

# Improving Job Advertisement Attractiveness and Best Practices for Social Media Recruitment

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## **Improving Job Advertisement Attractiveness and Best Practices for Social Media Recruitment**

Social media is reshaping recruitment with unprecedented efficiency, yet limited research leaves recruiters relying on intuition. This study examines the impact of various job advertisement dimensions on job seekers' attitudes and application intentions, offering actionable insights for optimizing social media recruitment (SMR). Analyzing 7,692 Facebook posts from a leading Macau-based recruitment service (June 2022–May 2023) through Generalized Linear Models in R, the study reveals that organizational familiarity and advertisement interaction significantly influence job seekers, while factors like salary and company culture show minimal effect. Findings suggest that traditional electronic advertising designs often fail to engage candidates. This research provides clear guidelines for crafting effective social media job advertisements, offering practical insights for organizations, HR managers, recruitment agencies, and consultants. It also advances understanding of testing advertisement effectiveness and job seekers' perspectives on ads, jobs, and organizations, contributing to improved SMR strategies.

**Keywords:** *Social media recruitment, job advertisement effectiveness, job seeker behavior*

**Track:** *Advertising*

## **1. Social Media for Recruitment**

Social media (SM) has become an indispensable tool in modern life, playing critical roles in communication, business, entertainment, information sharing, and politics. Platforms like Facebook are leveraged by businesses for cost-effective marketing and customer engagement, while Instagram and YouTube have redefined entertainment and education through influencers and user-generated content. Based on Statista, for 2023, internet users spent an average of 151 minutes daily on social media, reflecting its growing influence.

Research underscores social media's advantages over traditional marketing strategies, particularly as a platform for word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, which generates long-term impacts on consumer behavior and company performance (Trusov et al., 2008; Yu et al., 2013). Recognizing these benefits, many organizations now use social media for recruitment due to its cost efficiency, broad reach, and real-time interaction capabilities (Muduli and Trivedi, 2020). Platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn are increasingly popular for talent acquisition, as employer perception plays a critical role in attracting candidates (Highhouse et al., 1999). Recruitment messaging that captures attention has also been shown to influence application behavior (Barber & Roehling, 1993).

Despite this, limited research exists on crafting effective social media job posts. Organizations often replicate traditional offline advertising strategies online, failing to optimize for the unique interactive features of social platforms. This results in missed opportunities to fully engage potential candidates and drive quality applications. More research is needed to identify the critical elements of effective social media job advertisements to enhance their impact on recruitment outcomes.

### *1.1 Research Question*

- How can effective social media job posts be constructed to maximize click-through rates?
- What elements are unnecessary for social media recruitment?

### *1.2 Research Objectives*

1. To examine the importance of different elements in social media job posts and provide evidence-based guidance for their construction.

2. To improve the design and management of social media recruitment efforts, enhancing employer branding.
3. To offer actionable insights to companies, HR teams, staffing agencies, consultants, and SMEs for creating job ads that attract diverse applicants.

## **2. Employer Branding through Job Advertisement**

Talent is a key driver of organizational success, yet many companies struggle to establish an employer brand that attracts the right candidates (Edwards, 2010). While social media platforms enhance recruitment efficiency and cost-effectiveness, organizations often fail to leverage their full potential due to poorly designed advertisements or insufficient attention to branding (Reis & Braga, 2016; Sisodia & Chowdhary, 2012). This highlights the need for more precise strategies in social media recruitment (SMR) to create impactful, engaging job advertisements.

Price (1996) proposed viewing employees as “employment consumers,” emphasizing mutual choice between employers and employees. However, research has predominantly focused on recruiters' perspectives (Breugh, 2013), with job seekers' viewpoints receiving limited attention. Despite SMR's growing prominence, recruiters often rely on anecdotal feedback, hindering its effectiveness. Current studies highlight the positive influence of job advertisements and employer attractiveness on job seekers' attitudes and application intentions (Roberson et al., 2005; Gomes & Neves, 2011). However, little research examines the specific content and design of advertisements, despite their critical role as the first interaction between job seekers and organizations (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Lee et al., 2012).

