

THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF QUALIFIED EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT THROUGH FUNNEL SYSTEMS IN SOCIAL MEDIA LIKE INSTAGRAM: A CASE STUDY ON SUBOPTIMAL SUCCESS

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Abstract: This case study explores qualified employee recruitment challenges and opportunities. This happens through funnel systems on Instagram with a focus on a German construction company. Despite strategic investments, the success is below par. The approach involves recruitment advertisements and a social media funnel. Those funnel systems have phases like awareness, action, interest, and match. The results show a 2.82% conversion rate. These emphasize the importance of authentic qualification claims. Social media funnels offer extensive reach. There are challenges such as choosing the right criteria and using valid assessments. The study recommends a continuous learning process for companies to improve strategies, combining flexibility, human judgment, and adaptation to market conditions.

Keywords: recruitment methods, social media, funnel, digital recruitment strategies, recruitment funnel.

Introduction

In today's business landscape, technology changes quickly and the competition for skilled professionals and experts increases. Companies face the task of finding new recruitment methods to attract and hold qualified employees. Social media is a gifted platform to find qualified employees [1]. The use of funnel systems to involve qualified employees through the recruitment company process has lately expanded¹. This development generates suboptimal success, as the present-day case study proves.

In the last 20 years, the labor market situation in Germany has experienced meaningful changes. Before, companies have the chance to choose their employees freely from a pool of applicants. But since 2005, there has been a change in this trend. Fewer people are unemployed [2]. Today, employees can select the best and most attractive company from several potential options [3].

This shift is primarily driven by demographic changes resulting in a lack of qualified professionals. According to the Federal Statistical Office, there is expected to be a strong decrease in the workforce projected for 2035. This estimate ranges from 45.8 to 47.4 million, compared to 51.8 million in 2018². Further, there are 40 to 46 million workers declined by 2060. The Federal Employment Agency expects a decrease of 6.5 million people by the year

2025³. These statistics highlight that qualified employees will become more valuable for companies.

Many organizations focus their efforts on digital recruitment strategies. Especially on social media. It enhances their presence. Further, it engages potential candidates [4]. Today's audiences want to understand what a company is like. Moreover, what they can get from working there, and knowing what the company stands for. Employer attractiveness aims to appeal to external candidates [5]. Traditional “one-size-fits-all” communication aimed at the masses leads to propagation losses [6]. Simply showing employer benefits on social media is not adequate. The company needs to appoint in dialogue with candidates. Moreover, it is important to have an attractive employer online [5]. A “recruiting funnel” assists as a framework for the entire recruitment process. It generates a constant pool of applicants. Its objects include gathering talent data to grow networks. Further, assisting more successful information procurement, and engaging with qualified individuals¹.

This case study focuses on a mid-sized German construction company looking to recruit and reach out to qualified employees. This is achieved through funnel systems on social media platforms like Instagram. The company makes careful and strategic investments in digital recruitment technology. The company faced an unexpected challenge: it failed to generate reliable qualified workers. This problem shows how difficult it is to hire through social media funnels. It requires an in-depth analysis of the main factors conducive to this failure. This academic impact offers a complete examination of different aspects of this case study. The study case focuses on the applied funnel strategies and the challenge of targeting specific audiences. The conclusion can inform future recruitment initiatives. The analysis offers significant insights and perspectives on the opportunities and challenges of recruiting qualified employees through funnel systems on social media like Instagram.

Literature Overview

This case study examines the opportunities and challenges in qualified worker recruitment through a funnel system on social media platforms like Instagram. It is the impact of a dynamic modern recruitment strategy on social media. Despite the company's online recruitment investment, it exposes a suboptimal success. This can be shown by an analysis of important factors for running an online social media recruitment campaign. The use of funnel recruitment strategies, with awareness, interest, match, and action phases⁴, highlights a structured method for reaching quantitative and qualitative candidates. Moreover, it underscores the huge impact of authentic qualification claims of candidates. There are a lot of challenges given by just running a social media recruitment campaign. Those challenges can be found in criteria selection

and valuation validity. Companies must learn how to improve their departments. Constant learning about new strategies, flexibility, human judgment, and adapting new changing market are conditions that need to be contained. The main key factor for success is finding a good adaption and continuous learning.

