



From Talent Pools to Talent Communities

How Social Media Technologies Are
Changing the Recruiting Landscape

mYStaffingPro[®]
Applicant Tracking System

The power of social media and social technology is being felt throughout organizations today much in the way the internet influenced the way we did business in the early 1990s. In the beginning, expanding into new territory is always uncomfortable; change management always resistant. It can be a challenge to adopt quickly and feel mastery with the landscape changing almost daily. The fact that the majority of companies still prohibit social media usage reinforces the knowledge that most businesses today are still in the early adoption phase of this technology.

Directing and focusing the power of social media and social technologies is heavy on the minds of HR professionals and CEOs alike, with all research trends pointing to social networking as a powerful tool for sourcing candidates and building talent pools and communities.



In [Ventana Research's Social Media in Recruiting Benchmark Report](#) released in December 2011, the conflicts and fears of developing social media practices and opening social media networks to employees were at odds with the benefits of tapping the social media networks to build community, recruit new talent, and deliver brand awareness.

Fears aside, the results show that human resource departments that integrate social media achieve better results than those that do not. Yet, 59 percent of the organizations still actively prohibit social media usage, even with compelling data on social media usage overall. Current statistics show that more than 800 million people frequent Facebook with 50 percent on any given day; more than 135 million people are on LinkedIn, and more than 100 million people are on Twitter. Pew Research shows that 65 percent of adults use social networking sites as of 2011, up from 61 percent in 2010.

This paper will address current research into social media trends and practices in human resources; identify best practices for strategic integration of social media to build talent communities; and outline the fears and obstacles that are preventing companies from shifting practices to take advantage of the social media explosion. Finally, you will learn what one company has done to create a social technology software infrastructure designed to help businesses integrate social media to reduce your time to hire and improve the quality and quantity of your talent pool.

“We would like to see companies take the social media opportunity further than just posting jobs,” says Bob Schulte, CEO of myStaffingPro, a company that provides an applicant recruiting software system that easily integrates social media applications. “Our clients are tapping social media to generate



“Our clients are tapping social media to generate brand awareness and create emotional connections.”

—Bob Schulte
CEO, myStaffingPro

brand awareness and create emotional connections. We have built customer-friendly systems where applicants may apply from Facebook or LinkedIn, and from mobile devices. We are also taking social media beyond job posting to develop talent pools and communities.”

The new Ventana Research benchmark report projects that companies expect to use social media to source more than 80 percent of the jobs profiled in the report, including finance and administration, the front office, IT, operations and learning functions, a trend if proven true amounts to a nearly 15 percent increase over 2011 results.

Social Media Taking Hold in Human Resource Systems

The companies that were profiled in the research expressed a keen awareness of social media as a force to be considered in developing human resource practices. In the report, 57 percent of participants said social networking tools are important or very important for recruiting and applicant tracking. In fact, close to 60 percent of the companies profiled state that they utilize social media in some form in their talent pool recruiting activities. Yet, most companies still block usage, preventing employees from sharing job openings and communicating with potential future employees when they are at work.

Innovation Far from Prevalent

As social media takes off worldwide, the Ventana Research study still found that companies are behind on its utilization.

Less than 20 percent of respondents were described as innovative in the December 2011 study. Additionally 40 percent ranked at the lowest possible tactical level of integration of social media practices into their applicant tracking systems.

Lack of Confidence in Social Media Integration

Even though social media use is on the rise, the research found that there was a lack of confidence in how effective social media networks are to their talent pool development. In fact, 38 percent of companies profiled were not confident in the effectiveness of their social media recruiting processes and only 7 percent expressed confidence in the processes they have in place.

One Silicon Valley human resource director for a large technology firm quoted anonymously said that she blocks Facebook from employees and has



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no plans to change this. Yet, blocking Facebook may prevent the company from viral employee shares and referrals that could indeed grow the workforce effortlessly. Not to mention the dirty little secret of the recruiting industry: most *are* using social networks to source and screen.

