

Can Social Media be classed as a Disruptor in the South African Recruitment Industry?

(Definition of a Disruptor: Disruptors are innovators, or innovations, that uproot and change how we think, behave, do business, learn and go about our day to day activities –

Forbes Magazine)

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Abstract

The effect of social media on the South African Recruitment Industry was studied for two reasons. Firstly, people use social media in many different ways but these can all have an impact on their careers. Secondly, a major change in the way talent is attracted, and recruited, in South Africa has been observed in the last ten years in this fast-paced, ever-evolving industry. The aim of this study was to gain a greater understanding of how job seekers view their social media platforms and the impact these have on their careers. In addition, the study was designed to obtain a better understanding of how Talent Acquisition Specialists viewed these platforms and how many Talent Acquisition Specialists were using these platforms to improve and streamline their daily recruiting activities. The study was conducted using Survey Monkey and both job seekers and Talent Acquisition Specialists were targeted. Results indicated that job seekers view LinkedIn as by far the most popular social media platform to enhance their careers, with LinkedIn also widely used by the Talent Acquisition Specialists. The surveys also showed that career portals still play a large role in the South African Recruitment landscape, although there is definite requirement for employers to have a career's page on their own website too. More companies are thus understanding the importance of having a good social media presence and how this can add value to their business by helping them to attract a higher calibre candidate.

Keywords: social media, recruitment industry, South Africa, disruptor

Introduction

Traditional recruitment methods, in the South African context, refer back to the ‘pre-social media’ days. These were the times when Talent Acquisition Specialists would rely on a rolodex of immediately available candidates on their desk and also on career portals to find the candidates who were advertising that they were ‘on the market’. When social media gained popularity, and momentum, in South African, these traditional methods of recruitment changed. This study will prove that social media has been a Disruptor in the South African Recruitment Industry as it has forever changed the way Recruitment, and talent attraction, happens. Talent Acquisition Specialists are no longer restricted to a pool of job seekers who have put their CVs on a career portal when they feel that they are ready to change jobs. With social media, Talent Acquisition Specialists, can grow and nurture communities of both active and passive candidates. They can also use the tools provided by social media to attract talent to them. Please remember the word ‘Disruptor’ during this study as everything we have looked at in the surveys has been of a result of social media and the impact that it has had on the Recruitment Industry.

Survey Monkey was used to conduct my survey as it was the easiest way to send the survey to as wide an audience as possible. The survey was run from the 1st February until the 30th March 2017. 68 responses on the Job Seekers Survey and 51 responses on the Talent Acquisition Specialists Survey were received, and since the aim was for a minimum of 50 responses from each survey, this was a satisfactory result.

The same eight social media platforms were chosen throughout the study, including the most popular platforms that are used by the majority of South Africans at present:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Google+
- YouTube
- Snapchat

The first section of this research project comprises an analysis of the results of the Job Seekers Survey. The researcher wanted to discover how people who classed themselves as ‘on the job market’ viewed these various social media platforms. People who work in the Recruitment industry, always have access to a wide range of job seekers as they seem to be a ‘CV magnet’ for everyone’s Aunt, neighbour or ex colleague who might be looking for a career change. The job seeker responses largely came from people who emailed their CVs through to the researcher in the hope that she could assist them. A link to the survey was also placed on the researcher’s personal LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+, Instagram and Twitter profiles as well as on company or community profiles that are they managed on these main social media platforms. The results came from a wide range of South African job seekers, which was the aim in order to get as diverse a set of results as possible.

Both surveys were done anonymously and participants were informed that their answers would remain confidential from the outset.

Job Seekers Survey Results

The first question to the job seekers was about their first activity, or action, when they found themselves in a position where they had decided to look for a new career opportunity. The aim was to see what the first ‘port of call’ for these job seekers would be, such as whether a general post on social media would be their first action or whether they would pick up the phone to call someone, be it a Recruitment Agency or an ex colleague, who could maybe assist them. The job seekers were given the following options to choose from and they had to rate them according to their first action, until their last.

- Reached out to family and friends to see if they could help
- Placed your CV on an Internet Career Portal (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)
- Visited companies that you would like to work for's websites to see if they were advertising any suitable roles
- Reached out to your ex-colleagues or your preferred Recruitment Agency/Consultant
- Looked for suitable roles on Internet Career Portals (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)
- Posted on your personal social media platforms that you were in the job market

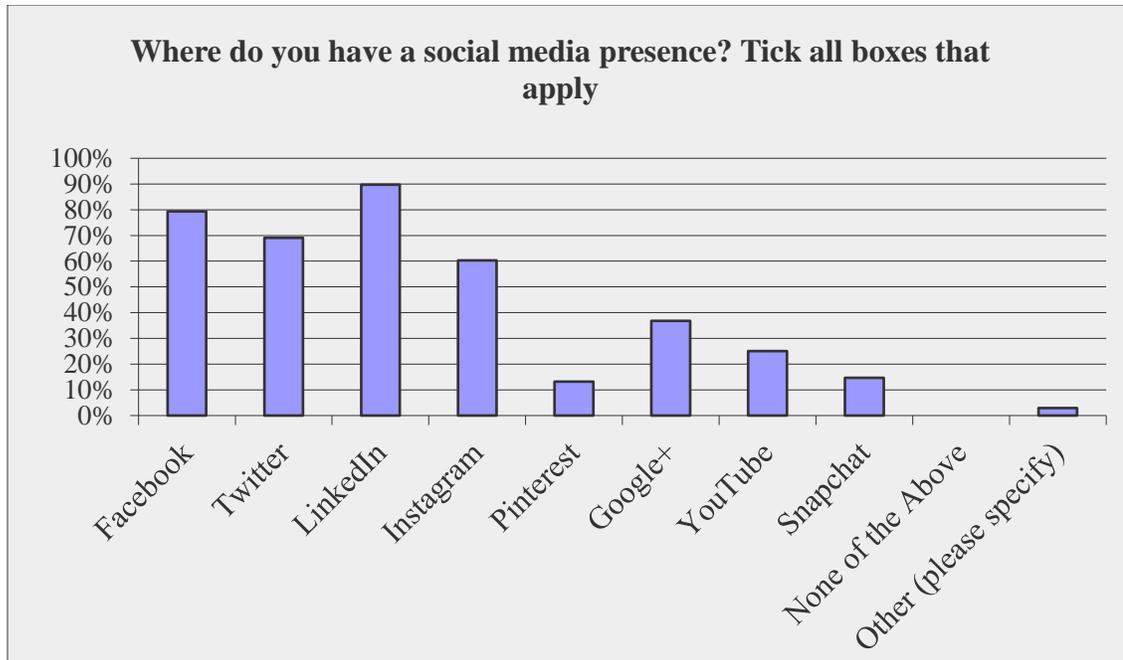
The responses indicated that the most popular action, chosen by 40% of the respondents, was to visit online career portals like Pnet, CareerJunction, Careers24 etc to upload their CVs. A lot of the candidates that we deal with do not have time to upload their CVs and also don't feel that they get the best response from being on these career portals. The most common complaint from our candidates is that they battle to remove their CVs or contact information from these portals once they have successfully found new employment. Another issue with placing CVs on career portals is that there are so many employers now using the portals directly that the

candidate's CVs may be 'discovered' on one of these portals which could lead to numerous HR issues.

The second most common response, chosen by 33% of the respondents, was to turn to the career portals to look at roles being advertised that candidates could potentially apply for. This proves that career portals still have a valuable role to play in the South African Recruitment landscape. This is great news for the likes of Pnet, CareerJunction, Careers24 to name a few of the more popular career portals available in South Africa today. It does however appear that these career portals work better when looking for less skilled, entry-level candidates as opposed to senior scarce skilled candidates. For example, it is easier to find twenty call centre agents on a career portal than it is to find one CIO. For more senior candidates, researching their profiles on LinkedIn and then headhunting them is often a more effective option.

The third most common activity from the respondents was to visit the websites of companies that candidates would like to work for. This highlights the importance of company websites having a career's page that prospective candidates can apply directly for jobs on. This also allows companies to avoid using a Recruitment Agency which will help them to dramatically reduce their hiring costs too.

The second question was to gain some insight into which platforms were the most commonly used by the respondents. The results were as follows:



Interestingly, the majority of applicants had a presence on LinkedIn compared to Facebook. This could be an indication that a lot of the Millennials are not as keen on Facebook as the older generations these days. Most Millennials tend to spend more time on Twitter and Instagram as this is where they can connect with the majority of their peers. It was also very interesting to note that none of the respondents had no social media presence at all – it seems that everyone is active somewhere on social media these days. This is great news for Talent Acquisition Specialists because if candidates are active at least ‘somewhere’ – we can track them down and connect with them.

The two candidates who chose ‘other’ as an option were confusing a social media platform with a career portal and a communication application (WhatsApp).