The instrumental-symbolic framework (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003) provides a theoretical lens for understanding how job advertisements influence candidates. It distinguishes instrumental attributes, such as salary and benefits, from symbolic attributes, like prestige and innovation (Van Hove et al., 2012). These dimensions interact to shape job seekers' perceptions and decisions. While this framework has been studied in Western, individualistic cultures (Van Hove & Saks, 2010), its application to non-Western contexts and SMR remains underexplored.

Organizational familiarity further strengthens the effectiveness of job advertisements by leveraging a job seeker's awareness of a company. Familiarity enhances perceptions of

employer attractiveness and increases application likelihood (Cable & Turban, 2001; Turban & Cable, 2003). Employer branding elements, such as logos and mission statements, reinforce positive perceptions and improve candidate engagement (Martinez, 2000; Cable & Judge, 1996).

The content and design of job advertisements significantly shape candidate behavior. Clear descriptions of responsibilities and qualifications help candidates understand roles, while competitive salaries and benefits attract talent (Milkovich et al., 2002). Visual elements, such as testimonials or appealing designs, further enhance engagement (Certo et al., 2001; Ryan & Tippins, 2004). Emphasizing organizational culture fosters alignment with candidates' values, contributing to job satisfaction and retention (Schein & Schein, 2017; Iqbal et al., 2017).

Job advertisements are a critical tool for shaping perceptions of organizational attractiveness. Integrating instrumental and symbolic dimensions with effective branding and visual elements can significantly enhance SMR outcomes. This study addresses these gaps by investigating how advertisement elements and organizational familiarity influence job seekers' perceptions and application intentions.

### **3. Methodology**

This study utilized data from *Jobs Call Me Company Limited* (jobscall.me), a leading local recruitment service specializing in online job advertisements across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WeChat. The company serves clients from diverse industries, including tourism, healthcare, real estate, and technology, among others. As of May 2023, Jobscall.me led the Macau job recruitment market with a 43.7% pageview share, according to SimilarWeb, making its dataset robust and representative.

A total of 7,692 Facebook posts from June 2022 to May 2023 were collected, including recruitment ads, industry updates, and engagement posts. Posts unrelated to recruitment were filtered out, yielding 6,358 samples. To ensure feasibility, a random sampling approach selected 1,200 posts (100 per month), which, after further screening, resulted in 1,137 valid data points. Independent variables were defined based on the instrumental-symbolic framework (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003) and included job features, salary, benefits, organizational culture, and familiarity, along with engagement metrics like clicks and reach.

Data analysis was conducted using **R** for its statistical and visualization capabilities. Key packages included *ggplot2* for visualization, *caret* for model training, and *dplyr* for data manipulation. Outliers were identified and removed using the interquartile range (IQR) method, improving data distribution. Skewness decreased from 1.88 to 0.91, and kurtosis dropped from 4.88 to 0.23, confirming enhanced data symmetry.

The dependent variable, click-through rate (CTR), was calculated as the ratio of clicks to impressions, serving as a key metric for ad effectiveness. Due to the non-linear relationships and right-skewed distribution of data, Generalized Linear Models (GLMs) were employed instead of linear regression. GLMs account for skewed distributions and provide flexibility in modeling relationships that are not strictly linear.

The model incorporated independent variables such as job features, salary, benefits, organizational culture, and visual elements, along with industry and language of the post. Variable selection was performed using backward elimination and forward selection, optimizing model fit based on Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) scores. These methods identified the most significant predictors for CTR while minimizing overfitting. Diagnostic tests ensured the validity and reliability of the final model, supporting its use for interpreting relationships between variables and optimizing social media recruitment strategies.

