

# How to use social media in recruitment and retention

## Toolkit to include:

- Intro to social media recruitment
- Social media recruiting: Networks, sites and strategies
- Social media sourcing: Tools, training and process



### **What are the disadvantages of social media recruitment?**

Despite being a powerful hiring technique, social media recruitment has limitations. Here are a few:

- Its content is ephemeral.
- It requires thorough sourcing.
- It's time-consuming.
- It comes with legal risks.
- It's not always well-received by candidates.



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Its content is ephemeral. Social media broadcasts what's "happening now," which means your posts have a short shelf-life. To be at the top of potential candidates' newsfeeds, frequently update your status and take advantage of current social media trends.

It requires thorough sourcing. Not all the content you find on social profiles will apply to your job. If you're using social sourcing to screen candidates, dig deeper than first results to find useful information relevant to your open roles.

It's time-consuming. To use social networks for recruitment, you have to invest time to network and build relationships with potential candidates before contacting them for a job opportunity.

It comes with legal risks. Social profiles give you access to information unrelated to the candidate's professional background (e.g. race or marital status) and may create unconscious bias during the hiring process. Evaluate only job-related information when you're screening candidates on social networks.

It's not always well-received by candidates. Though candidates may expect a recruiting email for a job opportunity, they may be caught off-guard by messages on social networks. Refrain from being intrusive when you personalize your messages to passive candidates.

**What are the most popular social media networks for recruiters?**

LinkedIn (96% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used LinkedIn)

Facebook (66% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used Facebook)

Twitter (53% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used Twitter)

Google+ (12% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used Google+)

YouTube (11% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used YouTube)

Instagram (7% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used Instagram)

Pinterest (3% of recruiters surveyed indicated they used Pinterest)



It's clear that most recruiters use social networks to hire. According to data from Social Media Strategies Summit, 78% of recruiters have hired through a social network. Here's where they're doing most of their hiring:

LinkedIn: 92% have hired at least once through LinkedIn.

Facebook: 24% have hired at least once through Facebook.

Twitter: 14% have hired at least once through Twitter.

### **What are the most popular social media networks among job-seekers?**

Facebook: 79% of people online are active Facebook users, despite age and gender.

Instagram: 32% of people online are active Instagram users.

LinkedIn 29% of people online are active LinkedIn users

Twitter: 24% of people online are active Twitter users.

#### **Aside from personal networking, people also use social media to find and research jobs.**

More than one-third use social media to look for or research jobs;

one in five applied for a job they first found out about on social media;

and 13% say information they posted on their social profiles helped them get a job.

Understand your local market, ask your co-workers what sort of media they use?

### **Some compelling social media recruiting statistics?**

According to a Society for Human Resources (SHRM) study (2015), companies use social media recruiting to:

- Build employer brand: 77% aim to boost their employer brand and recognition.
- Save money: 55% found social recruiting to be less expensive than other recruiting methods.
- Source candidates by location: 51% use social networks to recruit candidates in specific areas.
- Increase candidate diversity: 33% use social media to find candidates in traditionally underrepresented groups (e.g. women, minorities and veterans.)

The same research reveals how companies use social recruiting:

About nine out of 10 companies use it to post their job ads on social networks.

Three out of four companies use it to communicate with potential candidates and source passive candidates and active candidates.

More than half of the companies encourage employee referrals through social platforms.

### **What are the advantages to using social media for recruitment?**

- Increases job visibility.
- Lets you advertise your jobs to your audience.
- Improves employer branding.
- Provides better insight into candidates' profiles.
- Helps you connect with passive candidates.



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Increases job visibility. When you only advertise your jobs on job boards and your careers page, you limit your outreach to people who are actively searching on these channels. Jobs ads on social media have greater reach because they're visible to a larger audience that may include passive candidates.

Lets you advertise your jobs to your audience. Instead of casting a wide net, you can narrow down your search – and potentially your costs – by going where your desired audiences are with targeted job ads. For example, Facebook's paid ads help you find candidates by location, and LinkedIn's sponsored ads help you get in front of candidates with the skills you're looking for.