The third question to the job seekers was to establish which social media platforms they deemed important for ‘work purposes’ and therefore would have an impact on their career advancement. LinkedIn came in as a clear winner at 84%; followed by Twitter with 35% and

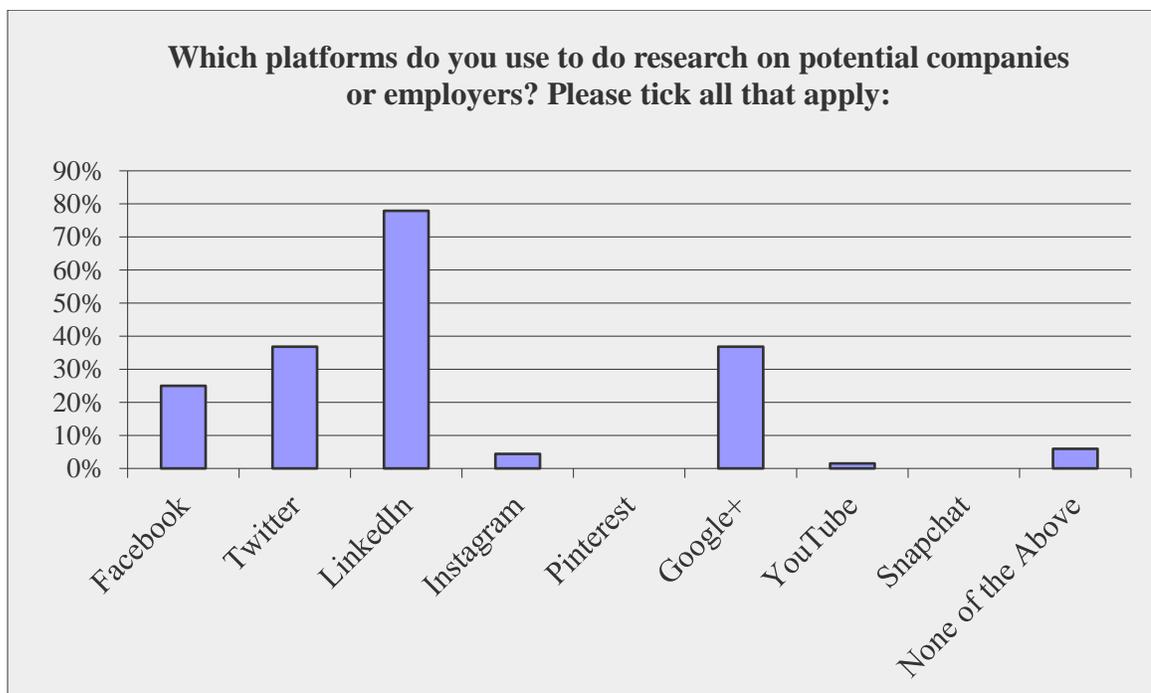
Facebook at 15%. More emphasis should however be placed on the other seven platforms too, not just on LinkedIn. Unfortunately, what most candidate's do not take into account is that what they post on Twitter and Facebook etc can have a negative impact on their career advancement. (This will be discussed in more detail when we look at the Talent Acquisition Specialists Survey results.)

The answers to question 4 were very similar to the answers from question 3. In question 4, job seekers were asked which social media platforms they would be happy to be contacted via by prospective employees and Talent Acquisition Specialists. Again, LinkedIn was the most common response at 79%, followed by Facebook at 28% and Twitter at 25%. This clearly shows that LinkedIn is viewed as a business-networking tool in South Africa and that candidates do not view the other platforms as a tool that they can use for their career advancement. This is very unfortunate as potential employers and Talent Acquisition Specialists do not only research potential candidates on LinkedIn – they spend as much time researching candidates on the other social media platforms too. Talent Acquisition Specialists will also attempt to make contact with candidates across all of the platforms, not just on LinkedIn. The author has personally successfully recruited more than five candidates on Twitter as this is a great platform to connect and chat to anyone. Candidates need to ensure that their privacy settings are in place if they do not want people outside of their networks to view their posts or status updates on these platforms.

Question 5 was to ask the job seekers if they belonged to any online professional groups or business networks. 57% of the respondents answered yes and 43% answered no. This number needs to be way higher as South Africans could learn huge amounts from other professionals by

joining international online forums and discussion groups. Spending time on social media platforms is often seen as a great time waster, but spending time on social media can actually be a differentiator between yourself and another candidate. There are lots of interesting blogs, articles and learning materials that are shared online that can assist candidates to advance their careers. In having to decide between two candidates with the same qualifications and experience; but the one candidate wrote a regular blog and was an active member of a reputable online community, the author would choose this candidate as they have demonstrated passion for what they do. This indicates they go out of their way to contribute to their community and like to share their knowledge with others.

The graph below refers to question 6 which is as follows: Which platforms do you use to do research on potential companies or employers? As shown, there is one clear winner again.



LinkedIn takes pole position with 78% of the vote. There is a tie for second place between Facebook and Google+ at 37% each. *(It is apparent that a good number of job seekers confused Google+ with a regular Google search. For the purposes of this study, reference was only made to the social media platform of Google+).* This may have skewed the results for this question, but it can undeniably deduced that LinkedIn was the clear winner again. A good question to ask here would be as follows: what if the prospective employer did not have a company page on LinkedIn? Would you stop there or would you then turn to another platform to see if they maybe had a presence there? It is also plausible that if a potential employer didn't have a company page on any of these platforms, the candidate would be concerned as to whether the company was legitimate or not.

Candidates are often encouraged to do online research on the people that will be interviewing them on LinkedIn, as this will give them better insight into who they are meeting with and what sort of background they are coming from. The answers to this question are in line with South African candidate behaviour as the majority of candidates use LinkedIn as a research tool before attending interviews. Candidates are also encouraged to not only do their research on their client's website but also by doing a quick Google search.

As there are more jobs than there are suitable candidates for in South Africa, it appears safe to say that the war for talent is over as it has been won by the candidates. This is especially true when we look at the recruitment of any candidates with over three years' experience in their chosen careers. This pool of candidates would fill intermediate, to senior and even some C-level positions in South African businesses. These are the more difficult positions to fill as the talent is scarce and Talent Acquisition Specialists are increasingly up against international opportunities

when it comes to hiring these candidates. These candidates are often the ones who are offered ridiculous counter offers to remain in their current roles. The onus is falling more and more on employers to entice people to work for them. Companies need to work harder to seduce candidates to work for them. Businesses need to offer amazing opportunities for the candidate's personal development that their competitors are not in a position to offer. An example of some of these perks or opportunities could be to pay for their studies; send them to attend international conferences; give them more leave or allow them to work from home. There has recently been a greater demand for the 'work at home option', especially from IT Specialists who are normally already 'set up' to work from home. Companies also need to work on their employer branding in order to create a positive online image to portray themselves as a company that candidates *want* to work for. There is a definite war for talent and the best companies, with the best perks, are going to win every time.

Question 7 aimed to gain a better understanding of what candidates are looking for when they research prospective employer's social media platforms. The statements that they had to rate in order of importance were as follows:

1. General information on the company in order to be better prepared for an interview with them
2. Do they even have a social media presence and how efficient are they with keeping their followers up to date
3. Are there any negative comments about the company online from customers or past employees

4. Do you know anyone who is currently working at the company who you could ask to give you some idea of what it is like to work for them
5. To ascertain what sort of company culture the business has by viewing their posts on social media
6. Are they advertising any suitable roles that you could apply for directly on their social media platforms

The statement that was regarded as the main reason that candidates research a company's online presence was number 1. 47% of the respondents stated that they conducted research on the company's social media platforms to enable them to do better in their interviews with that company. It is good to see that more candidates are researching their prospective employers as this will stand them in better stead during the interview process.

The second most popular statement was number 6, which is in line with the answers that were received on question 2. A lot of candidates will visit a particular company's social media platforms to see if they are advertising any positions that are suitable for them. They could also be visiting these platforms to see if they could find a job description or specification for the particular role that they will be interviewing for.

The third most common reason why candidates will do online research on a prospective employer is to see if they have any negative comments on their social media platforms – statement number 3. It was thought that this would have rated higher especially for companies that are smaller and potentially not as well-known as the larger enterprises. To highlight at this juncture, people are always very quick to complain on social media when something goes wrong with a business; they are conversely less likely to praise a business when good service is received

from them. Some complaints, especially on the likes of www.hellopeter.com, should therefore be taken with a pinch a salt as they are often written in the heat of the moment and companies are then required to pay Hello Peter to respond to these complaints.

The author sees herself as a Talent Acquisition Specialist who has an open and honest relationship with her candidates. In doing background research on a candidate, and finding something untoward on one of their social media profiles, the candidates are questioned about it. Firstly, they are normally shocked that we go into this much detail to find out more about them and secondly, they are always adamant that we hacked into their profiles as they have already apparently set their privacy settings to be quite stringent. The reason we do such extensive research on candidates online is twofold. Firstly, to gain a better understanding of the candidate, not by just meeting them for an interview and letting them *tell* us about themselves, but by what they *actually* get up to in their spare time. Secondly, to find anything that is a bit risqué on their profiles before the client does.

The next question was to see if candidates would change their profiles to appear more attractive to prospective employers. 65% of respondents said that they would where 35% said that they would not be prepared to make any changes to their social media platforms. This was an interesting answer as some candidates vehemently feel that what they post on social media should not impact their job applications. This is a very easy statement to make but is it really a good idea for job seekers to be posting photos of themselves under the influence of alcohol or even worse, drugs? Or to post some extreme right-wing status updates or offensive Tweets on South Africa's current political situation? Unfortunately, some candidates are not able to 'put themselves in their employer's shoes' and refuse to change these settings as they feel that people

must hire them because they can get the job done and not because of their behaviour or views out of office hours. This is a very contentious issue that could be debated for a very long time. The author's view on this is that it is better to have a clean, politically correct social media presence as once you put your thoughts in writing they remain on the Internet forever. Two golden rules of using social media is never to put something in writing that you would not post on a billboard or not to post something that you would not say to your mother! The choice is entirely up to the candidates to make, but it is recommended that they choose wisely.

The final question to the job seekers was to see if they put links to their social media platforms on their CVs so potential employers could find them easily. The aim was to see if some candidates were proud of their activity and accomplishments on these platforms and thought that this would enhance their applications. Again, the most common platform to post a link to was the candidate's LinkedIn profiles, which 32% of candidates already do. This is a step in the right direction and most good Talent Acquisition Specialists would run a search on LinkedIn on the candidate before they even phone them to bring them in for an interview. 62% of the respondents said that they do not put any links to their social media platforms on their CV at all. Again, this comes down to a personal preference, but a hyperlink to a LinkedIn profile is always a good idea.