#### **4. Decoding Social Media Recruitment**

The analysis revealed no significant multicollinearity issues, as verified by both the correlation matrix and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) methods. All VIF values were below 5, with the highest at 3.78, indicating that the variables contribute unique information to the model. Moderate correlations were observed, such as a negative relationship between "logo" and click-through rate (CTR) and a positive relationship between "interaction" and CTR, suggesting their potential importance.

The initial Generalized Linear Model (GLM) showed good fit, with residuals clustering near zero and minimal skewness and kurtosis after data cleansing. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) for the model was -3541.6. Adding the "admin" variable improved model fit, reducing AIC further and confirming its relevance.

Variable selection through backward elimination and forward selection identified key predictors. Backward elimination refined the model to 18 predictors, achieving an AIC of -

3554.83. Forward selection, however, outperformed this with an AIC of -5091.04, retaining variables like "logo," "feature," "familiarity," and "interaction." Recursive Feature Elimination (RFE) highlighted "logo," "feature," and "familiarity" as top predictors, aligning with forward selection results. The final model incorporated these significant predictors while balancing accuracy and complexity.

Key results showed that "logo" had a negative effect on CTR, suggesting that its inclusion in job ads may detract from engagement. Conversely, "familiarity" positively influenced CTR, emphasizing the value of employer recognition. "Feature" details also negatively affected CTR, indicating that overly detailed job descriptions might reduce curiosity. Positive influences were found for "interaction" and Chinese-language ads, while visual elements like "photo" and "portrayal" had negative impacts. Variables such as "salary" and "culture" were not statistically significant.

Diagnostic tests confirmed the model's assumptions. Residuals showed homoscedasticity, normality, and low leverage for most data points, with few outliers observed. Overall, the model effectively captured the relationships between predictors and CTR, providing actionable insights into optimizing social media recruitment advertisements.

## **5. Understanding Job Seeker Behavior**

This study underscores the growing importance of social media recruitment (SMR) and addresses a critical gap in understanding the content of job advertisements. While prior research established links between organizational attractiveness, job ads, and job-seeker behavior, this study delves into the factors influencing click-through rates (CTR). Traditional job advertisements, often detailed and standardized, fail to effectively engage candidates. Instead, creative, authentic, and value-aligned messages, such as storytelling that reflects company culture, resonate more with job seekers. Although salary remains a key factor for retention, it is unlikely to attract significant attention unless highly competitive. Organizational familiarity and strong employer branding emerged as pivotal factors, fostering trust and interest among potential candidates.

The findings emphasize the need for creativity and strategic presentation in recruitment advertising. Highlighting unique strengths, such as innovative projects or prestigious partnerships, offers greater appeal than exhaustive job details. Visual elements, while widespread, should be used thoughtfully to avoid perpetuating biases or misrepresenting

company culture. By prioritizing authenticity and leveraging employer branding, organizations can craft compelling job ads that attract a broader and more diverse pool of candidates.

However, the study's scope is limited to data from a single recruitment company in Macau, restricting generalizability. The sample size of 1,137 cleaned data points also limits statistical power. Moreover, cultural and market-specific factors, such as differences in compensation preferences between Asian and Western contexts, may impact the model's predictive accuracy. The feature selection relied on established frameworks (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003), yet confounding variables or omitted predictors may have influenced results. As the model was designed for recruitment-specific contexts, its applicability to broader social media analytics remains limited.

Future research should expand datasets across diverse industries and geographic regions to improve generalizability and statistical power. Exploring cultural variations in job-seeker preferences could validate the model's cross-cultural relevance. Additional variables, such as industry-specific factors and demographic data, may further refine predictive accuracy. A hybrid approach, integrating both recruiter and job-seeker perspectives, could provide deeper insights into recruitment strategies.

This study offers actionable insights into optimizing social media recruitment. By emphasizing creativity, authenticity, and unique organizational attributes, organizations can enhance employer branding and craft job advertisements that engage a wider audience. The findings serve as a foundation for evaluating recruitment ad effectiveness and advancing recruitment analytics and employer branding strategies.

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