Improves employer branding. Social media gives you the tools to promote your company culture and showcase your current employees. Give candidates a glimpse of what it's like to work for your team. Good brands prompt more candidates to apply for open roles.

Provides better insight into candidates' profiles. Social profiles capture the bigger picture. They reveal more information about candidates' skills (e.g. communication abilities) and professional interests (e.g. conferences they attend.)

Helps you connect with passive candidates. People who aren't actively looking for a new job opportunity are can learn about your open roles if you approach them on social networks.

### **What are the benefits of using social media to post and advertise jobs?**

Here are the benefits of posting and advertising your job openings on social media:

- You reach diverse audiences.
- You reduce time-to-fill.
- You make it easy for employees to refer candidates.
- You can get creative with job posts.
- You decrease recruiting costs.



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You reach diverse audiences. Social media demographics prove that people of different ages, nationalities and backgrounds are active on social networks. Recruiters can reach out to them by building effective social media sourcing

and recruiting strategies.

You reduce time-to-fill. By using more job advertising channels for your open roles, you increase your chances of finding qualified candidates faster.

You make it easy for employees to refer candidates. Companies can benefit from the various posting and sharing options that social media sites offer. Current employees can share job openings with friends or simply post job ads on their personal feeds to increase visibility.

You can get creative with job posts. Social media job posts don't have to be traditional job descriptions. Include pictures and videos of your workspace, write engaging text to describe the position and add a humorous touch, if it suits your brand.

You decrease recruiting costs. Setting up social media accounts and posting your job openings costs less than traditional recruiting, and it allows you to inform people from your professional circle and beyond about open roles at your company.



## Are there legal issues to consider when using social media for recruiting?

Yes. Social media recruiting is often used as a pre-employment background check. But, candidates' social profiles contain information unrelated to their careers that may invite bias and legal issues into hiring decisions. These characteristics include:

- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Pregnancy
- Disability



Also, from May 2018, organisations need to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when sourcing EU candidates. This means that recruiters shouldn't be looking for these candidates on non-professional social media like Facebook and they need to inform candidates when collecting their information on social media like LinkedIn.

## **What social media networks are most effective for recruiting?**

To source, attract and recruit candidates, you need to go where your audience is, which includes some of the most popular social media networks.

**LinkedIn:** Professionals use LinkedIn to share their career history, network, build their brand and search for new job opportunities. When recruiting on LinkedIn, use job posting and application options to speed up the hiring process.

**Facebook:** The world's largest social network, Facebook members are diverse in age and background. Recruiters use features like groups and paid job ads to advertise their job openings to their desired audience.

**Twitter:** Brevity is king on Twitter, a social platform that empowers its members to share posts no greater than 280 characters. Use appropriate hashtags to inform potential candidates about job opportunities, and take advantage of Twitter lists to network with passive candidates.

Hashtags are powerful tools for increasing the scope of your message in certain social media.

A good idea may be to identify the Twitter, Facebook or Instagram hashtags that job seekers follow. Keep in mind, however, these are generic rather than relevant to your industry. Once you make that first step, you'll have to narrow it down even further. There are industry-specific hashtags that will do an even better job in terms of identifying top talent in the field.

### **Add Instagram to the Mix for a Bit of Fun**

Recruiting efforts don't have to be all serious and strictly professional. The rules of the game are changing when you're trying to reach millennials. This generation has much more specific needs and preferences than its predecessors.

This is the main reason why your recruitment efforts should bring a bit of fun to the table. One of the best ways to accomplish the goal involves setting up an Instagram profile.

You may be thinking that Instagram and recruitment don't go hand in hand but you're wrong. The visual network of the social platform can help you accomplish a lot, even where other social media fail.

For a start, let's take a look at the range of Instagram users. According to 2016 data, the number of active monthly users reached 600 million people in December. In comparison, the monthly active users in December 2014 were only 300 million. Over 60 percent of the Instagram users log in on a daily basis and 90 percent of them are under the age of 35.

This is a massive talent pool and chances are that the people you're trying to reach are already on Instagram. Therefore a fun business profile can make it a lot easier to connect with these people.

