media and still in development phase but I think it's something they'll need to work on if it's to become the No 1 tool on the market

Int 6

Miriam Durack, Private Careers Consultant, Previously Sigmar Recruitment Manager

1   Explain where you are currently working?

- I have currently set up my own business and I'm doing career coaching Previous to that, I worked for a very large recruitment company called Sigmar Recruitment and I setup their healthcare division and worked for them for seven years Prior to that, I worked in HR focusing on recruitment for the NHS

2   What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- Within my own company, there's only myself at the moment However I would see in 6 months time taking on somebody else perhaps on an internship to work alongside me

When you left Sigmar, what was the recruitment like for that organisation?

- Sigmar itself were continuously recruiting and they had a very good graduate training programme They would run the graduate training programme maybe 2-3 times per year and they also just recently set up a division in Singapore and maybe 3-4 irish employees from Sigmar have moved out to Singapore to set up the Division and then they'd also have a division in Warsaw I would imagine in total Sigmar employees 90-100 people, its quite a lot and its an irish company

3   What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

- The most popular would have been using the job boards Also, LinkedIn was very

poular particularly for Banking and Finance and more Senior management roles

4   Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

- I found that it was becoming the next job board, particularly people on LinkedIn

wanted to be seen to be credible and have themselves up on LinkedIn And also, I

found it was very good for networking, particularly I would see a lot of overseas

recruitment

5   What social media tools do you use?

- I would have used LinkedIn and that would have been the mam social media tool

I would have used

6   How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment

methods?

-   I think you can target your audience a little bit more In particular, I can target

more globally because I was involved in healthcare and nursing, so I found

using that facility was giving me a wider audience as opposed to maybe using

the traditional methods such as advertising in the newspaper and the job boards

7   By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social

media?

-    I'm not fully aware to be honest We would have run a report on the number of

placements We would have run a report to know where we were getting that

person from So, whether it was from a job board or monster or recruiter/

linkedin or marketing campaign or whatever You would have been able to

measure what was the most effective

8   What benefits do you see of social media tools?

-    People knew I was out there I was able to brand myself

9   When did you start using social media tools?

-    I would think it was probably about 3 years ago But more seriously within the

last 18 months

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via

social media?

-    It was usually they were curious to know You'd usually get somebody

responding to find out a bit more about it I think it usually it would generate an

interest

Would you say overall it was quite positive?

- I would yes

Did you have incidents where somebody complained?

- No, I never had anyone complain to me

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find

social media as a screening tool?

- Well, I suppose you can just incidentally look at something I know that with a

traditional CV, you'd obviously be waiting for it to come in I would just

sometimes find LinkedIn works quite good cause you could just go straight to

that person

And was there any other benefits?

- Well also, when I was looking at people's profile, I'd also look at how many

connections people would have Were they well known on LinkedIn?

12 In terms of searching for top talent, how do you find social media helps?

- Well usually I was able to contact different groups through social media and

put up a notice in different groups to say I was hiring for a particular role

These would be groups within LinkedIn?

- Yes, these would be the groups and contact groups which I had built up in

  LinkedIn I would have a number of different groups within my own contacts

  That's the kind of thing I found quite good because sometimes at senior level,

  it's somebody else who might mention something, particularly in Nursing

13 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social

media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

- Thats a difficult question to answer as both of them were fairly comparable

So, you wouldn't say that one is more accurate than the other?

- No I found it worked well with the more senior positions Whereas if it were a

  more junior role, I found it worked more by word of mouth, you know

  somebody telling someone else about the position

14 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- It wasn't a huge amount now, I think it would roughly have been about 10

15 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment

tool? What are those disadvantages?

- I suppose for me, I didn't really have anything that was a disadvantage to me

  But I do know some people who don't like other people looking at their data

But if you don't want someone looking at your profile, you shouldn't be on a social media

In the case of facebook and twitter, if a company were to set up a profile, do you think there'd be any disadvantages?

- I know Sigmar have both the facebook and twitter account It's used mainly when they want to promote something and in particular on a social side or if there's something being launched within the company or a marketing man Jamie would have been very pro active in using those sites It had never come up that it was a disadvantage I think its the way the company is promoting their image

16 How do you think social media has affected recruiting?

- I think it's something that's going to be a new trend Even now with the coaching (my company), I've been talking to people about wanting to be on LinkedIn and to be seen to be on it and joining groups and participating I think a lot of people are seeing it as a platform for them to raise their credibility with colleagues in a similar field

17 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better quality candidates?

- Well, I think it's opened up a larger pool of people It's probably another tool that a recruiter (inhouse or agency) can capitalise on because they need to be

looking at various methods to achieve results However, it does depend more

on the type of role they're looking for

18 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate

analysis?

- No, I have never done that

When you sourced a candidate, did you do any searches on them?

