

# Digital communication of companies during the selection process

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**Abstract:** Digitization affects various areas and finds practical application all over the world. Companies are not idle and use digitization just like individuals. Those individuals who are looking for employment in the labour market. Companies have assimilated and use digitization when looking for new employees. This scientific article describes what forms of digital means they use.

**Keywords:** human resource marketing, personnel management, human resources, digital marketing

**JEL Classification:** M12, M31, M51

## 1 Introduction

The process of selecting an employee is increasingly complex and competitive in the current era of digitization. Therefore, it is necessary for companies to assimilate and use digitization also during selection process. Companies can use a wide variety of social networks and other online channels, and recently also publicly accessible artificial intelligence. Bejtkovský (2020) focused on the use of social networks in relation to the size of the company. Surprisingly, his conclusions did not find a statistically significant connection between the size of companies and the amount of use of social networks in the selection of employees. But he also came to the idea that the company with more employees, the more it uses video recordings to share information about a potential employer.

Businesses use digital channels in the short and long term. In the short term, to spread information about a specific filled position and in the long term, to share and promote your company culture, love brand, for which job seekers will be motivated to work. Viot & Benraiss-Noailles (2019) conclude that the ideal combination of brand influence on potential employees is the benevolence of the employer and well-being at work. Pulyaeva & et al. (2018) summarizes the practical use of digital communication channels in practice. They mention accounting, records of working hours, analyzes optimizing managerial decisions. It defines the software used in companies and the benefits of using them. Floricic (2018) is focused on using digital communication channels in tourism and personalised email marketing. The use of digital communication channels increases the effectiveness of the recruitment process. This claim has already been confirmed by Bondarenko, Voronov & et al. (2020), who surveyed employees (managers or recruiters) of 250 companies, and where 67 % evaluated "result of HR marketing function is positive dynamics". The theme of HR (human resources) marketing has long been of interest to many authors (e.g. Wimmers, 2009; Collins, & Payne, 1991; Glassman, & McAfee, 1992; Peterson, 1993; Ambler, h & Barrow, 1996; Żarnik-Żuławska, 2012; Gladka, & Fedorova, 2019). They define HR marketing as the application of marketing principles in the field of HR management. Ambler and Barrow (1996) confirm the applicability of the marketing concept to the employment situation in their article. Martin (2006, 2009) points out: while the issue of brand and reputation of companies has long been intensively addressed in marketing activities in target markets, in the field of HR marketing, the companies has not received significant attention of those information and their HR managers or academic authors of scientific articles. When creating the brand of the employer and try to attract quality candidates, companies must carefully consider the communication channels used and increasingly consider the importance of digital communication channels (Kaiser, 2012). Digitization or Industry 4.0 bring new challenges across the entire system of corporate governance and in the field of HR management and marketing (Karas & Novotná Březnovská, 2020). The main goal of this article is to determine the relationship between the size of the company and the use of digital communication tools in the process of selecting a new employee.

## 2 Methods

There were 30 companies selected for the research. For comparability, all companies are based and operate in the Czech Republic (CR). The companies were divided by size into 10 small companies with up to 50 employees, 10 medium-sized companies with 50-499 employees and 10 large companies with over 500 employees. For these companies, the area in which they do business was monitored. The categorization according to the size and subject of business of the companies was based on the publicly available database of the Administrative Register of Economic Entities (ARES) according to the current authorities of the Ministry of Finance of the CR (2023). The parameter determining the group of

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the subject of business will be based on the Classification of Economic Activities CZ-NACE (2018), or from data on the subject of business listed in the Commercial Register (Justice.cz, 2023).

Activity on selected digital channels was monitored for individual companies. Social networks were selected: LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. Websites with a career section and job portals were also examined. On the LinkedIn social network, it was monitored whether the company even had a profile; how many followers the company's profile has; activity was measured by the number of posts for the previous year and the number of active job advertisements. On Facebook, the existence of the profile, the number of followers and whether the company uses its profile to recruit new employees were investigated. On the social network Instagram, the same parameters were examined, and in addition, data on the number of posts was collected. The actual number of shared advertisements with a job offer was determined on the career pages on the company's website. The two largest job portals were selected - Jobs.cz and Prace.cz. The number of advertisements with job offers was monitored here. Furthermore, it was investigated whether companies use at least one other job portal.

