Self-branding or employer branding? The impact of employees' social media posts on employer brand perceptions and talent acquisition

Lorena Blasco-Arcas
ESCP Business School
Almudena Cañibano
ESCP Business School
Hsin-Hsuan Lee
ESCP Business School

Paper from the 51st Annual EMAC Conference, Budapest, May 24-27, 2022

Self-branding or employer branding? The impact of employees' social media posts on employer brand perceptions and talent acquisition

Abstract

Social media have dramatically changed how job-seekers gather information about potential employers. The organization no longer controls such information because numerous messages about the employer brand stem from employees who post about their professional lives. At the same time, employees also post to build their own professional brand. Yet, we have very little systematic understanding of the types of messages posted by employees and their influence on employer branding outcomes. First, using text-mining and topic modelling techniques, this paper develops an empirical typology of employee messages in social media, looking at content (instrumental, symbolic or informational) and language features (employer branding, employee branding, professional self-branding). Second, through two complementary experiments, the paper shows that employee messages focusing on instrumental attributes (e.g. working conditions) and messages signaling employee organizational identification (i.e. with language features such as the pronoun 'we') are more likely to foster talent attraction and positive employer brand evaluations.

Keywords: *employer branding; self-branding; social media*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media