Companies Fear Quantity over Quality

In part, the fears human resource professionals have around social media integration relate to ensuring the value outweighs the cost and that the efforts can be analyzed.

In the Ventana Research, it states that most companies are not equipped to measure the results of social recruiting. More than 25 percent rely upon spreadsheets and documents to track results and 16 percent use whatever human resources management system was in place before social media was an influence. These outdated systems don't measure social media engagement, referrals, and opportunities to further the human resource department goals and objectives.

Another disconnect is that frequently, the belief is in place that social media should just be used to post job openings. This doesn't address the need for companies to build relationships with future candidates. So, while companies deeply desire more qualified talent pools, the methods and technologies that are being used are incomplete.



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Treating Job Seekers Like Gold

Keeping up with social media and social technologies means more than posting a job on Twitter. The opportunity to build a relationship with potential candidates is a differentiator that will ultimately improve the employment brand and the quality of hire.

As social media integration takes the forefront, it is important that the technology to apply is as easy to use as the network that it came from. This ease of application technology will work hand-in-hand with social media to send people to the job openings. As more and more people find the job openings and talk about the company benefits on Facebook "walls" and on LinkedIn, the applicant system needs to stay in-tune with applicant need for ease of functionality.

"We want the application experience to be easy and relevant. That means we use short forms, make sure that applicants can save their work numerous times, and collect only the information we need when we need it." said

Jennifer Brogee, CIO of myStaffingPro. “It does not make sense to spend time and effort on social media recruitment, if your application process is cumbersome and causes applicants to drop out. An effective application process turns social media relationships into hires.”

As a company navigates the new landscape of recruiting with social media tools and technologies, a few extra steps can ensure that the applicant can find job openings more easily, match themselves better with company cultures that will be a fit, and apply from where they are.

For instance, myStaffingPro has created a Facebook application that allows a potential employee to search and apply from within Facebook – as well as the ability for employees of the company to “share” job openings on Facebook. To promote the company culture, myStaffingPro highly recommends embedding a video describing the company culture, employee testimonial, message from the CEO, and/or a video about “a day in the life” on the job.



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Overcoming Fears of Social Media Integration

When integrating any new practice, Brogee suggests that companies stay practical while embracing the new technology with an open mind. Practical integration means selecting the network that makes the most sense for the profile of the employees you seek. For C-level engineering manager hires, for instance, Facebook may not be the best choice for a social media blitz. For high-level organizational hires, LinkedIn may be a better source for integration of social media tools. For retail positions that need to be filled at the hundreds nationwide, Twitter and Facebook are an easy fit.

When the company positions itself well, their efforts will reap stronger results because potential employees will be able to match themselves with the profile, or exclude themselves from applying if the company doesn't feel like a cultural fit.



Define Where You Are, Build a Roadmap

Take time to look at where your company is utilizing social media, and where it can adjust and grow its impact. Be thoughtful about how you plan to take your company to the next level with social media integration. More isn't necessarily better. Increasing the number of candidates that are not meeting the recruiting needs of the company won't necessarily add any “juice” to your

results. So, adding relevant content and creating an employment brand is key for getting the results you desire.

Create a list of what your company is doing, and then identify what it could be doing that it has not yet put into action. Create plans within the framework of the strategic objectives of the company and utilize the advertising sections on the social media sites to get a good snapshot of the users you want to attract.

Keep it simple, yet think bigger than you have imagined. Build a social media strategy, even if that strategy is to block Facebook and better integrate LinkedIn. When your social media strategy is clear and consistent it can be easily followed by all employees.

The Reputation of your Organization

When attracting new applicants to the company, the reputation of your organization will always play a key role in the quality of your talent pool. If your employees enjoy their jobs, they will recommend jobs to their network of friends and colleagues. The myStaffingPro system provides the technology to post job openings to your Facebook wall. Similarly, employees may be easily encouraged to tweet about new openings and share on LinkedIn. Human resource professionals within a company can take extra steps to monitor the employment brand; perform exit interviews to improve the overall process; and survey candidates during the hiring process for real-time feedback on the systems in place.