All the data used for the research was therefore freely available on the Internet. Research questions were established prior to data processing:

**RQ<sub>1</sub>** – Do companies with more employees look for more new employees than small companies?

If the answer to the question is yes, it is necessary to create a comparable parameter that takes into account the size of the company. This indicator will be the ratio between the number of employees and the number of advertisements of individual companies. The indicator was named *RQI index*.

**RQ<sub>2</sub>** – Do companies looking for a higher percentage of employees (with a higher *RQI index*) used social networks, career sites and job portals more intensively on a comparable scale?

The activity intensity indicator on digital channels will be represented by the number of followers and posts on social networks and the number of job advertisements on other digital channels. It can be assumed that the higher the *RQI index*, the higher the activity on digital communication channels should be.

**RQ<sub>3</sub>** – Is there any connection between the subject of business and the choice of digital channel?

The indicator is created by dividing companies according to the subject of business and the existence of individual social networks.

**RQ<sub>4</sub>** – Is there any connection between the location of the company headquarters and the intensity of the use of social networks in HR marketing?

The indicator will be created by dividing companies by location and comparing the number of followers and posts.

**RQ<sub>5</sub>** – Is LinkedIn social network the most common digital communication channel for companies?

This parameter will present the number of followers of the company profile on individual social networks.

**RQ<sub>6</sub>** – Are career sites used only by large companies?

This parameter will compare the number of employees of individual companies and the existence of career pages.

**RQ<sub>7</sub>** – Are paid job portals used less often than career sites?

This parameter will be represented by comparing the number of advertisements on career sites and job portals.

**RQ<sub>8</sub>** – Is the largest job portal Jobs.cz used more than the job portal prace.cz?

This parameter will be represented by comparing the number of company advertisements from Jobs.cz and Prace.cz.

### 3 Research results

In general, it can be declared that 100 % of the selected companies own websites. Apart from one, they also have a Facebook profile, but only a third of them use it for HR marketing purposes. Facebook is the most used social network. Overall, 70% of the selected companies use Facebook the most. It is especially popular with large companies, where it ranked first in 90% of cases. In medium and small companies, it is used the most at 60%. In second place is Instagram. Most small businesses do not have a LinkedIn profile. For only one large company, LinkedIn is the main digital

communication channel. Medium-sized companies usually use LinkedIn, but it is the least followed social network. The results are clearly presented in Table 1.

**Table 1** – Use of digital communication channels

Digital communication channel	% existence	% usage for HR marketing	The most used social network
LinkedIn	67 %	100 %	3 %
Facebook	97 %	33 %	70 %
Instagram	90 %	23 %	27 %
Website	100 %	70 %	
Carries page	70 %	100 %	
Jobs.cz	50 %	100 %	
Práce.cz	53 %	100 %	
Other job portal	93 %	100 %	

Source: Own processing

### 3.1 $RQ_1$ – Do companies with more employees look for more new employees than small companies?

The answer is yes in 100 % cases. That is why the  $RQI$  index was created, which is the ratio of the number of positions currently being recruited to the number of company employees. This indicator will further be used for the comparability of individual companies when calculating  $RQ_2$ .

The indicator also has a telling value about the company. Higher numbers can infer higher turnover of employees or economic growth of the company. As a result, small companies are looking for a significantly higher percentage of new employees than large companies. It can also be stated that 3 out of 4 companies with the worst results are from the field of gastronomy.

### 3.2 $RQ_2$ – Do companies looking for a higher percentage of employees (with a higher $RQI$ index) used social networks, career sites and job portals more intensively on a comparable scale?

By a simple ratio of the  $RQI$  index to the number of followers, posts or job advertisements, indices indicating the intensity of use of digital channels of the selected companies were created. All these indices show the disadvantages of small companies. In general, it can be summarized that small companies do not use digital communication channels compared to what the absence of a missing employee is a thorn in their side.

To get an idea of this, the average of the individual indicators also speaks for itself. In Table No. 2, for clarity, the average of individual indicators of companies is divided by size.