That brings our Job Seekers Survey analysis to an end. Some of the key findings are as follows:

- LinkedIn is by far the most popular social media platform that candidates use to enhance their careers

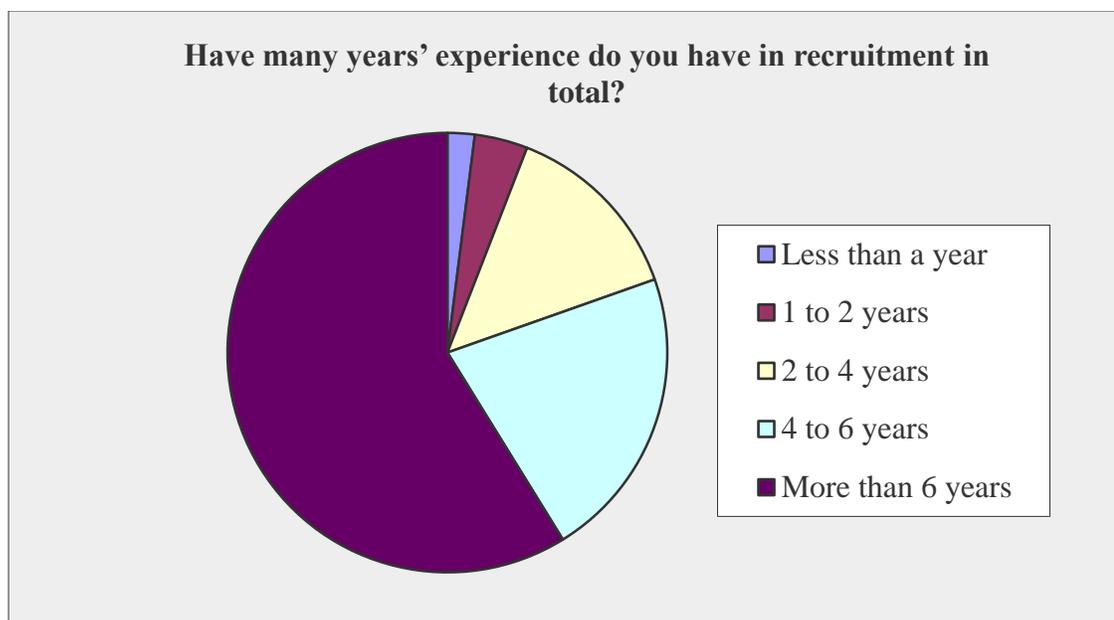
- Even though several candidates have a presence on other social media platforms, mainly Facebook and Twitter, they do not view these as suitable tools to advance their careers
- There is definite requirement for employers to have a career's page on their websites. They also need to have an online presence on social media so candidates can research the business before meeting with them
- Career portals still play a large role in the South African Recruitment landscape, even though it was thought there was a move away from career portals, towards social recruiting

Job seekers need to be more aware of their actions now that social media is playing a part in their career advancement. Before the days of social media, job seekers could 'get away' with bad behaviour as the only background checks that were conducted by Talent Acquisition Specialists was mainly through phoning their nominated Referees for a reference. Social media has 'disrupted' this as anyone can view what they are posting online. Job seekers therefore need to be more vigilant and digitally savvy when it comes to their online presence. They also need to see social media as something that can give them the edge over their competitors if it is used in a sensible way to promote their personal brand.

Talent Acquisition Specialists Survey Results

As mentioned previously, there were 51 responses on the Talent Acquisition Specialists Survey. This was a good result, considering the struggle to find Talent Acquisition Specialists who had the time to complete the survey. There may also have been some suspicion that whatever they put as their answers would be held against them at a later date by their Managers, even though they been told that this survey was completely anonymous. Five questions were added at the end of the Talent Acquisition Specialist's Survey just to get a better understanding of who the respondents were and what sort of experience they had in the Recruitment industry. The analysis of this survey will start by looking at these responses, as it will give a better understanding of all of the answers received.

Again, a broad spectrum of responses was wanted here – from people who classed themselves as 'Career Talent Acquisition Specialists' (more on this terminology later) to people who were just starting out in a recruiting role. The vast majority of the responses, 59% to be exact, came from seasoned Talent Acquisition Specialists or people with over 6 years' experience in the Recruitment Industry. Please refer to the chart below to get a better understanding of the experience that the Talent Acquisition Specialists who completed this survey had:

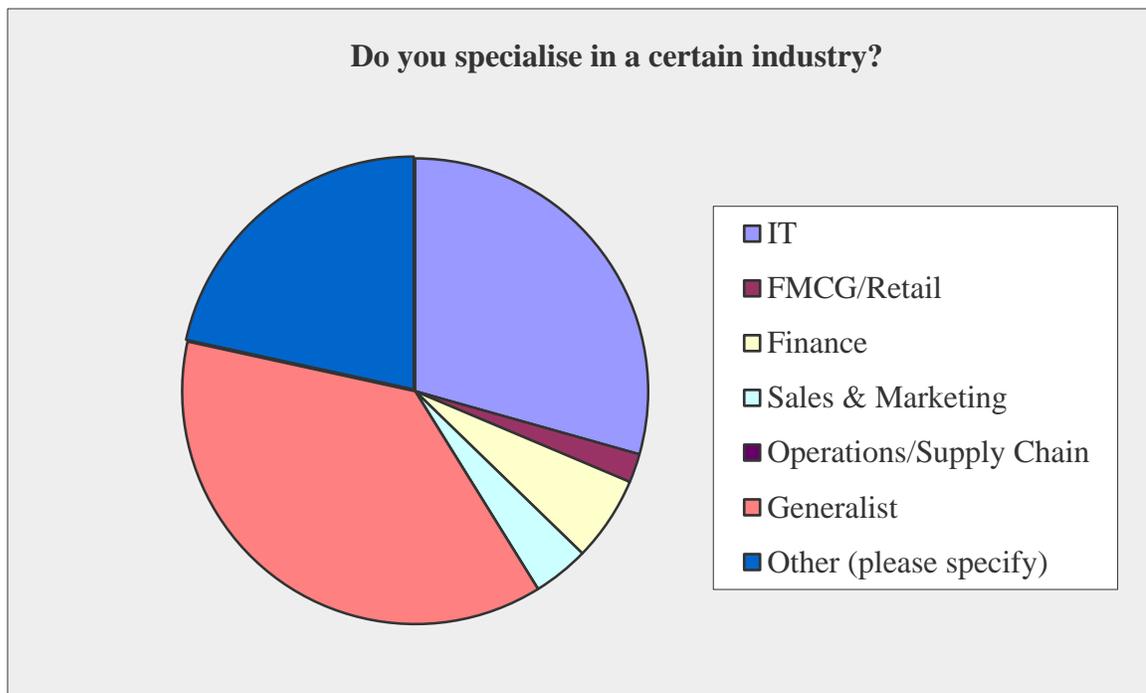


Out of these 51 responses, it was also important to ascertain how many Talent Acquisition Specialists were working in Internal Recruitment teams or in External (Recruitment Agency) set ups. The survey showed that 77% of the results were from Agency based Talent Acquisition Specialists and that 23% were working as Internal Talent Acquisition Specialists in an HR Department. It is assumed that both types of Talent Acquisition Specialists would have their clients and candidate's best interests at heart so it's not likely that their answers would be completely different.

Most Talent Acquisition Specialists who have been in the industry for over 6 years, have chosen to specialise and only recruit in a certain industry. This helps them to grow and nurture Talent Pools from their chosen communities. This undoubtedly helps Talent Acquisition Specialists to be better at their jobs and also to have a constant network of candidates whose trust and respect they have earned as they understand the terminology or 'lingo' used by these people. In other words they can 'talk the talk and walk the walk'. Candidates like these interactions and they will be more willing to meet industry specific Talent Acquisition Specialists for interviews

compared to other Talent Acquisition Specialists who may not fully understand the roles that they are recruiting for. 37% of the respondents were still working as generalist Talent Acquisition Specialists, but it wasn't surprising to see that 29% of the Talent Acquisition Specialists were specializing in IT Recruitment. There is a lot of demand for scarce skilled IT Professionals, so IT Talent Acquisition Specialists should never be bored or without work. An added bonus to this is that as the salaries in IT are higher, the placement fees are generally higher in this industry too.

Please refer to the chart below to see where the Talent Acquisition Specialists chose to specialise:



Some of the Industries mentioned in 'other' are as follows:

- Scientific
- Construction, Mining & Engineering

- Human Resources
- Project Management
- Medical
- Telecommunications

Before the survey was switched to 'live', it was anticipated that the largest number of responses would come from Gauteng, and this proved to be correct. An overwhelming 78% of the results came from Talent Acquisition Specialists residing in Gauteng. The next biggest region was the Western Cape with 10%, followed by a tie for third from the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, with 6% each. No responses from Talent Acquisition Specialists residing in the Free State, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga or North West were received. It is unknown how tech savvy the Talent Acquisition Specialists are in the outlying areas, but it is believed that they still do a lot of their talent acquisition through word of mouth and the use print media like the local newspapers.

The next question was to determine if the respondents classed themselves as 'Career Talent Acquisition Specialists' or whether they were just working in the Recruitment Industry until something better came along. During the author's time of working in the Recruitment Industry, there appears to be a clear distinction between a 'Career Talent Acquisition Specialist' and someone who is just biding their time until a better offer comes their way. Career Talent Acquisition Specialists have a unique passion for people and a desire to improve their candidates and their clients' lives by matching the most suitable candidates to their client's company culture. 75% of the respondents classed themselves as Career Talent Acquisition Specialists while 8% admitted that they were just working in the role until something better came along.

18% of respondents opted for the 'other' option. Here are some of the 'other' options that were given:

- Talent Advisor
- Researcher/Sourcer/Resourcer
- Recruitment Communications

Having a better idea of the geographical location; area of specialisation of the respondents and how they view themselves in the Recruitment industry certainly offered a lot more context to look at the answers that this set of people provided for the remaining questions.

Firstly, the survey wanted to establish where Talent Acquisition Specialists were finding, or sourcing, the majority of their candidates from, so this question was asked at the very beginning of the survey. As previously mentioned, there is a definite war for talent and Talent Acquisition Specialists need to be increasingly innovative when finding their 'one eyed rocket scientists' (to coin a popular term that has been used in the Recruitment industry for several years now). The Talent Acquisition Specialists were asked the following question: What is your preferred method of sourcing candidates? They were then asked to rate the following six statements in order of their preferred method of finding candidates, from one to six.

- Applications through your company's website
- Applications through your company's social media platforms
- Applications via your own personal social media platforms
- Word of mouth, or referrals from other candidates working in similar fields or previously placed candidates

- Applications through Internet Career Portals (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)
- Advertising on Internet Career Portals

The most common statement was ‘Word of mouth, or referrals from other candidates working in similar fields or previously placed candidates’ which 43% of respondents claimed was their best way to find suitable candidates. This is unsurprising as we find that good candidates tend to ‘stick together’ as they enjoy working with each other. You will often find that top candidates will follow their trusted peers to new companies once they hear the good reviews that that company is receiving. This is also a very good way to source candidates as it is not in our nature to recommend candidates that would put your position or ‘professional standing’ at the company at risk. Therefore, candidates will normally recommend ex-colleagues who are on the same level as them or even slightly stronger than themselves. Businesses should also sit up and pay attention at this point as they would benefit greatly from having a referral policy in their company where candidates can recommend candidates from their professional networks for a financial reward. This could end up saving them a lot of Recruitment fees at the end of the day. The reader may think that this way of sourcing candidates would be possible without social media but the reality is that social media enables the Talent Acquisition Specialists to stay in touch better with placed candidates and to mine into their networks more effectively.