The hiring process is an excellent platform to grow the brand and reputation of the company. Beyond simply posting openings, a company can harness the hiring process to grow its reputation. With these strategies, a company can grow not only its current application pool but a future community of potential hires who are drawn to the brand and the company's identity.

Talent Pool Verses the Talent Community

Defining what constitutes a talent pool and a talent community is an important distinction. Building talent pools is the first step to attracting the right candidates to your brand, and your jobs. This includes delivering relevant employment information via social media and social technologies. Building community means you attract the right "people" to your employment brand and your company, not necessarily requiring them to apply for your jobs immediately. Plus, allowing those joining your community or communities to collaborate among themselves about your brand and your industry creates an



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emotional connection. This is a value-add and a deviation from the traditional two-way communications with you and your recruiting team.

Next Generation Social Media Integration

Get proactive. Don't wait for huge reams of statistical data to show the rewards of social media and social technologies. When the first personal computers came out – replacing the room-size mainframe computers – many managers could not see the benefit of allowing each employee to have a computer on his or her desk. It was just not considered practical. The early adopters were able to see the results before the sluggish companies that waited for others to blaze trails.

The next generation of social media integrations will become more than two-way communication in functionality, so that companies may grow communities of talent and brand awareness simultaneously. The focus becomes a practice of engaging and building relationships candidates. Start by reaching out to your current applicant database and inviting them to join your social communities.

The Ventana Research benchmark report showed that organizations are moving beyond job boards to social recruiting tools. The biggest organizations are still the key focus of the end user. Research found that nearly 60 percent of all social media recruiting is taking place on LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter.



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Build a Talent Community with myStaffingPro Elevate

Companies are finding that they can achieve success with the cutting edge tools found in myStaffingPro Elevate. The basic features of myStaffingPro Elevate address job distribution; social media integration; collaborative employment brand; employee referrals; plus give the job seeker a positive and easy application experience. The new myStaffingPro Elevate responds to the consumers' need to distribute positions via social media; create a branded communication system via the bigger platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter; and generate a talent community by allowing employees to easily collaboratively share and make viral openings at the company.

To facilitate job distribution, myStaffingPro Elevate has share functionality with widgets; the opportunity to email openings to friends; the click of a button to "like" the job on Facebook; plus search engine optimization applied to all



career pages to maximize search results. In addition, the job openings are automatically posted free on Indeed.com, SimplyHired.com and Trovit.com.

All job postings contain a share opening button where a candidate can distribute the opening easily on Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites. Potential employees may also sign up for an RSS feed to receive notifications when new jobs are posted. A job applicant may intelligently refine the job notifications so they are relevant to their job search. In other words, an accountant may be updated only about positions within accounting verses all jobs within the company.

Schulte, CEO of myStaffingPro, states that his intention in creating the Elevate system is to make it practical to integrate social media and social technologies into talent recruitment.

The functionality in myStaffingPro Elevate allows human resource departments to automate social media job posting with built-in systems to:

- Publish job openings to Twitter
 - Post openings to the company's Facebook wall
 - Search and apply for openings through a "Jobs Tab" on the company's Facebook page
 - Communicate job openings to LinkedIn connections
 - Enjoy limitless posting capabilities with an RSS feed of job openings
 - Promote following your social networks with one –click access to social profiles
 - Connect with current employees on LinkedIn and review employee statistics
 - Connect with Hiring Manager/Supervisor on social networks
 - Search engine optimization (SEO) with titles, descriptions, tags, as well as text-rich job listings by category, location, and state
 - Subscribe to the job posting RSS feed to receive the latest job postings
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Creating community and an emotional connection helps others learn more about the employment brand and industry while showcasing the culture, diversity, and a day in the life of the company.