Research methodology

The methodology is employed to create an online recruitment advertisement (short: ad) on the social media platform Instagram for finding qualified employees. This recruitment ad is a social media funnel campaign. The recruitment process commences with a team meeting at the company, which includes two responsible individuals from the human resources department. In this meeting, the candidates' questions for the social media funnel are made. The funnel design is personalized and only created for the company's advertisement. The ad runs for two weeks as a recruitment campaign. After two weeks, a systematic evaluation and a detailed analysis are assumed. The main objective is to gather specific designed personal data information from qualified employees. The emphasis is on starting with a primary telephone job interview.

After the telephone interview, the process continues with an in-person job interview at the company's headquarters. The aim is a hiring decision. The method is designed to find through a structured selection recruitment process a qualified talent. The scientific structure, execution, and outcomes of the funnel are presented in the main part. The structure of this digital recruitment funnel is based on a classic human resource- funnel. This human resource – funnel includes the awareness, interest, match, and action”- phase⁴.

During the “awareness” phase, engaging content is created to reach the attention of potential candidates on the social media platform Instagram. The main target audience identified is individuals with a qualified education in masonry. In designing the funnel, the original focus is on attracting target group applicants. The company aims to reach this target group by highlighting the outstanding benefits of the company. The funnel starts with: “You are a trained mason and are interested in:” After the start, the benefits are presented. These benefits include a good salary, permanent employment, flexible working hours, educational opportunities, a company pension scheme, health care, team events, career prospects, inclusive paid company breakfast in the morning, and a guaranteed switching bonus of 5.000,00 euros. After presenting the benefits, a multiple-choice decision question (1) is given: “Do you already have completed education as a mason?”. Applicants could answer with (1A) “Yes” or (1B) “No”. If the candidate answers with (1A) “Yes”, the potential applicant is directed to the next page of the funnel. If the candidate responds with (1B) “No”, the applicant is forwarded to another page. This next page is the end of

this application process. At the bottom of the page is a hyperlink where other job offers are and a specially made image film. This film is made specifically for this campaign. Responding with (1A) “Yes” directs the potential applicant to the next funnel page. The next funnel page starts with a company image video.

In the “interest” phase, an image film serves as creative content about the company. It offers a full company overview akin to an online advertisement. This content is designed to capture the attention of qualified employees. Below the image video, there is a list titled “What you bring”. The list “What you bring” highlights the job qualifications that are required for the application process. These qualifications include a completed education in masonry, an interest for craftsmanship as a professional activity and the ability to work in a team. As a benefit, but not a requirement, a class B German driver's license is considered advantageous for the application. After inspecting the list, the applicant can scroll down further.

This leads to the “Match” phase. In this phase the candidate sees an application form and must answer. Interested candidates can leave their contact information or delegate to a direct application. It starts with the following sentence: “Apply now without a cover letter using the express application. Apply and become part of our team in Hagen!” Applicants must complete the contact form. The contact form requests detailed personal candidates information such as first name, last name, email, phone number, specifying the completed profession, professional experience, and preferred time when the company can reach the candidate. The contact form begins with the sentence: “Great, you have the best qualifications. So, we can contact you, let us know how we can reach you”. After completing, an automated email is sent to applicants to distribute a follow-up message or email. This follow-up message or email are added with information and more interaction possibilities. This message is meant to thank applicants for their application, provide more information about the application process and give future contact details.

With a submitted application, the company starts the “Action” phase. First, it begins with a telephone interview. The HR- Department speaks with individual applicants to conduct a personal interview and assess if they are potential candidates. If this conversation is successful, applicants are invited to a personal face-to-face job interview in the headquarters. This may lead to a hiring decision. After this process, feedback is given from the HR to evaluate the funnel. The evaluation analyzes the conversion rate of actual applicants. This case study aims to organize the company's steps in managing potential candidates through the recruitment process. The aim is to employ a qualified employee.