The second most popular way of sourcing candidates was through ‘Applications through your company’s website’. A well-designed website with relevant, regularly updated content and an attractive careers page will go a long way when attracting candidates to a company. Most important is to ensure that the website has fantastic Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) in the

background so job seekers are finding the business when they search for new roles online. The author highly recommends spending the required monthly fees to get your SEO properly set up and to include some Google AdWords onto your company website. From the author's personal experience, some of the strongest candidates have come through the company website.

Ranking at number three was the following statement: 'Applications through your company's social media platforms'. In order for this to be a successful way of finding candidates, the business needs to ensure that you have a well-established and popular presence on social media. The more followers or community members you have on these platforms, the better the reach your adverts will have. Businesses also need to have people on these profiles who want to help disseminate your adverts through the sharing and liking of these posts. It takes a long time to build up a solid following on social media so this is something that needs to be worked on every day to ensure consistent organic growth. A good idea to ensure that your business is growing their online presence is to appoint social media champions within your organisation. These would be people with a natural flair for social media, who understand the value of using these platforms for business and personal purposes. Encourage these people to disseminate your posts to ensure that they are reaching as wide an audience as possible. These champions will lead by example and hopefully the rest of the business will follow their online activities.

Coming in at number four, Talent Acquisition Specialists said that they found that 'Advertising on Career Portals' was the best way that they sourced their candidates. Advertising on a career portal is a good way to find candidates, but this is definitely better suited to the more junior and intermediate positions that Talent Acquisition Specialists are trying to fill. The most

common complaint from Talent Acquisition Specialists is that they place adverts for skilled IT candidates, for example, and everyone from the tea lady to the unemployed call centre agent respond to their adverts. The man hours that it takes to sift through these responses can be quite exhausting and a complete waste of time. Some of the career portals have added extra questions to help filter out the unsuitable candidates but they still seem to get through somehow. Having said this, lots of successful placements are done through advertising on career portals. We live in a country where there are more job seekers than there are jobs, so you normally will find quite a few suitable applicants through this sort of job advertising.

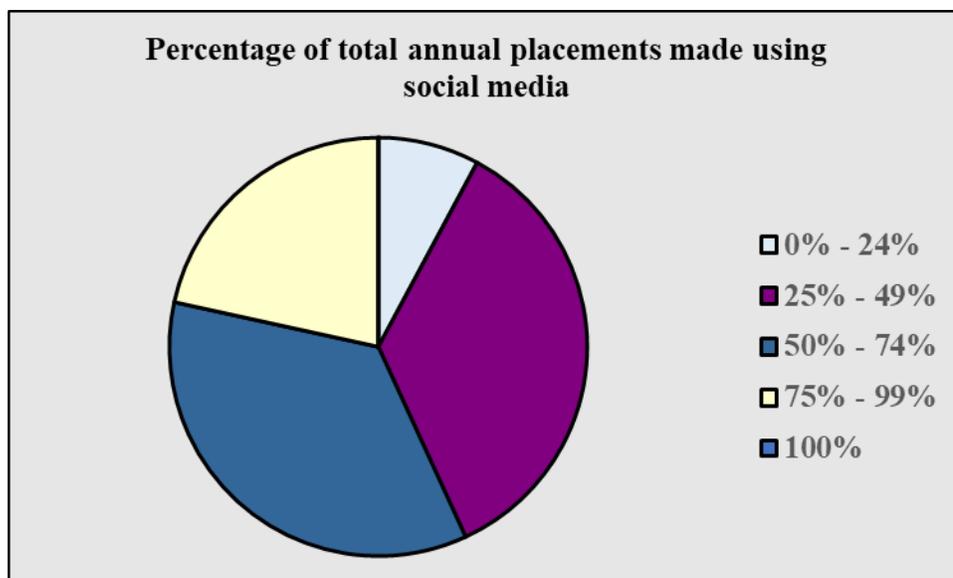
‘Applications through Internet Career Portals’ was the fifth most common way to connect with job seekers. As mentioned previously, there is value in using career portals to source entry level and junior candidates but when it comes to the senior candidates, you just cannot solely rely on career portals to find these scarcer skills. One of the problems with these career portals is that a lot of the larger, enterprise companies have their own subscriptions to the candidate database on these career portals. This results in both the company and the Recruitment Agency ‘fishing in the same pond’ for their candidates. How can an agency really justify their value add to the company if they are just going to search in the same place and present the same candidates to them? External Recruitment Agencies need to start being way more innovative when it comes to the service they provide or else they will find themselves becoming redundant very soon.

The final statement that the Talent Acquisition Specialists thought was relevant to their sourcing of candidates was ‘Applications via your own personal social media platforms’. It was not surprising to see this option in last position, as a lot of Talent Acquisition Specialists have not mastered the art of growing their own Talent Pools from within their job seeker communities.

Candidates need to view the Talent Acquisition Specialists as a subject matter expert in their chosen field in order for them to build a mutually beneficial and trusted relationship with them. There are not many Talent Acquisition Specialists who have done this successfully as they feel that they need to keep their personal social media presence separate from their work social media presence. Unfortunately, recruitment is an intense people based activity and it is incredibly difficult to separate your personal persona from your work persona. Talent Acquisition Specialists who have a strong online presence with a well-defined and developed personal brand will always be the most successful Talent Acquisition Specialists in that chosen space. This has been proven time and time again and it is what makes successful Talent Acquisition Specialists the sort of workers who are not clock watchers and who realise that their job is not just a standard nine to five job. You can easily spot a Career Talent Acquisition Specialist at a weekend social event, or even in a queue at their local grocery store, as they will be chatting to strangers, asking them what they do and doing their best to grow their networks.

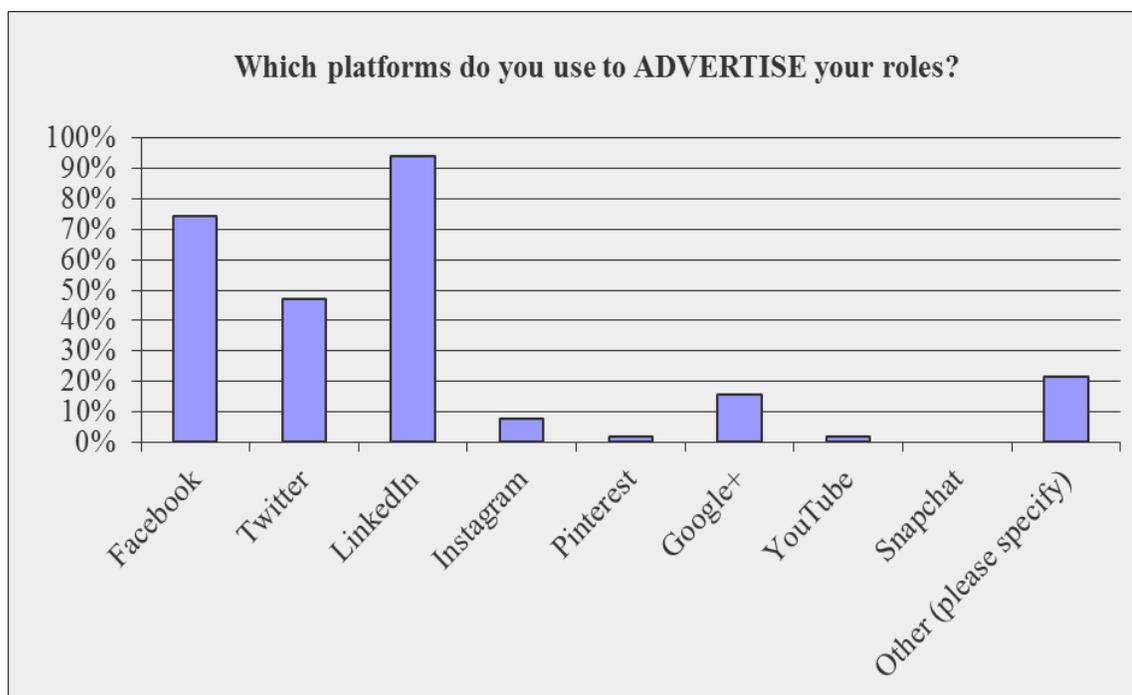
Question 2 was a straightforward question as to whether the Talent Acquisition Specialists felt that there was value in using social media to assist them with their recruitment. 90% of the respondents thought that social media could assist them to do their jobs better. Conversely, 10% of Talent Acquisition Specialists didn't think that social media would be able to assist them to be better at their jobs. The author uses social media constantly to source, verify and vet candidates and now cannot imagine doing any recruitment without it.

Out of the 90% of the respondents who were using social media to recruit successfully, the next question aimed to establish what percentage of their placed candidates, over the past year, were sourced using social media. The pie chart below depicts the answers to this question:



These results were a lot higher than the author had expected them to be. The majority of the placements made over the past year were made using social media and the author expects these percentages to increase in future years. As many as 25% to 75% of the total annual placements made by the Talent Acquisitions Specialists were done through the use of social media.