Use Instagram to show the other side of care. You can take pictures around the office, or in the community show the work that your employees do, present your company values. The purpose of the profile will be to show the hip, young and exciting crowd that's working for a great industry.

### How do you build a social media sourcing strategy on LinkedIn?

The following tips will help you build an effective LinkedIn sourcing strategy:

- Create your company profile.
- Consider a Recruiter plan.
- Connect with past and potential candidates.
- Post your job ads.
- Share your job openings.
- Track your analytics.



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Create your company profile. Describe your company, promote your jobs and offer links to your websites or other social media pages. Encourage your current employees to update their profiles and add your company as their current workplace.

Consider a Recruiter plan. Unlock more sourcing features with LinkedIn Recruiter or LinkedIn Recruiter Lite. You'll get access to more profiles and you can send more InMails per month (150 and 30, respectively.) If you're using Workable as your ATS, you can view candidates' LinkedIn profile data along with InMails exchanged, all in one place.

Connect with past and potential candidates. When you spot interesting profiles, send LinkedIn invitations to connect and introduce yourself. You can also use LinkedIn to stay in touch with past candidates who might be more suitable for a future job opening. Keep track of their career choices, comment on their posts and congratulate them when they make professional achievements.

Post your job ads. LinkedIn offers options to help you advertise your job openings. Write compelling job descriptions and list your desired skills. Prompt candidates to "easy apply" using their LinkedIn profiles to speed up the application process.

Share your job openings. People from your network – including current employees – may know someone who might be a good fit for your roles. Network by advertising your positions to employees, who might recommend your next hire.

Track your analytics. LinkedIn offers analytics of your network's demographics and the behaviours of your page's visitors (e.g. number of clicks to your posts.) This data is useful because it helps you understand what kinds of posts and updates drive traffic to your page.

## How can I use Facebook to find candidates?

Facebook features can help you source candidates. Here are the most useful tools to help you find potential hires on Facebook:

- Facebook groups.
- Paid job ads.
- Facebook Search.
- Facebook Live.



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Facebook groups. People are more willing to share their personal information online once they find themselves in more private settings, like Facebook groups. For example, if you're looking for a Web Designer, instead of typing "Web designers who live/work in X", search groups where designers hang out, like "graphic designers" or "UI/UX designers".

Paid job ads. Instead of posting a job ad on your Facebook company page, reach your desired audience directly with paid job ads. To attract candidates you want, choose from multiple filtering options, like location, college degree or professional interests (e.g. PHP or Google Analytics.)

Facebook Search. Use the Facebook Search bar to source candidates by specific criteria (e.g. location or job title.) Make sure to choose the "People" tab when viewing your results.

Facebook Live. This feature helps you connect with your audience in real-time without using extra apps or video editing software. Ask employees to take part in Facebook Live sessions to introduce themselves, give office tours or simply share casual moments at work to build your employer brand.

### How do you build a social media sourcing strategy on Facebook?

With over 2 billion monthly Facebook users, it's likely your next hire is sharing a photo or chatting with their Facebook friends right now. Here's how you can use Facebook features to recruit candidates:

- Post job ads.
- Share your company culture.
- Source passive candidates.
- Network with potential candidates.
- Encourage employee referrals.



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Post job ads. Add job postings to your company's Facebook page and include links to the application form on your careers page. You could also use paid job ads to attract your desired audience based on specific criteria, like location or professional interests.

Share your company culture. Give candidates a glimpse of what it's like working with you. Share pictures of your offices and company events. Keep in mind that your current employees may also be your best brand ambassadors. Encourage them to share their work experiences on Facebook, or spotlight them on your Facebook careers page.

Source passive candidates. Facebook Search allows you to find candidates using filters (e.g. location or job title.) You can also browse and join relevant Facebook groups, where people with similar professional interests gather and share ideas.

Network with potential candidates. Dedicate someone on your team as a page manager to respond to people's questions. Participate in Facebook groups and interact with followers on a regular basis. You could also attract job seekers by sharing career advice and interview tips.

Encourage employee referrals. Create shareable Facebook job posts your current employees can easily send to their contacts. People who know their future co-workers are more likely to apply to your open roles.