- The only thing I would have looked would have been their profile on LinkedIn,

just so that I could compare it on LinkedIn

19 If you were to find an something controversial/ embarrassing photo of someone on

the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- Well, it would really depend on what they had up on the web about themselves

If it was something minor than it wouldn't bother me but if it were something

bigger, I would definitely question why they have it up there on facebook etc

20 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

- I definitely do see it becoming more of a trend and whether its the companies

themselves driving it or whether its the perception of people thinking that this

will be the new way forward I suppose as a recruiter, you're always trying to

find a very experienced person and you're always trying to find a new way to

find that person and stay ahead of your competition

21 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

- I think because they have access to a wider range of people It's now become a global market for these multinationals so they can now have a wider audience on one site

22 Any other comments / insights

- No, not really I do think recruitment methods seem to be constantly evolving though When I first started out, it was done through advertising in newspapers, then it moved to job boards and now its moved onto social media So, for a recruiter it's about keeping up with this I think with social media because everyone is now online and has some form of access via facebook or twitter or LinkedIn, this will be the way forward

Int. 6

Aidan O'Brien – Senior Recruiter, Deloitte

1 Explain where you are currently working?

- I am currently working as a senior recruiter in Deloitte

2 What are the recruiting activities like currently in the organisation?

- We would have a limited number of positions open at any one time so we're constantly recruiting on the more skilled side and we have a separate graduate

recruitment scheme also

3 What recruitment methods do they currently use/ most popular?

    -   We use the full spectrum A combination of direct applications (referrals) from

        employees and agency supported recruitment Within the broad spectrum this

        would include, job boards, our own website, referrals and social media

        (linkedin and twitter)

4 Why did you decide upon using social media tools?

    - Because it's the quickest and most user friendly way to get t candidates It's

    everywhere we look at the moment and used in all sorts of marketing and branding

    So we would be left behind if we didn't use it

5 What social media tools do you use?

    - LinkedIn and Twitter would be the main ones We have a certain level of activity

    on facebook also but this is really for graduates

6 How do you feel social media recruiting differs from traditional recruitment

    methods?

    -   It's more immediate and allows us to focus on candidates which we are more

        interested in as opposed to a scatter gun type approach It also helps to manage

        costs more

7   By what sort of systems do you measure results/ return on investment with social

    media?

    -   We would look at metrics like cost per hire We look at the number of recruit

        which come from a particular stream/ source and the associated cost with

        running this stream/ source

8   What benefits do you see of social media tools?

    -   It's the immediate delivery to the marketplace It's a quick way for the

        candidates to interact with us and it's also a much more cost effective way of

        handling our cost base in recruitment

9   When did you start using social media tools?

    -   About 4 years ago roughly

10 What type of reactions do you get from candidates when you contact them via

    social media?

    -   On the whole it's very positive They won't always want to come and join the

        organisation Given the way LinkedIn is set up, an approach can be done in a

        very user friendly way You are not forcing them, you're only seeing if they'd

        show an expression of interest or not so it's been very helpful that way

11 In comparison with traditional methods (like screening CV's), how do you find

    social media as a screening tool?

- It's helpful though it won't define the final result It definitely allows us to target in a more productive way and certainly gives us a better idea of where the person is coming from

12 In terms of searching for top talent, how do you find social media helps?

- It certainly does The top talent can be people who are passive and not actively present in the market so you have access to them in this way

13 In terms of searching for specific candidates, how much more accurate has social media been in its results compared with traditional methods?

- It can be If people represent themselves properly on LinkedIn than we can search them better

14 How many candidates have you placed whom you contacted through social media?

- On an annual basis, between 10—12 would be hired here (specific to social media) The ratio of hire would be 3/1 or 4/1 in terms of the number of candidates which would be contacted before hire per opening We would hire about 120 per year so at the moment, that ratio is not where we'd like it

15 Do you think there are any disadvantages to using social media as a recruitment tool? What are those disadvantages?

- The critical issue is that its' becoming noisy and there's a lot of messages coming into the candidate on a daily and hourly basis (especially through twitter) so we have to be careful of this moving forward

So are you saying the candidate is being bombarded with messages?

- Yes, I think so We are hearing more stories of things only being half read and then being deleted when it comes to a recruitment message

16 Do you think social media has allowed recruiters to source better quality candidates?

- I would have to say yes it has improved Even though we have only placed a small amount of candidates (around 12), social media has played a huge part in this

17 Do you use social media as a means of performing background checks/ candidate analysis?

- No and it's not our policy, we have a separate policy on this

18 If you were to find an embarrassing photo of someone on the internet, would this affect your final decision on that candidate?

- I would prefer not to comment on this That's a separate policy matter I wouldn't be prepared to discuss

19 What future trends do you see for social media and recruitment?

- I think it will continue to be a very important part of recruiting key talent I think the different strands of social media will begin to define themselves with the different level of talent For example, Facebook is something we find works with the graduate, newly appointed workers As we go up the different skills sets, the linkedin and twitter platforms tend to be more popular I think the challenge for recruiters now going into the next few years is to having a different kind of presence, something which is very unique that is engaging but is also serious People who are looking for jobs (and serious about their careers) wish to be dealt with in a serious manner However a bit humour can be used but only in the right way

20 From my own research, it seems that the companies who invest in social media are mainly the multinationals, why do you think this is?

- I would tend to agree with the statement and it's because mainly of the larger markets Big companies like us are recruiting cross borders so it opens the market Deloitte Ireland for example would recruit from markets overseas so social media plays a very important role in facilitating this

21 Any other comments / insights

- I think it's been comprehensive However, I would like to reiterate I think social media is here to stay and has an important part to play but we have to be careful it's managed properly and not flogged to death I think some people think in some instances it is, not in recruitment just yet but in other areas it is and we just have to be careful how it's managed, that we are visible and that we're unique