The next question that was posed to the Talent Acquisition Specialists was on which social media platforms they chose to advertise their roles. It was no surprise to see that LinkedIn was again the most favoured platform to advertise positions with an overwhelming 94% of the respondents choosing this option first. This was followed by Facebook with 75% and Twitter with 47%. The graph below shows the results of this question:

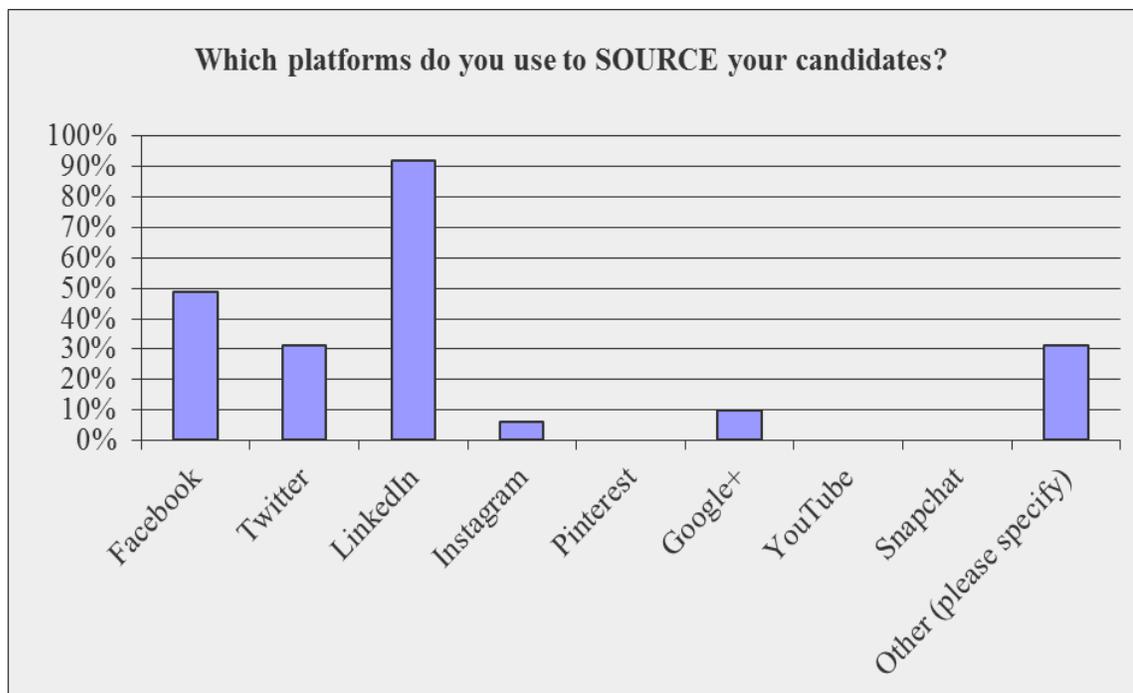


22% of the Talent Acquisition Specialists chose the ‘other’ option for this question. Even though the answers provided are not traditional social media platforms, it is interesting for the purposes of this study, to see where they are advertising their job roles:

- Company website
- Using Recruitment Agencies to advertise on their behalf
- Career portals
- Word of mouth/Networking

Question 5 was very similar to question 4 but it was looking to find out which social media platforms Talent Acquisition Specialists were using to source their candidates from.

Please see the table which shows the answers to this question:



Again, LinkedIn was the most commonly used social media platform to source candidates from with 92% of Talent Acquisition Specialists choosing this option. This was followed by Facebook at 49% and Twitter at 31%. The Talent Acquisition Specialists that chose the 'other' option here, cited the following as places they sourced candidates from:

- Company database
- Recruitment Agencies
- Career portals
- Word of mouth/Networking
- Professional bodies
- Competitor companies

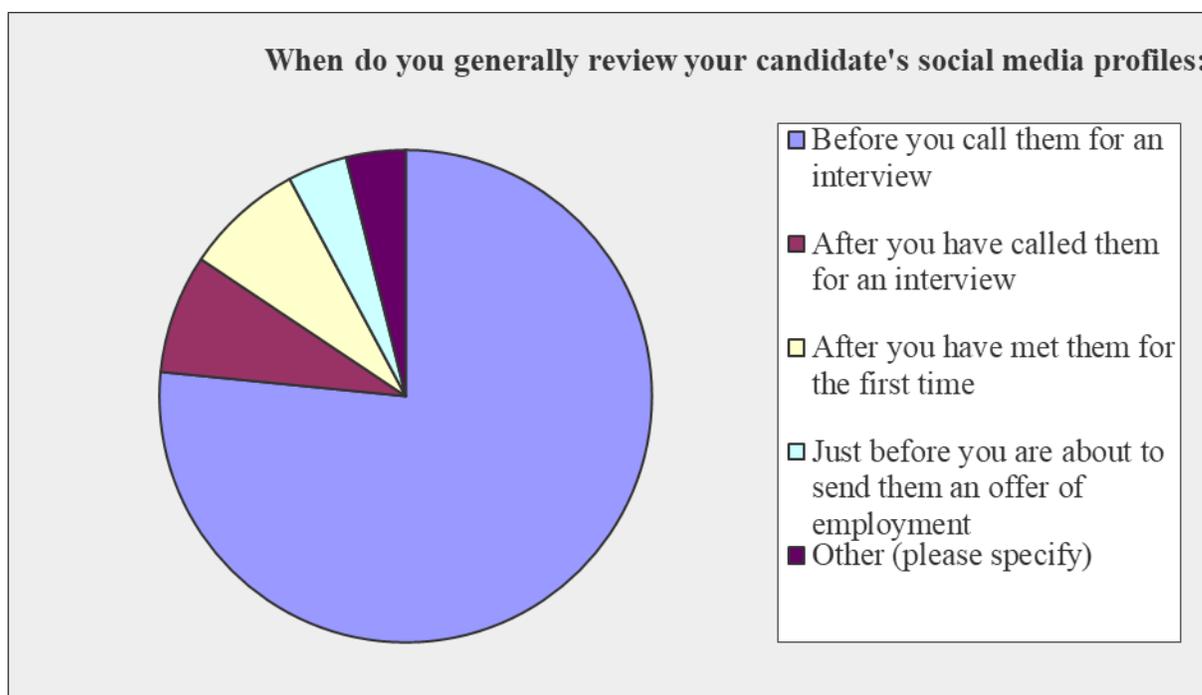
It needs to be highlighted at this point that Talent Acquisition Specialists need to stop relying so heavily on LinkedIn for their Recruitment needs. Not all of their potential candidates

are going to be on LinkedIn. For example, Millennials working in the IT industry are more likely to be on Stack Overflow or GitHub; so only a very small percentage of potential candidates will see adverts if they are only placed on LinkedIn. The Talent Acquisition Specialists need to be networking and advertising on the platforms that provide them with the greatest chance of reaching as many potential suitable candidates as possible. It is known for a fact that many extremely talented Developers refuse to load a profile on LinkedIn as they can be bombarded by as many as ten Talent Acquisition Specialists a day. The author is fortunate enough to stay in close contact with a large number of placed candidates and hears this from them regularly. They are contacted by both local and international Recruiters offering them attractive positions locally and overseas. Talent Acquisition Specialists need to start finding more effective advertising and sourcing channels to ensure that they are sourcing those hard-to-find candidates that their competitors are not finding. This is the key differentiator between a good and a great Talent Acquisition Specialist.

It is unlikely that the author would even pick up the phone to call a candidate without having looked at least one of their profiles on social media. Admittedly, this usually starts on LinkedIn, as this is a good place to cross-reference the career history on a candidate's CV with the information provided on their LinkedIn profiles. (It is incredible how many CVs and LinkedIn profiles differ from each other.) The author also looks at the potential job seeker's profiles on Facebook and Twitter before making contact with them. The main things to look for on these platforms are if they could be viewed as a 'Thought Leader' in their chosen career field - do they have links to their blog or any other business forums that they contribute too? It is vital to connect with people who are passionate about their industries and are respected by their peers. The author also looks for candidates who stand out on these platforms for different reasons

which may not be viewed in a positive light - more on this later. Question 6 asked how many Talent Acquisition Specialists 'professionally stalk' their candidates online, and the results showed that 75% of Talent Acquisition Specialists review their candidates' social media platforms.

Question 7 was looking to answer *when* the Talent Acquisition Specialists thought it was a good time to review the candidate's social media platforms. It is important to highlight to job seekers that they needed to ensure that all of their social media platforms were 'clean' or that they had their privacy settings in place as soon as they put themselves on the market. The Talent Acquisition Specialists were given four stages of the recruitment process to choose from as well as an option to add their own stage in case there was something that had been omitted as an option. Please see the chart below for the results:



The most popular answer by a huge majority was to research the candidates online before the Talent Acquisition Specialist even made contact with them. Results indicated that 77% of other Talent Acquisition Specialists also looked at least one of the candidate's social media platforms before they phoned or emailed them. The other options given were:

- When completing reference checks
- When sourcing for candidates (the author would have chosen the first option in this case)

The next question aimed to find out what exactly the Talent Acquisition Specialists were looking for on the job seeker's social media platforms. The Talent Acquisition Specialists were given six statements to rate from the most important to the least important. They are as follows:

- Do you have any mutual connections with this person who you could chat to find out more about them?
- What does this person enjoy doing on the weekends or in their spare time?
- Do they have any extreme political views or activities?
- The average tenure that they have had at their previous companies and to generally verify the information on their CV?
- Do they have any online portfolios; published articles or business blogs that could add value to their job application?
- Do they have any memberships or affiliations to any professional organisations that could add value to their application?

Just over half of the Talent Acquisition Specialists, 51% to be exact, felt that statement two – 'What does the person enjoy doing on the weekends or in their spare time?' as the most

common reason that they looked at one or more of their candidate's social media platforms. If the company that they are recruiting for is sporty and have a culture of being active, they might look for people who are keen runners or cyclists as they know they will fit into the company's culture. What Talent Acquisition Specialists do not want to see are after hours' activities that may not be as socially accepted like recreational drug taking or gang rituals.

The next reason that Talent Acquisition Specialists looked at their candidate's online profiles was statement three: 'Do they have any extreme political views or activities'. South Africa is known to be a country that is incredibly politically charged. We have a History that lends itself to racism and there are mixed views on our current government's methods to address the wrongs of the past. What Talent Acquisition Specialists would be looking for here is extreme right wing behaviour on job seeker's profiles. Talent Acquisition Specialists do not want to put candidates into any business where they think that they are going to rock the proverbial political boat.

The third top reason as to why Talent Acquisition Specialists look at job seeker's online profiles is statement number one: 'Do you have any mutual connections with this person who you could chat to find out more about them?'. Sometimes this is the best way to get a quick reference on a potential candidate. Sometimes you can even get a simple "Yes, proceed with the interview" or "No, don't touch the candidate". Obviously, Talent Acquisition Specialists need to filter some of the responses but on the whole, it is nice to get a trusted friend, or reputable colleague's opinion on a potential hire before you enter the interview process with them.

Fourth position went to statement six – 'Do they have any memberships or affiliations to any professional organisations that could add value to their application?' and fifth position went

to statement five – ‘Do they have any online portfolios; published articles or business blogs that could add value to their job application?’. The position of statement five was surprising as this is something that the author *always* looks for. A candidate who takes the time to ‘give back’ to the community and uses their spare time to empower other community members is something that makes a good ‘selling point’ to the client/business. In last position was statement four – ‘The average tenure that they have had at their previous companies and to generally verify the information on their CV’.