### **What are some social media sourcing mistakes recruiters make on Facebook?**

Here are the most common social media sourcing mistakes recruiters make on Facebook and how to avoid them:

- Making biased judgments about candidates.
- Failing to build relationships.
- Ignoring your brand.



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**Making biased judgments about candidates.** People use Facebook personally and professionally, so they don't always expect to be found (and judged) by recruiters. Evaluate only job-related information you find and avoid discriminating against potential candidates based on their personal preferences.

**Failing to build relationships.** While Facebook is good for quick communication, it's best to take the time to invest in long-term, trusting relationships with potential candidates and industry professionals. Engage with people online to build connections for your future hiring needs.

**Ignoring your brand.** Candidates will research you when you reach out to them, so build an attractive corporate Facebook page. Share industry-related content, show off your workplace and reply to comments to show that you appreciate feedback and strive to improve your hiring process.

### How can I use Twitter to find candidates?

With 328 million active users per month, Twitter is a solid source of potential candidates. Here are the Twitter features that will help you source candidates:

- Hashtags.
- Advanced Search.
- Twitter lists.
- Chats.



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**Hashtags.** These increase the visibility of your posts. When posting a job ad, use appropriate hashtags to reach a more niche audience.

**Advanced Search.** This feature lets you look for candidates' profiles, using criteria like location, profession and hashtags. Use keywords relevant to your industry to find profiles that match your roles.

**Twitter lists.** These lists are curated groups of accounts categorized by topic or interest (e.g. attendees at an industry conference.) Boolean search can also help you find Twitter lists for particular fields.

**Chats.** These are group discussions that occur at predetermined times. Use Twitter chats to spot passive candidates who exchange interesting ideas. Consider initiating your own Twitter chat to attract more followers and get a better feel for potential candidates' concerns.



### How do you build a social media sourcing strategy on Twitter?

It can be challenging to build an effective social media sourcing strategy on Twitter because it limits posts to 280 characters. But Twitter is still an effective way to source and engage candidates. Here's how to get started:

- Set up your account.
- Company accounts.
- Personal accounts.
- Promote your employer brand.
- Expand your search.



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Set up your account. Choose whether you will use your company's official Twitter account or your personal account to tweet. In any case, upload a professional picture and write a descriptive mini bio.

Company accounts: If you're using a company account, you might find it easier to attract more followers who are already familiar with your brand.

Personal accounts: Personal accounts, though, may invite more interaction, as people prefer talking to other people rather than corporate accounts.

Create engaging content. Good content that's relevant and relatable will make your Twitter feed interesting and will attract followers. Tweet about current events and news, frequent status updates, links to interesting articles and retweet (RT) influential people. Also, using the "@" to mention other people will invite dialogue on the topics you're tweeting about.

Promote your employer brand. Play to Twitter's strengths and use it to build your reputation. Showcase employees' achievements to give you a competitive advantage and a strong employer brand. Promote your events on Twitter: for example, let your followers know you participate in job fairs and invite them to meet you there.

Expand your search. Beyond attracting potential candidates to your page, go where they are. Follow conference hashtags to find Twitter users who attend industry-related events. You can also use Boolean search to identify Twitter lists with people who are interested in specific topics.

### **What are some social media sourcing mistakes recruiters make on Twitter?**

Here are some mistakes recruiters make when using Twitter to recruit candidates and how you can avoid them:

- Not expanding your follower base.
- Not uploading a photo.
- Just posting job ads.
- Low involvement from hiring managers.



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Not expanding your follower base. If you're taking your first steps into recruiting on Twitter, invest some time to build a strong network of followers. Posting a job opening on Twitter when your only followers are your current employees may not bring you many applications.

Not uploading a photo. Twitter's default profile picture alienates followers, as they don't know who they're talking to. Even if you're using a corporate account, make sure your page has photos and your posts read naturally (e.g. Use "we" instead of "X company" and ask questions to prompt interaction with followers.)

Just posting job ads. Using Twitter as another job board, where you only advertise your openings, doesn't play to its strengths. Twitter is a place where you can reach out to potential candidates before meeting them in a more formal setting, like interviews. To attract more followers, produce engaging content. Announce company news, share thoughts on industry-related topics, spotlight employees and interact with followers.