Additionally, myStaffingPro Elevate contains analysis and tracking embedded in the system so that a company can easily assess the best sources for recruiting different positions.

In the Ventana Research study, the key components that human resource departments seek in candidates are quality of background and cultural fit.



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Beyond a talent pool with a good number of applicants, most companies want to see applicants that will fit into the company culture and style. The fact is, you never know when someone interested in the company who is a great cultural fit may want to apply for a job, so creating a talent community tells future applicants “you’re very important to us, whether you apply now or not.”

“That’s where our recommendation of treating applicants like gold, and utilizing the job applicant experience to express the brand of the company comes in,” says Schulte. “We want to help companies with a practical approach to integrating social media that furthers the brand awareness of the company – with an easy process for the potential applicants to navigate.”

Employee Referral

One of the major changes that will ultimately define how well social media can elevate talent pools into talent communities will be how employees talk about your company with friends and colleagues, and how they post about it on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

This is the new landscape of talent recruiting that, if integrated systematically, has power to reduce cost per hire and broadly expand with little expense the reach of the company to find the right talent for any given openings.

“What we have done is create an employee referral component of myStaffingPro’s career page on the company website,” explains Schulte. This employee referral system should be easy to use and easy to communicate to the employees of the company.

The Keys to Social Media Integration Success

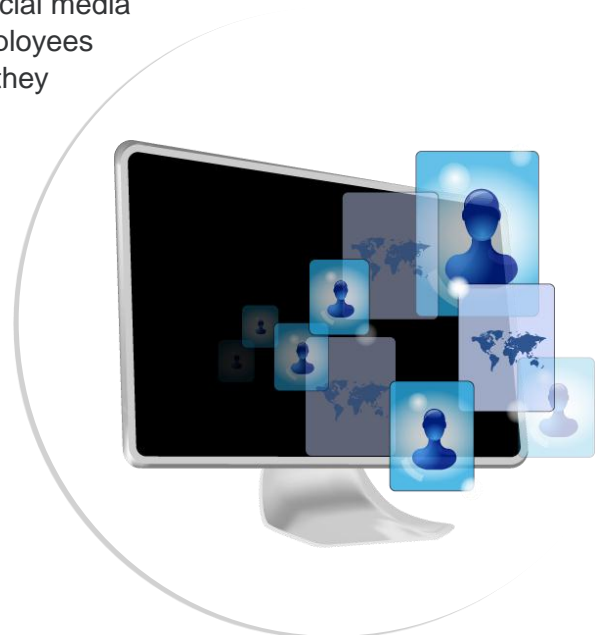
“Keep the eyes on social media for not only building your talent pool, but for creating buzz, developing brand awareness, and another opportunity to treat candidates like gold,” Schulte states.

myStaffingPro recommends that companies take the following steps to engage social media:

- Engage and interact on social media by commenting, responding, have giveaways and contests
- Leverage free job boards (SimplyHired, Indeed, Trovit, etc)
- Search engine optimize job listings with keywords
- Create an employment blog



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- Create an RSS Feed of job openings
- Provide support through live chat, telephone, email, and help guides
- Treat those interested in your employment brand like customers, whether they apply for a job immediately or not
- Advertise your employment brand
- Showcase your company culture and brand in all of your social media activities, to best build talent communities

“We recommend companies focus on the idea of creating engagement and an emotional connection with candidate,” says Schulte. With myStaffingPro Elevate, the sky is truly the limit.

About myStaffingPro: myStaffingPro, a full-featured SaaS applicant tracking system, provides HR professionals with the tools they need to recruit, qualify, track, and hire the best applicants. The scalable myStaffingPro system can be configured to any hiring process or budget. myStaffingPro currently delivers the hiring process for more than 500 companies and has processed more than 20 million applications.

To learn more about myStaffingPro applicant tracking system, visit <http://mystaffingpro.com>.