The question of whether a Talent Acquisition Specialist has ever declined a candidate because of something that they saw on one of their social media platforms has always been a contentious one. Some Talent Acquisition Specialists might not think that what candidates put on their social media platforms is important in the first place and others might just be hoping that their clients don’t check their candidate’s social media profiles. The purpose of the following question: ‘Have you ever declined candidates after viewing certain activities on their professional or personal social media platforms?’; was more to find out what sort of behaviour was deemed bad enough to disqualify a candidate from the recruitment process. 40% of Talent Acquisition Specialists admitted to discounting candidates after something they found on their social media platforms. The next survey question was therefore to establish what job seekers did on their personal platforms that was deemed to be offensive. Here are some of the reasons given by the Talent Acquisition Specialists: *(Please note that these examples were recorded directly from the survey verbatim)*

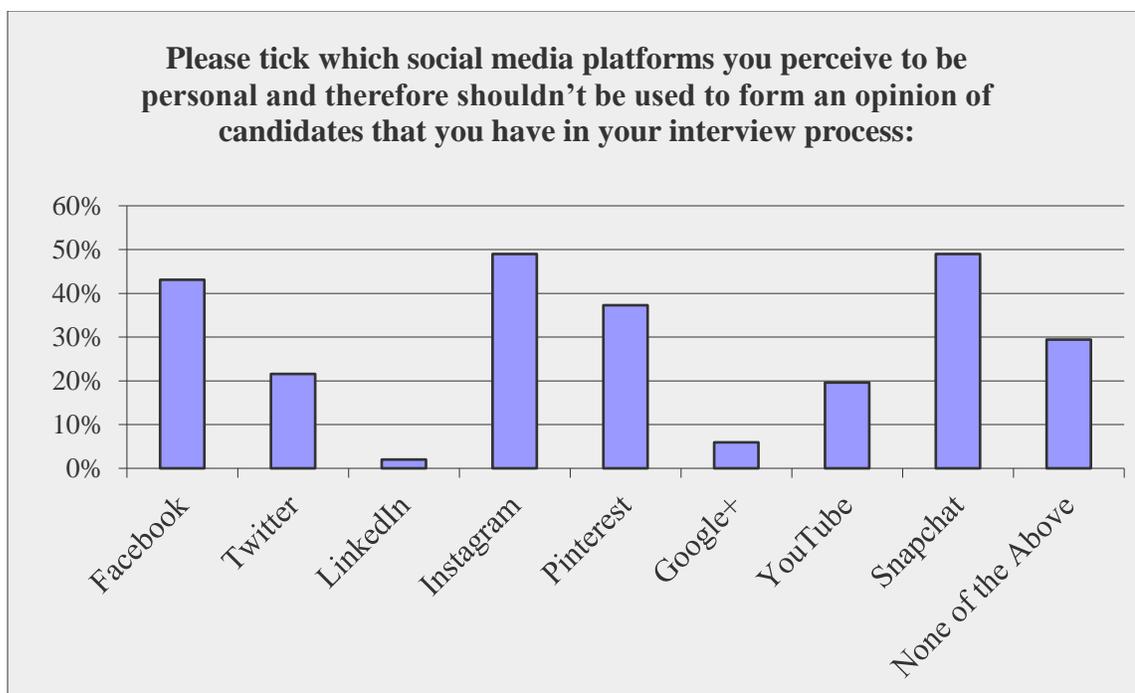
- “Tacky pictures highlighting dubious behaviour”

- “Unethical behaviour, extremist comments, nudity, drinking, inappropriate unprofessional behaviour”
- “Behavioural – this could compromise company values and work ethics”
- “If you can gather from someone’s profile that they are mentally unstable it’s best to walk away”
- “Racism and extreme political views”
- “This could be based on the lifestyle they lead or the way they conduct themselves”
- “Facebook profile picture was of a candidate holding a 9mm gun”

It must be mentioned at this point that a lot of Talent Acquisition Specialists said that they would not judge their candidates based on one indiscretion on a single social media platform, but rather on continued ‘bad’ or negative behaviour. Most Talent Acquisition Specialists also mentioned that they would still interview these candidates, especially if they had scarce skills, and then they would discuss their findings on social media with the candidates in person. A few Talent Acquisition Specialists also stated that what most people put on social media is not a true reflection of their everyday lives anyway so how did you know what to trust or not. This last point is very valid and could be debated for days.

Based on the last paragraph, the next question aimed to determine which social media platforms were deemed to be the most personal by the Talent Acquisition Specialists – maybe they would turn a blind eye to any negative behaviour they found on these platforms? To the author it is odd that different platforms are seen as personal vs private as anything you share on social media is accessible to other people. If it is on social media, it is no longer private and this is something that people need to understand about the nature of social media.

The platforms that are more ‘picture intensive’, like Instagram and Snapchat, were considered to be the most private. Maybe this is due to some inappropriate pictures that may have been shared by some of the job seekers? Facebook and Pinterest were also deemed to be more private than the likes of Twitter and LinkedIn. Talent Acquisition Specialists definitely view Twitter as more of a business tool so they would be more open to being approached via their personal Twitter accounts; as well as contacting potential candidates via their Twitter accounts. The fact that only one Talent Acquisition Specialist said that LinkedIn was a private platform shows that it is widely considered to be an open business network where connecting with people for business purposes was common and acceptable. It was also fascinating to see that 29% of the Talent Acquisition Specialists stated that none of these platforms should be used to ‘form an opinion’ on their candidates. Surely the Talent Acquisition Specialist would want to discover any inappropriate political rants on social media before they submit that candidate to their clients? Remember that Talent Acquisition Specialists are not only looking for negative activity on social media – they may even discover that the candidate does work for a homeless charity on the weekend. This could align with your client’s current Corporate Social Investment initiative and could be used as an extra ‘selling point’ to the client. Please see the responses below:



Are Talent Acquisition Specialists behaving in an ethical manner when they ask their candidates to remove certain posts, or photographs, from their social media platforms before they are submitted for interviews? This is another highly-debated topic. 59% of Talent Acquisition Specialists say they encourage their candidates to clean up their social media platforms when they embark on the interview process. Hopefully this is requested after they have met with these candidates and really questioned them on whatever they deemed was inappropriate enough to ask for it to be removed from social media. It wouldn't really be ethical if Talent Acquisition Specialists were asking candidates to tidy up their profiles, before really trying to understand why they may have behaved like they have done on a public platform. It's not always just about making the placement; sometimes Talent Acquisition Specialists need to take more heed of the red flags that we see on these public profiles.

Do you personally feel that perceived personal social media platforms, like Facebook or Twitter, give us as Talent Acquisition Specialists, an accurate indication of whether our

candidates can perform in their jobs or not? This was the next question that was posed to the Talent Acquisition Specialists. 84% answered no to this question which was good to see. At times, it appears that we lose sight of the fact that a lot of talent acquisition simply boils down to whether the candidate can do the job or not. Having said that, should we be placing as much importance on their online activity as we currently do? Surely as long as the candidates put their heads down and do their jobs without disrupting their colleagues; they are doing what they have been hired to do? The Talent Acquisition Specialists were asked to please elaborate on their answers and here are some of the comments that were received, again they are recorded verbatim:

- “I am mostly looking for culture fit when I look on candidate’s social media platforms”
- “If my clients are looking at the candidate’s online profiles they are merely searching for a reason not to hire them”
- “As a Talent Acquisition Specialist, I am looking at the candidate’s values like integrity, honesty and their professional demeanour. Would I be proud to represent them?”
- “Social media gives no indication of their performance at work, only of their behaviour”
- “Candidate’s personal opinions about everyday life doesn’t necessarily reflect on their capabilities in the workplace”
- “Social media only provides us with a small insight into the person you are dealing with”
- “We cannot hold what people get up to in their spare time against them (unless of course it is causing harm to others)”
- “People are more honest on their social media platforms as I feel that we don’t always get to the know the ‘real’ person during an interview”

All of these are valid points and this is where the ‘human element’ of talent acquisition comes to the fore. You cannot teach a robot, or a hiring algorithm, to have a ‘gut feel’ about something or someone in the hiring process. This is where good Talent Acquisition Specialists prove their worth as they should be using their gut, their experience and good judgement on these hires to decide whether to continue with the process or not.

Social media needs to be embraced by both the Talent Acquisition Specialist and the job seeker as it needs to be seen as a positive addition to someone’s career path. To elaborate on this statement, job seekers can really promote their achievements and how they add value to their work and personal communities through the use of social media. This will stand them in better stead when Talent Acquisition Specialists chose them to meet with and interview over their peers. Talent Acquisition Specialists also need to use social media to enhance their candidate’s applications – mention things like they have a blog, present at community events and help poor families in their spare time. In this way, social media is a positive Disruptor which should be used to assist and improve your career journey.

For the last few questions of the survey, the intention was to explore whether Talent Acquisition Specialists felt that the clients they were recruiting for really understand the importance of their social media presence, or footprint. As mentioned previously, South Africa is operating in a scarce skilled market. We don’t have enough skills to fill all the positions that are currently advertised. Therefore, the war for talent provides a brutal battle field of headhunting, counter offers and exorbitant salary packages. Companies need to realise that they need to focus more of their energy on attracting talent to work for them. Unfortunately, this is not yet the key focus for the vast majority of companies where it truly should be. It was pleasing to see that 61%

of Talent Acquisition Specialists felt that companies were aware of the importance of social media when it came to promoting their company and employer brand. This has increased lately in South Africa which shows that we are closely following global trends in the social media space.

