

The use of social media in HR processes

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According to market analyst In-Stat, there are now more social-networking accounts than there are people in the world. A.C. Nielsen published stats showing that “three of the world’s most popular brands online are social-media related (Facebook, YouTube and Wikipedia) and the world now spends over 110 billion minutes on social networks and blog sites. This equates to 22 per cent of all time online or one in every four and half minutes.

Recruitment

The popularity of using social media for recruiting people is on the rise world-wide. According to the 2010 survey by Jobvite, social media recruiting has become a mainstream channel for companies. Over 83 per cent of the respondents say they either use or plan to use social media. The applications include social media/networking sites (Face book, Twitter, Orkut, LinkedIn, MySpace), blogs, podcasts (Podcast Alley, iTunes), video sharing sites (YouTube, Ted, Flickr), mobile apps etc. Low-cost, wider reach, better targeting and easier sorting are some of the advantages that recruiters are counting on social media usage for hiring.

Back-channel referencing

Recruiters pre-qualify executives when they are initially sourcing candidates for a role by speaking to their peers within the same sector. Generally this happens by checking the public domain. The social networking sites like Linked-in, Facebook, blogs etc. are major contributors of such information. They look for aspects such as indecent comments, pictures or posts, falsification of qualification or job history details, use of drugs or substance-abuse, racial comments or abuse by candidates etc. An online reputation research was commissioned by Microsoft and was conducted by Cross-Tab between December 10 and 23, 2009, in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Approximately 275 recruiters, human resources (HR) professionals, and hiring managers, and about 330 consumers interviewed in each country showed that the recruiters and HR professionals surveyed are not only checking online sources to learn about potential candidates, but a majority of them also reported that their companies have made online screening a formal requirement of the hiring process.

Networking & Communication

In-house social networking platforms have done what above-normal salary hikes have not been able to do – control attrition.. It is reported that the company-social networking platforms have helped engage employees better and reduce attrition. Cognizant's Facebook-like platform – Cognizant 2.0 or C2, Wikis and Justask at Tata Consultancy Services, Channel W and My Wipro

World at Wipro Technologies, Ideabank of BankWest, Australia are few but very strong examples of a new trend where companies have started to embrace social networking by their employees, to their advantage, rather than regard the same as threat and create barriers to curb it.