**Table 2** - Average activity on digital communication channels in different size of companies

	Types of digital communication channels							
	NFLI	NPLI	NALI	NFFB	NFIG	NPIG	NAJ	NAP
Large enterprise	32904	122	18	823790	59505	1240	46	35
Mid-market enterprise	3629	12	0	95998	3338	4011	2	2
Small businesses	228	0	0	1596	428	90	0	1

Source: Own processing

NFLI = number of followers on LinkedIn

NPLI = number of posts in previous year on LinkedIn

NALI = number of job offer advertisements on LinkedIn

NFFB = number of followers on Facebook

NFIG = number of followers on Instagram

NPIG = number of posts on Instagram

### 3.3 RQ<sub>3</sub> – Is there any connection between the subject of business and the choice of digital channel?

A relationship can be observed between the number of social networks used and the subject of business. All online stores and portals have established and actively use all selected social networks. However, the data may be correlated with the location, all of these companies are from Prague. The opposite trend can be observed in the construction industry. All 3 construction companies from the selection show a lower use of social networks. Not one of the hospitality companies has established LinkedIn and they are all active on Facebook and Instagram in HR marketing.

The interpretation of the results may indicate that small companies use more offline channels, possible ignorance or mistrust in the online environment. In the short term, they may not even need digital communication channels because they can recruit from their personal networking network until it is exhausted.

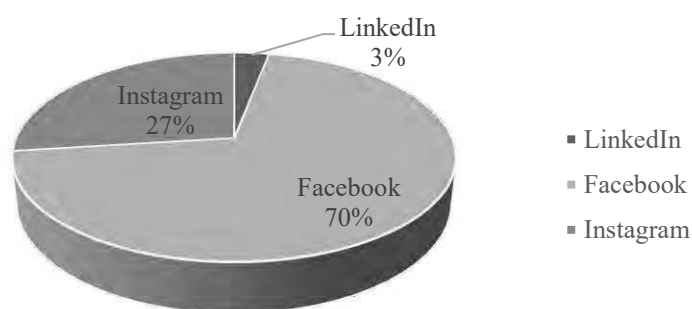
### 3.4 RQ<sub>4</sub> – Is there any connection between the location of the company headquarters and the intensity of the use of social networks in HR marketing?

The answer on RQ<sub>4</sub> is yes. All Prague companies have established profiles on all selected social networks and, apart from 2 exceptions on LinkedIn, they are significantly more active in adding posts to social networks.

### 3.6 RQ<sub>5</sub> – Is LinkedIn social network the most common digital communication channel for companies?

The answer on RQ<sub>5</sub> is no. Despite the fact that LinkedIn is a work social network specialized in meeting employees with employers, the most used social network is Facebook.

**Figure 1** – The most used social media in HR marketing



Source: Own processing

### 3.7 RQ<sub>6</sub> – Are career sites used only by large companies?

The answer on RQ<sub>6</sub> is no. A rather surprising 70 % of companies have career pages on their website that they use for recruitment. These are not only large companies, but practically all medium-sized companies as well.

### 3.8 RQ<sub>7</sub> – Are paid job portals used less often than career sites?

This statement is not entirely confirmed. Companies use the job portal prace.cz 13 % more than their career pages, and the job portal jobs.cz is used more often by 7 % of companies.

### 3.9 RQ<sub>8</sub> – Is the largest job portal Jobs.cz used more than the job portal prace.cz?

The answer on RQ<sub>8</sub> is no. This statement applies to only 23 % of companies. The rest of the companies use the job portal prace.cz more than the job portal jobs.cz.

## 4 Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be stated that the size of the company plays a significant role in the intensity of use of digital communication tools. Large companies use digital online channels more intensively. And this despite the fact that for small companies, the absence of one person in the company can be a ruinous circumstance.

It can be assumed that it is easier for smaller companies to use offline channels. In the case of small companies, it will probably be friends of friends. This personal network of friends is quite narrow. In the digital world, the job market can be much broader than networking. Therefore, small companies should not underestimate online communication channels and should not forget to build their digital world not only to expand their own products, but also when looking for potential employees.

The prices for sharing on selected job portals are high, increasing the total cost of recruiting a new employee. In general, it is recommended not to use the services of job portals unless it is necessary. That is why the intensity of use of job portals is quite surprising. The good news, however, is the high proportion of the existence of career pages of companies whose management is de facto free of charge.

### Acknowledgement

The article has been prepared with support of the project of the Grant Agency of the University of South Bohemia No. 129/2022/S.

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