The Talent Acquisition Specialists were also asked how they felt that companies could be doing this better and here were some of their responses, again verbatim:

- “Internal Talent Acquisition Specialists felt that posting job adverts directly onto the company’s social media platforms was giving them a better response to these adverts”
- “Talent Acquisition Specialists felt that companies needed to get more ‘buy in’ from their staff to help to comment and share content from these platforms”
- “Most Talent Acquisition Specialists said that a LinkedIn company page was the best platform that they used for recruitment purposes”
- “Quite a few responses stated that because no one was officially appointed with the task of maintaining the company’s social media platforms, they were not used correctly and often there were months between posts”
- “Companies need to post regularly and add value to their followers in order to stand out from their competitors”

The next question was to see where South African companies had a presence on social media. Did they have a Facebook Page or a Twitter account and so on. 96% of companies had a Facebook Page even though this was not viewed as a ‘business tool’ by job seekers. 90% of companies had a LinkedIn Page, although it was assumed that only large corporates had a presence on this platform. This result shows that even smaller companies must have a presence

on LinkedIn too. The third most popular social media platform for business was Twitter with 73%. The author believes that a lot of companies use these social media platforms as a way to deal with online complaints as opposed to attracting talent to their organisations. Most companies are 'listening' to what people are saying about their brand as opposed to sharing content and encouraging people to join them. The author feels that there needs to be a dedicated individual who is managing these platforms, on behalf of the companies, with an aim to attract talent to the company. Alternatively, a member of the company's talent attraction team, should have access to these platforms to place job advertisements and to add posts that would attract people to their company.

One of the last questions that was asked of the Talent Acquisition Specialists was why they felt that their clients or companies needed to have a presence on these social media platforms. Talent Acquisition Specialists were given the following options to choose:

- To stay connected with a passive candidate pool
- Increase and improve their Employer Branding
- Target candidates with a particular skill set
- Be easier for potential candidates to get in touch on their preferred platform
- Less expensive than other methods of recruitment
- Identify and connect with candidates in other geographical locations

All of these statements were generally seen as good reasons as to why companies should have a good online social media presence. The top scoring statement, with 88%, was statement two – 'Increase and improve their Employer Branding' and lowest, with 65%, was statement five – 'Less expensive than other methods of recruitment'. As can be seen, there are several benefits

to companies who have a well-managed and maintained social media presence. As we all move into a more digital existence, it is important for companies to keep up with the times and to promote their brand on at least one of these social media platforms.

One of the major problems with a company's social media platforms is as to which department will be responsible for it. Does it fit into a Sales, Marketing or Human Resources department? Unfortunately, the role of a Social Media Strategist is a new role within an organisation and it almost needs to straddle several departments. Your Social Media Strategist needs to be someone who understands your business and is passionate about what you do. This role needs to be fulfilled by someone with an outgoing personality and an exceptionally well defined EQ. A lot of companies are falling down as they are not appointing someone in this role and if they are, they are appointing people who are still expected to complete their current duties, on top of taking on the social media tasks. The role of a Social Media Strategist is a stand-alone position that is a fulltime job on its own. Social media is commonly referred to as the new 'cold calling' and if it is managed properly, it can bring in a large portion of your customers, as well as attracting people who want to work for you. The next question wanted to establish who was responsible for business's social media platforms so the Talent Acquisition Specialists were asked who was currently responsible for this in their, or their client's, organisations. Here are the answers that were received in order of popularity:

- A member of the Marketing/Communications Team
- Owner of the business/CEO/MD
- Talent Manager
- HR Manager

- Office Manager
- Business Development/Sales Manager
- Social Media Consultant
- Administrator

Would you really leave your social media updates and response handling to an Administrator? Unfortunately, too many companies have not appointed a Social Media Strategist or Consultant on a fulltime, or even an adhoc basis, and this could be causing some serious damage to their brand. This role is of utmost importance to companies and they should at least be working with an independent consultant if it is not a fulltime position within their organisation as yet. The Talent Team can assist by placing job advertisements and sharing the company's success stories, but they are often not in touch with the business enough to help to bring in the B2B clients.

The key findings that were found in the Talent Acquisition Specialists answers are as follows:

- LinkedIn is definitely viewed as a professional business networking tool and it is widely used by Talent Acquisition Specialists
- It is common practice for Talent Acquisition Specialists to research their candidates on social media platforms but a large portion do not let what they find on these platforms determine whether the person can fulfil the required role or not
- More companies are understanding the importance of having a good social media presence and how this can add value to their business and help them to attract better talent

That concludes the analysis of the survey results. It was an interesting study and shed a lot of light on how fellow Talent Acquisition Specialists and job seekers viewed social media and how it could aid, or hinder, someone's job application. It is clear to see that social media plays a large role in the South African Recruitment Landscape. It is used on a daily basis by both Talent Acquisition Specialists and job seekers in order to make more informed decisions about who they will meet with and which companies they want to work for. This does beg the question of has social media changed the way we recruit? Can it be classed as a Disruptor as previously stated? The author will discuss this in greater detail in her closing statements.

Comparison to similar International Surveys

The author also wanted to see how the results that were had observed in the South African Recruitment landscape differed from those found in the international recruiting space. The two studies that were available online that were found to be the most similar to this current study were as follows:

1. Using Social Media in the Recruitment Process – Robert Walters – 2016.

<https://www.robertwalters.co.za/hiring/hiring-advice/using-social-media-in-the-recruitment-process-whitepaper.html>

This was a global survey conducted in the following countries:

- Australia
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Ireland

- Japan
- Korea
- Luxembourg
- Malaysia
- Middle East
- New Zealand
- Philippines
- Portugal
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- The Netherlands
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Vietnam

2. The Jobvite Recruiter Nation Survey – Jobvite – 2015

<http://www.jobvite.com/resources/ebooks/2015-recruiter-nation-survey/>

- United States of America

There is a lot of information (and white papers) available on the Internet that Talent Acquisition Specialists can access. It is a worthwhile exercise to stay in touch with Global Trends as the author has observed that South Africa is approximately a year or two behind these trends when it comes to the Recruitment industry. This way we can anticipate the trends that are coming our way and make sure that we stay ahead of our competitors.

The author constantly stays abreast of global Recruitment trends as this is the best way to stay ahead from her competitors. Through the better utilisation of sourcing methods and tools, understanding how the Recruitment landscape may be changing and seeing how overseas companies are attracting and retaining talent, the author feels that she is staying ahead of other Talent Acquisition Specialists. The author has also presented at Recruitment Conferences in

Sydney for the Australian Talent Community and in London at #TRULondon, so her personal brand is well known beyond South African borders. She feels that this gives her the edge against other Talent Acquisition Specialists but she still encourages more people in the South African Recruitment industry to step back, lift their heads and see how other countries are dealing with the global scarce skills crisis. The author knows that she saw the disruption that social media would cause before it became a Disruptor in the South African Recruitment landscape and that is why she has such a strong online presence as she had more time to prepare for this.

After reading through both of these studies, below are the key findings:

- Talent Acquisition Specialists worldwide are facing an increasingly demanding and competitive talent market. After the global recession, most companies have experienced a reduction in the number of jobs they are looking to fill which has decreased the need for external Recruitment Agencies. This can be seen in the South African context by the war for talent that happens every day to fill key positions. A lot of South African enterprises have adopted a model where they have built in-house or internal recruitment departments so companies are doing their own recruiting as opposed to having to rely on external agencies.
- The majority of jobs that people are looking to fill are generally highly skilled positions that only experienced and well educated candidates can do. This has handed the 'power' to the talented workforce who know they are in a position where they can pick and choose where they want to work. This is reflected in our South African context as top talent can demand exorbitant salaries, with their own perks, of the likes that we have never seen before.
- Top Talent Acquisition Specialists are using every tool available to connect with job seekers. This highlights what I touched on in my study about South African Talent Acquisition

Specialists being too focussed and becoming too reliant on LinkedIn. South African Talent Acquisition Specialists need to diversify their sourcing skills and start using some of the Google Chrome extensions at their disposal. In this way, social media is a good Disruptor but we just need to know how to use the tools at our disposal to our advantage.

- Talent Acquisition Specialists need to make relationship building a priority especially within the industries that they are specialising in. They need to build communities of candidates around them that they can reach out to at any given time. Very few South African Talent Acquisition Specialists take the time to do this as it often involves after hours work, like attending weekend conferences. This will definitely be a differentiator in the South African Recruitment industry.
- As of June 2017, Facebook had over 2 billion active users whereas LinkedIn had 467 million active users in April 2017. Why are we still placing so much emphasis on the use of LinkedIn as a recruiting tool when we need to change our mind-set about how we view, and recruit on Facebook?
- Some social media channels are widely perceived as being acceptable recruitment channels whereas others are still viewed as private and 'off limits' to both job seekers and Talent Acquisition Specialists. This perception needs to change, from both sides, as whatever you place on social media is put into the public domain for anyone to access. (This can be controlled to a certain extent by your privacy settings.) This applies to both job seekers and Talent Acquisition Specialists as too many South Africans are too quick to post while emotions are high and then have regrets when the damage is done.
- Social media is becoming increasingly important to job seekers when it comes to doing their market research on perspective employers. Companies need to realise that social media can

be a great differentiator for them when it comes to attracting talent. In South Africa, we need to guide our clients to improve their social media platforms so they make our jobs of recruiting top talent for them easier.

- Talent Acquisition Specialists all use their discretion when researching candidates via their social media platforms. What they see is not used to assess whether the job seekers can do the job or not, but more to gain a holistic understanding of the candidate. Candidates are only rejected for extreme behaviour that could impact the company that they could be working for. The same applies for South African Talent Acquisition Specialists which has been discussed already in this research report.

In closing, the author would like to answer the question that was posed at the beginning of this study: Can social media be classed as a Disruptor in the South African Recruitment Industry? Based on the information that this study has provided, the author feels that the answer to this question is a resounding yes. Social media can be used to really enhance or improve someone's career journey but it can also destroy someone's career with a careless update or Tweet. The author chooses to take the positive from any situation and with this attitude she has partnered with her candidates to add useful information from their social media platforms, onto their CVs, in order to position them better during interviews.

Social media has also allowed Talent Acquisition Specialists to be more innovative and resourceful when finding scarce skills. However, we need to continue to be *even more* innovative and resourceful, than our competitors, when it comes to finding these skilled candidates. This can be done by learning from successful international Sourcers who are more than willing to share with their communities online through their Twitter profiles, blogs and free webinars. I

really encourage more South African Talent Acquisition Specialists to take the time to listen to international webinars; to get involved in Twitter chats relating to recruitment or their field of expertise in order to learn from other more experienced people in their field. The world is often referred to as the Global Village as it much easy to share and disseminate information via the Internet that it has ever been before. South African talent Acquisition Specialists must take the time to listen to others as social media has, and will continue to change the Recruitment Industry as we know it.

