

Career Mail

Social networking can land you a dream job

USING social media just for fun could cause your career to suffer. More than a third of UK employers now use social networking sites to find new recruits, and two thirds say they will increase their usage over the next two years.

'I would say every one of our clients is using social networks in one form or another,' says Martin Cerrullo, of recruitment and outsourcing specialist Alexander Mann Solutions.

'Last year, a client of ours in the telecoms industry made approximately a third of its recruitments through social networks.'

It makes sense to get into social media jobsearch now, before everyone else realises the potential.

'Only 15 per cent of professionals are on professional networking sites, and only a few know how to make the most of them,' says Peter Crosby of networking site Viadeo. 'But those who do are ahead of the game.'

The best-known social networking site is Facebook, but for career purposes it is better to use professional networking sites such as LinkedIn or Viadeo — although don't completely write off Facebook, as many employers use it.

Build a profile page to attract employers. Put a summary at the top that includes up-to-date skills, job title and qualifications.

Recruiters search social networks for specific skills, job titles or industry key words, so use industry-standard terms, not company specific ones, says Santino Marcozzi, who hires staff for Taleo, a talent management provider that regularly recruits its own staff using social media.

Ensure your profile is as full as possible. 'The profiles that come top in searches are those that are most complete,' says Mr Crosby. Add a professional-looking photo, videos and personal interests. There are even ways to upload presentations to sites, so if you have done a good presentation, consider adding it.

Change your status regularly to reflect new jobs, responsibilities or

by Linda Whitney

projects you have completed — status changes are broadcast to your network.

Opt to receive personal e-mails from recruiters, and be sure your profile includes contact details.

Establish a network as soon as you can. Students can create links detailing their work experience to show bosses or others in companies for whom they are interested in working.

Viadeo recently teamed up with the site BraveNewTalent.com, which brings together the online profiles of 600 companies. It enables visitors to see employers' professional and social networking profiles and Twitter feeds. They can then choose which ones to follow.

'There is a social networking site built around this, so you can interact with a recruiter before an interview,' says Lucien Tarnowski of BraveNewTalent.com.

'Ask people you have worked with to post recommendations on your profile page,' says Rachel Clarke, head of social media at digital marketing agency TwentySix. Do the same for valued colleagues and contacts.

Viewers can see who has recommended you and who you have recommended — it shows you have good connections.

Most importantly, join relevant industry groups and take part in their online discussions.

Show your skills by posting useful information for discussion, answering questions or referring colleagues or associates who might be able to help,' says Alice Shell of Taleo.

Employers look for people with good professional networks. 'John Twitter



Picture: Jenny Goodall

MY CAREER HAS TAKEN OFF BECAUSE OF TWEETING

ALLIA WALKER got her job through Twitter. 'I was looking for a job and had been following digital communications company Outside Line,' says Allia, 35, from London.

'They invited all their followers to an event, and I replied on Twitter and got talking to them. They said they had seen my tweets and knew I was working in a social media engagement for Sky TV.' The tweets led to telephone calls and then conversations about potential jobs. After one interview, Allia (left) was offered her current job as a social media manager.

'If you are looking for a new job, update your online profile and follow relevant companies on Twitter,' says Allia.

'Many companies now put jobs on social media and Twitter before advertising them. You can find out about the company's culture, talk to senior people — who would usually be hard to contact — and get jobs more quickly this way.'

find out more about you. 'This way recruiters are able to build up a kind of 3D CV of a candidate,' says Mr Cerrullo.

'This will provide employers with a wealth of information to help them make a hiring decision. Keep everything up-to-date and add details to your CV listing where you can be found on the net.

Most employers Google candidates these days, so make it easier

for them. By doing this, you can demonstrate more knowledge, recommendations and industry connections than you could ever fit on your CV.

Finally, manage your online image. Ensure that everything about you on the net reflects well. Don't let rogue Facebook pictures of your Saturday night antics stand in the way of what could be your perfect job.

MY EMPLOYER FOUND ME ON FACEBOOK

JED HALLAM (right) knew he wanted to work for public relations company Wolfstar in Leeds.

'After I graduated, I set up a network of PR contacts on Twitter and they introduced me to Wolfstar's managing director Stuart Bruce.

'I went travelling and when I came back I set up a Facebook campaign to get a job with Wolfstar,' says Jed, 26. His Facebook page listed five reasons why he wanted to work for Wolfstar and five reasons why they should employ him.

He invited PR contacts from Twitter to join his campaign and they started posting recommendations



on his Facebook 'wall'. Within a day of inviting Mr Bruce to join his group, he posted a message on Jed's wall asking him for an interview.

After working for them for one day, the company offered him a job. Now Jed is Wolfstar's social media and innovation strategist.

He says: 'Now is a good time to use social media to differentiate yourself. At the moment, few others understand how to do it.'

BLOGGING BAGGED ME A GLOBAL REPUTATION

'I GOT jobs using my blog and LinkedIn,' says Julius Solaris, 29, from London. Julius (right) built up a 10,000-strong LinkedIn group while working in the events industry and then started a blog he linked to his LinkedIn profile page. Event ticking agency Amando contacted him on LinkedIn and offered him a job.

'They already knew about me from my presence on the net. At the interview, they said that the chief executive had talked about me to someone in Silicon Valley who I've never met — they



knew about me from my networking group,' says Julius.

More jobs followed as a result of his networking contacts. Julius is now an e-commerce marketing manager for electronics component distributor RS Components.

'Build networks and add a blog to your LinkedIn profile page and share useful information about your sector. It means that other people in your industry will want to meet you.'

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