

# Social Networking Websites Gain in Popularity as an Employer Recruiting Tool

SAN DIEGO, April 11, 2011 — More than half of human resource professionals (56 percent) use social networking websites to source potential job candidates, a significant increase from 2008 (34 percent), according to a new poll from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

The poll – SHRM Research Spotlight: Social Networking Websites and Staffing, which was released at SHRM’s 2011 Talent and Staffing Management Conference in San Diego – found that, not only are more employers using social networking websites to find new employees, organizations not using the sites currently are more open to utilizing them in the future. One-fifth of organizations (20 percent) do not use social networking sites, but plan to use them in the future. Only 21 percent stated that they currently do not use social networking sites and have no plans to do so in the future, down from 45 percent in 2008.

“Employers are increasingly using social networking sites to engage passive job seekers – those who aren’t really actively seeking new jobs, but might change for the right opportunity,” said Mark J. Schmit, Ph.D., SPHR, director of research at SHRM. “These sites can be valuable tools for organizations to find prospective employees with the specific skill sets and experience that they might not necessarily find through more traditional recruiting methods. The new SHRM poll found that organizations using social networking sites to recruit job applicants are using the sites most in the recruitment of employees for non-managerial salaried positions and managerial-level jobs, like directors and managers.”

The top reasons employers use social networking websites to identify applicants are:

- To source passive job candidates who might not otherwise apply for open jobs or be contacted by the organizations’ recruiters (84 percent);
- To use a less expensive method than other ways of recruiting job candidates (67 percent); and
- To increase employer brand and recognition (60 percent).

Most organizations using social networking websites to source job applicants use LinkedIn (95 percent). Other sites are not used as frequently, such as Facebook (58 percent), Twitter (42 percent) and professional or association social networking sites (23 percent).

When using social networking sites to identify candidates, the majority of HR professionals fill non-managerial salaried jobs (82 percent) and management-level positions, such as director- and manager-level jobs, (77 percent). Fewer organizations fill executive and upper management (39 percent) and non-managerial hourly positions (36 percent).

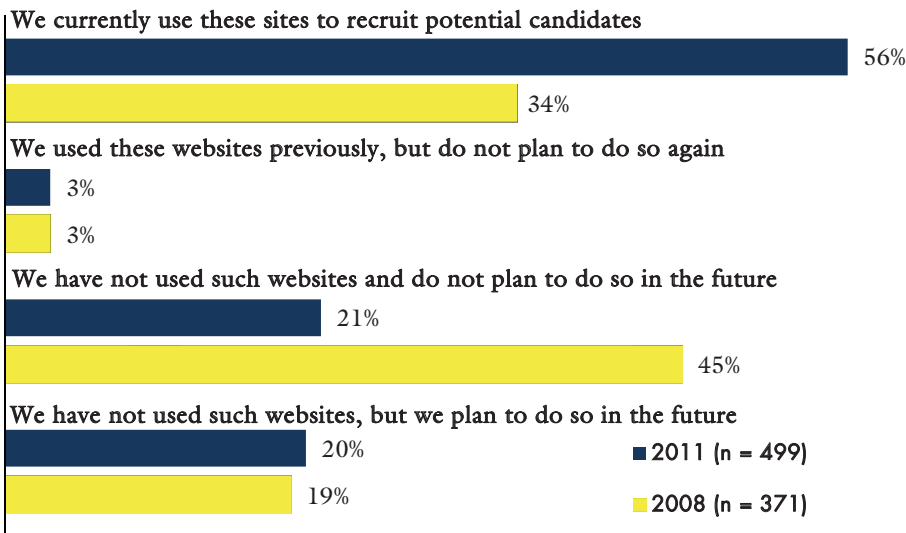
HR professionals report social networking websites are most efficient in recruiting managerial-level employees, such as directors and managers (58 percent); non-managerial salaried employees (58 percent); and executive and upper management (52 percent) positions. Forty-one percent of HR professionals find the sites to be effective for identifying employees for non-managerial hourly jobs.

For more information, visit the research section of SHRM.org at <http://www.shrm.org/Research/SurveyFindings/Pages/default.aspx>. Follow SHRM Research on Twitter @SHRM\_Research.

# SHRM Research Spotlight: Social Networking Websites and Staffing

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## Use of Social Networking Websites to Recruit Potential Job Candidates in 2011 vs. 2008



## What Is Social Media?

- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Any type of virtual interpersonal communication
- Media with social interaction
- Various forms of user-generated content and the collection of websites and applications that enable persons to interact online
- Transforms people from content consumers to content producers

## Key Findings

- More than one-half (56%) of the organizations currently use social networking websites when recruiting potential job candidates. This is a significant increase since 2008, when a little over one-third (34%) of organizations were using these sites as a recruiting tool.
- Among organizations that used social networking sites for recruiting, the most utilized social networking website in 2011 was LinkedIn (95%). This was followed by Facebook (58%) and Twitter (42%).
- The percentage of respondents who believe that social networking websites are efficient for recruiting nonmanagement, management and executive-level employees has increased significantly since 2008.