Companies also need to manage their online reputations better to ensure that people want to work for them. It is not only the responsibility of an internal or external Talent Acquisition Specialist to attract talent to the company anymore; business as a whole need to make sure that they are a place where people *want* to work. As a direct result of social media being a Disruptor, the role of a Social Media Strategist within every organisation is going to be more common in years to come.

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Appendix A: Job Seeker Survey Questions and Answers

1. When you first started looking for a new job, what were the first steps you took? Please order the following statements accordingly (1 will be first step and 6 will be the last step)

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average
Reached out to family & friends to see if they could help	10	8	12	12	16	10	3.68
Placed your CV on an Internet Career Portal (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)	27	16	6	10	2	7	2.49
Visited companies that you would like to work for's websites to see if they were advertising any suitable roles	6	11	15	20	7	9	3.56
Reached out to your ex-colleagues or your preferred Recruitment Agency/Consultant	5	8	14	12	23	6	3.85
Looked for suitable roles on Internet Career Portals (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)	16	22	16	8	5	1	2.51
Posted on your personal Social Media platforms that you were in the job market	4	3	5	6	15	35	4.91

2. Where do you have a Social Media presence? Tick all boxes that apply to you:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	79.4%	54
Twitter	69.1%	47
LinkedIn	89.7%	61
Instagram	60.3%	41
Pinterest	13.2%	9
Google+	36.8%	25
YouTube	25.0%	17
Snapchat	14.7%	10
None of the Above	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	2.9%	2

3. Which platforms that you ticked above, do you consider to be important for your career advancement? The others will be considered personal platforms that should not impact your next job application:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	14.7%	10
Twitter	35.3%	24
LinkedIn	83.8%	57
Instagram	2.9%	2
Pinterest	0.0%	0
Google+	11.8%	8
YouTube	2.9%	2
Snapchat	0.0%	0
None of the Above	2.9%	2

4. Would you be opposed to being contacted via Social Media about new career opportunities by Recruitment Agencies or potential employees? Which platforms do you feel would be suitable for you to be contacted via:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	27.9%	19
Twitter	25.0%	17
LinkedIn	79.4%	54
Instagram	2.9%	2
Pinterest	4.4%	3
Google+	14.7%	10
YouTube	0.0%	0
Snapchat	0.0%	0
None of the Above	8.8%	6

5. Do you belong to any online Professional Groups or Business Networks on Social Media to make sure that you are keeping in touch with like-minded professionals and are alerted to any new roles in your profession?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.4%	39
No	42.6%	29

6. Which platforms do you use to do research on potential companies or employers? Please tick all that apply:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	25.0%	17
Twitter	36.8%	25
LinkedIn	77.9%	53
Instagram	4.4%	3
Pinterest	0.0%	0
Google+	36.8%	25
YouTube	1.5%	1
Snapchat	0.0%	0
None of the Above	5.9%	4

7. What information are you hoping to find on these potential employers through their Social Media Platforms? Please rate your answers in order of importance with 1 being the most relevant:

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average
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General information on the company in order to be better prepared for an interview with them.	29	18	6	8	3	4	2.26
Do they even have a Social Media presence and how efficient are they with keeping their Followers up to date.	6	3	13	10	17	19	4.26
Are there any negative comments about the company online from customers or past employees.	4	6	17	9	20	12	4.04
Do you know anyone who is currently working at the company who you could ask to give you some idea of what it is like to work for them.	3	7	11	13	12	22	4.32
Can you tell what sort of company culture the business has by viewing their posts on Social Media.	10	16	10	18	7	7	3.25
Are they advertising any suitable roles that you could apply for on their Social Media Platforms.	16	18	11	10	9	4	2.85

8. Have you, or would you in the future, change your personal Social Media profiles to appear more attractive to potential employers? E.g.: Removing photos of you drinking at a party?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	64.7%	44
No	35.3%	24

9. Do you include Links to your Social Media profiles on your CV? If so which platforms do you post Links for?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	5.9%	4
Twitter	13.2%	9
LinkedIn	32.4%	22
Instagram	2.9%	2
Pinterest	0.0%	0

Google+	8.8%	6
YouTube	0.0%	0
Snapchat	0.0%	0
None of the Above	61.8%	42
Other (please specify)	2.9%	2

Appendix B: Talent Acquisition Specialists Survey Questions and Answers

1. What is your preferred method of sourcing candidates? Please rate in order of the most effective with 1 being your preferred method:

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average
Applications through your company's website	4	7	7	16	7	10	0	3.88
Applications through your company's Social Media platforms	1	12	13	7	11	7	0	3.71
Applications via your own personal Social Media platforms	9	10	3	9	10	10	0	3.61
Word of mouth, or referrals, through other candidates working in similar fields or previously placed candidates	22	4	11	7	2	5	0	2.57
Applications through Internet Career Portals (e.g.: Pnet, CareerJunction etc)	8	10	7	9	10	7	0	3.47
Advertising on Internet Career Portals	7	8	10	3	11	12	0	3.76

2. Do you find Social Media an effective platform to use when sourcing for candidates?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.2%	46
No	9.8%	5

3. Percentage of total annual placements made using social media

Percentage of total annual placements made using social media	0% - 24%	25% - 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 99%	100%	Rating Average	Response Count
	Number of placements	4	18	18	11		

4. Which platforms do you use to ADVERTISE your roles?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	75%	38
Twitter	47%	24
LinkedIn	94%	48
Instagram	8%	4
Pinterest	2%	1
Google+	16%	8
YouTube	2%	1
Snapchat	0%	0
Other (please specify)	22%	11

5. Which platforms do you use to SOURCE your candidates?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	49%	25
Twitter	31%	16
LinkedIn	92%	47
Instagram	6%	3
Pinterest	0%	0
Google+	10%	5
YouTube	0%	0
Snapchat	0%	0
Other (please specify)	31%	16

6. Do you “professionally stalk” your candidates online before you bring them in for an interview?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	74.5%	38
No	25.5%	13

7. When do you generally review your candidate's social media profiles:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Before you call them for an interview	76.5%	39
After you have called them for an interview	7.8%	4
After you have met them for the first time	7.8%	4
Just before you are about to send them an offer of employment	3.9%	2
Other (please specify)	3.9%	2

8. What are you looking to find out about your candidates by viewing their Social Media Platforms? Please arrange in order of relevance with number 1 being the most relevant:

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average
Do you have any mutual connections with this person who you could chat to find out more about them?	7	6	6	13	10	9	3.78
What does this person enjoy doing on the weekends or in their spare time?	2	5	5	5	8	26	4.76
Do they have any extreme political views or activities?	11	2	2	9	20	7	3.90
The average tenure that they have had at their previous companies and	17	12	10	5	5	2	2.51

to generally verify the information on their CV?							
Do they have any online portfolios; published articles or business blogs that could add value to their job application?	8	15	14	7	4	3	2.86
Do they have any memberships or affiliations to any professional organisations that could add value to their application?	6	11	14	12	4	4	3.18

9. Have you ever declined candidates after viewing certain activities on their professional or personal Social Media Platforms?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.2%	20
No	60.8%	31

10. Please tick which Social Media platforms you perceive to be personal and therefore shouldn't be used to form an opinion of candidates that you have in your interview process:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Facebook	43.1%	22
Twitter	21.6%	11
LinkedIn	2.0%	1
Instagram	49.0%	25
Pinterest	37.3%	19
Google+	5.9%	3
YouTube	19.6%	10
Snapchat	49.0%	25
None of the Above	29.4%	15

11. Do you encourage your candidates to clean up their Social Media platforms before they meet with your clients for interviews?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	58.8%	30
No	41.2%	21

12. Do you personally feel that perceived personal Social Media platforms, like Facebook or Twitter, give us as Recruiters, an accurate indication of whether our candidates can perform in their jobs or not?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	15.7%	8
No	84.3%	43
Please elaborate briefly on your answer:		26

13. Do you feel that your current employer, or clients, realise the importance of using Social Media to attract Talent to their businesses?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	60.8%	31
No	39.2%	20
Please explain how you feel Businesses could be doing this better:		15

14. Does your employer have a presence on Social Media? If so, which platforms are they are currently using to attract Talent? Please tick all that apply:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
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Facebook	96%	49
Twitter	73%	37
LinkedIn	90%	46
Instagram	28%	14
Pinterest	6%	3
Google+	26%	13
YouTube	18%	9
Snapchat	4%	2
They do not have an online presence	2%	1

15. Why do you think your employer should have a better Social Media presence? Tick all that apply:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
To stay connected with a passive candidate pool	84%	43
Increase and improve their Employer Branding	88%	45
Target candidates with a significant skill set	84%	43
Be easier for potential candidates to get in touch on their preferred platform	80%	41
Less expensive than other methods of recruitment	65%	33
Identify and connect with candidates in other geographical locations	69%	35

16. Who monitors your company's Social Media platforms? What is their designation? Eg: HR Manager, Marketing Assistant

17. Have you ever had a candidate decline to attend an interview with your Client for the following reasons:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Client didn't have a Social Media presence	3.9%	2
Client had a poorly monitored and/or out of date Social Media presence	5.9%	3

Client had negative comments on their Social Media platforms which made the candidate feel uneasy about working for them	27.5%	14
I have never experienced this	70.6%	36

18. Have many years' experience do you have in Recruitment in total?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year	2.0%	1
1 to 2 years	3.9%	2
2 to 4 years	13.7%	7
4 to 6 years	21.6%	11
More than 6 years	58.8%	30

19. Do you work for a:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Recruitment Agency or as an Internal Recruiter	76.5%	39
	23.5%	12

20. Do you specialise in a certain industry:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
IT	29.4%	15
FMCG/Retail	2.0%	1
Finance	5.9%	3
Sales & Marketing	3.9%	2
Operations/Supply Chain	0.0%	0
Generalist	37.3%	19
Other (please specify)	21.6%	11

21. Which South African region are you based in:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Gauteng	78.4%	40
North West	0.0%	0
Mpumalanga	0.0%	0
Eastern Cape	5.9%	3
Western Cape	9.8%	5
Northern Cape	0.0%	0
KwaZulu Natal	5.9%	3
Free State	0.0%	0

22. Do you see yourself as a

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
'Career Recruiter' or	74.5%	38
is this just a role that you are doing until something more in line with your career goals materialises?	7.8%	4
Other (please specify)	17.6%	9