Low involvement from hiring managers. Your next hire might already be following your hiring managers on Twitter. Ask hiring managers to share your job ads and provide career tips to attract a larger audience of potential candidates

## Other networks

### What are some underused social recruiting sites?

LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter might be the most popular sourcing sites among recruiters, but to step up your social recruiting game, consider non-traditional platforms as well.

Here are some underused social platforms you can optimise to recruit candidates:

- Instagram
- Google+
- Snapchat
- Reddit
- Slack
- Meetup
- YouTube



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**Instagram:** Use hiring-related hashtags to promote your job ads and attract potential candidates. And comment on people's profiles when they upload work samples.

**Google+:** Join or create Google+ communities to exchange ideas and have direct conversations with professionals from fields relevant to your open roles.

**Snapchat:** Attract potential candidates with non-traditional job ads, using special effects and stickers. As part of your hiring process, ask candidates to send short Snap videos in addition to their application.

**Reddit:** Post your ads on subreddits and engage in discussions with Redditors who're interested in your company.

**Slack:** Participate in industry-specific Slack communities to share relevant news and build relationships with potential candidates.

**Meetup:** Browse member lists of events to find relevant candidates for your roles.

**YouTube:** Create a channel with employee testimonials and videos that showcase your workspace.

## How can I use some underused social recruiting sites in my social media sourcing strategy?

Complement your social media sourcing strategy with some non-traditional platforms. These platforms are not technically sourcing tools, but have features that can help boost your sourcing:

- Instagram
- Google+
- Snapchat
- Reddit
- Slack
- Meetup
- YouTube



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Instagram: Comment on candidates' accounts and promote your job ads with appropriate hashtags.

Google+: Find candidates' online portfolios and resumes and contact them directly (as Google+ links with Gmail.)

Snapchat: Use features like special effects and stickers to create job ads and applications that grab potential candidates' attention.

Reddit: Post your job ads and interact with potential candidates in Reddit's subreddit communities.

Slack: Join Slack communities to meet potential candidates from a specific field in a less formal setting.

Meetup: X-ray Meetup.com to find members who attend job-related events, without actually having to attend those events.

YouTube: Illustrate what working at your company looks like to build a strong employer brand and promote your openings with video job ads.

## What are the keys to a successful social media recruiting strategy?

Here are the keys to building a successful social media recruiting strategy:

- Use social networks as proactive sourcing tools. Social media sourcing is an ongoing, organised effort to build candidate pipelines. Book specific time slots in your schedule, e.g. 30 minutes per week, to network with people online and start building relationships with potential future hires.
- Show off your company's personality. Candidates want to know more about your company, and you can use social media to provide this kind of information. Share photos of your workplace, describe the benefits you offer and introduce your company's employees. Create social pages that are unique to your company's culture.
- Measure your results and readjust. As technology advances and new tools emerge, not all social sourcing strategies will remain successful indefinitely. Measure your results often (e.g. your source of hire for each social network) and experiment with new techniques and platforms.

There is no end to the ways you can use the social media tools, it's a way for the online community to be reached locally.

## What are some of the best social media recruitment tools?

Here are some tools you can use to complement your social media sourcing efforts:

**Scheduling tools:** Automate updates for your social media pages to keep an active online presence around the clock. Software like Hootsuite and Buffer will help you schedule your posts.

**Analytics tools:** Measure your posts' traffic and engagement (e.g. number of clicks and shares) using social media tracking tools, like Bitly and Google Analytics.

**Sourcing tools:** Gather information from candidates' social media accounts, including their qualifications and professional interests. People Search aggregates and organizes information from millions of profiles to build complete candidate profiles.

**Applicant tracking systems:** If your ATS integrates with social platforms, like LinkedIn and Facebook, you can advertise your job openings and manage candidates' applications in one central location, without logging into each platform.

Get to know the products that are out there and try the tools out that can help you track your success then build on what you have learnt.



## Stay connected



Try things, test out new platforms, monitor the outcomes and plan again, the social media world is changing constantly, watch the market and advertise your company and be clear about your message.

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