Social networking websites allow an employer the opportunity to gather initial information about a job candidate before a single word has been exchanged.

## Social Networking Websites Used Most Often by Organizations for Recruitment in 2011

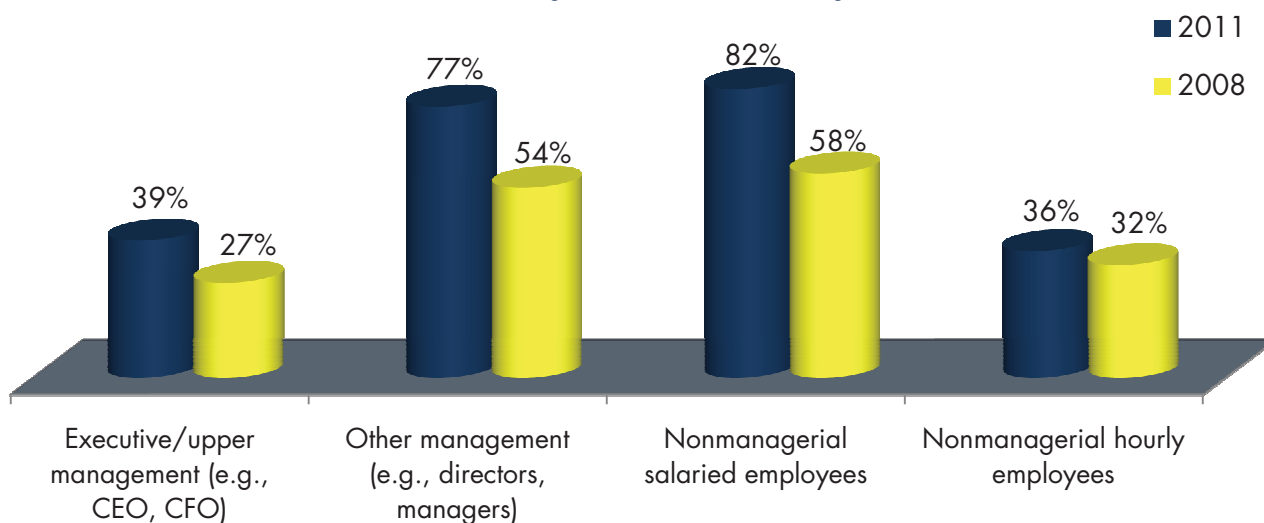
	(n = 277)
LinkedIn	95%
Facebook	58%
Twitter	42%
Professional or association social networking site other than SHRM Connect	23%
SHRM Connect	6%
MySpace	3%
Foursquare	1%
Second Life	1%
Other	6%

Note: Excludes respondents who indicated their organizations did not use social networking websites to recruit potential job candidates.

Top Reasons Organizations Are Using Social Networking Websites for Staffing in 2011 Compared With 2008	2011 (n = 277)	2008 (n = 125)
To recruit passive job candidates who might not otherwise apply or be contacted by the organization	84%	69%
Less expensive than other methods of recruiting job candidates	67%	-
To increase employer brand and recognition	60%	35%
To target a specific job level to recruit or contact (e.g., entry-level, managers, executives, etc.)	54%	40%
Can target job candidates with a very specific set of skills	52%	38%

Note: Excludes respondents who indicated their organizations did not use social networking websites to recruit potential job candidates.

### Job Levels Organizations Are Filling When Using Social Networking Websites



Note: Excludes respondents who indicated their organizations did not use social networking websites to recruit potential job candidates.

### Percentage of HR Professionals Who Believe Social Networking Websites Are an Efficient Way to Recruit Candidates at Multiple Job Levels

	2011 (n = 277)	2008 (n = 125)
Executive/upper management (e.g., CEO, CFO)	52%	22%
Other management (e.g., directors, managers)	58%	13%
Nonmanagerial salaried employees	58%	15%
Nonmanagerial hourly employee	41%	22%

Note: The data shown combine the responses "very efficient" and "somewhat efficient" as asked in the survey. Excludes respondents who indicated their organizations did not use social networking websites to recruit potential job candidates.

**Methodology** | A sample of HR professionals was randomly selected from SHRM's membership database, which included approximately 250,000 individual members at the time the poll was conducted. The sample was composed of members with the job function of recruiting/staffing. For this analysis, 541 responses were used, yielding a response rate of 18%. The margin of error for this poll is +/- 4%.

Note: 2008 data are taken from *SHRM Staffing Research: Online Technologies and Their Impact on Recruitment Strategies* (2008, July–September).