Results

The scientific outcome of the company’s recruitment campaign has been published on the social media platform Instagram with a funnel recruitment system. The campaign has received 17,683 views. The 17,683 ad views campaign has 499 direct clicks on the ad. This is a conversion rate of about 2.82%. In the “awareness phase”, the benefits are presented with a question for the qualification as a mason for the candidates. 310 out of 322 participants select the qualification as a mason with “yes”. Only 12 individuals answered “no”. 183 participants watch the image film in the “interest phase”. From these 183 participants, 145 individuals continue to the next funnel page and reach to the “match phase”. Those applicants fill out the application form, and at least 125 submit and send it to the company. The company starts the “action phase” and calls the applicants for a telephone interview invitation. The company reaches 105 applicants. At least 15 of the called applicants are invited for a personal job interview. All other applicants have a phone call, and it becomes apparent that 87 applicants do not have a completed mason education. Those applicants incorrectly present themselves as having one completed. Three applicants give false identities by using a fake name. Seven applicants do not show up for the scheduled personal job interview by the company without giving any short notice. Eight applicants receive a personal job interview at the company’s building and show up personally. The result of the social media funnel recruitment campaign is a single hiring. This hiring ends during the probation period.

Analysis of the case study

Funnel recruitment process on the social media platform Instagram, as of September 15, 2023.

Phase	Participants	Conversion Rate	Success
Instagram Call-to-Action	17.683		17.683 views through the social media campaign "Skilled Mason (m//d)"
Direct Funnel Click	499	499/17.683	Conversion Rate 2.82%
Awareness: Click on Selection - Completed Education	322	310/322	Perceived Qualification: 310; No Qualification: 12
Interest: Image Film and Qualification Overview	183	183/310	Viewed Image Film: 183
Match: Scroll Down and Application Form Filled Out	145	145/183	Completed Application Form: 145
Action: HR Process			The data is based on feedback from the HR department.
1. Initial Phone Interview	105	105/145	105 applicants were reached. All participants who could not be reached after the third call were no longer considered (HR feedback). Applicant Details: Unqualified applicants (no education despite declaration): 87; False Identity (Wrong Name): 3
2. In-Person Job Interview	15	1/15	Hiring during probation period: 1 // Applicant Details: No-show without cancellation: 8 (HR feedback)

Fig. 1. Results of the online recruitment advertisement

This data analysis demonstrates the rate in progression and conversion in the four awareness, interest, match, and action phase. Further, it shows the

importance of the validity of qualification claims in the process of the recruitment campaign.

Conclusions/ Discussions

The outcomes assess the opportunities and challenges of a qualified employee recruitment through funnel systems in social media like Instagram. A social media funnel recruitment campaign enables the extensive reach and visibility on social media platforms like Instagram. The campaign has received 17,683 views. This case study operates with funnel systems on social media platforms that allow targeting a wide-ranging audience, enhancing job advertisement visibility and good company presence.

This recruitment funnel system aids companies in finding the right qualified employees. To find the right employees, modern companies must face many challenges. They must consider a defining selection criterion within the funnel. If there is a wrong selection criterion, it can lead to suboptimal applicant selection success. Effective assessments are important to avoid overseeing qualified candidates with the company's needed attributes. Against all challenges, this study highlights the opportunities that are given by using a funnel recruitment system on social media platforms like Instagram. Very significant is the company's focus on customizing the approach. This approach includes explicit selection criteria, valid assessments, and continuing communication development with the potential candidates. This gives the company a guarantee of more qualitative recruitment efforts and this secures a long-term talent bonding for the future.

Notes

- ¹ **JobVite** (n.d.). The recruiting funnel deconstructed: Key benchmarks for the Recruiting Industry, pages 3. https://www.jobvite.com/wpcontent/uploads/2015/10/jobvite_the_recruiting_funnel.pdf (9 November 2023)
- ² **Statistischen Bundesamt Destatis** (2019). Bevölkerung im Wandel: Annahmung und Ergebnisse der 14. Koordinierten Bevölkerungsvorausberechnung. Pages 17-27. https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressekonferenzen/2019/Bevoelkerung/pressebro-schuere-bevoelkerung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (6 May 2024)
- ³ **Bundesagentur für Arbeit** (2011). Perspektive 2025: Fachkräfte für Deutschland. Page 6-8 https://www.forum-beratung.de/cms/upload/Wissenswertes/Politische_Initiativen/Perspektive_2025_Fachkrfte_fr_Dtl.pdf (6 May 2024)
- ⁴ **Lindner, D.** (2020). Aufbau eines digitalen HR-Funnels zur Gewinnung von Fachkräften. <https://agile-unternehmen.de/aufbau-eines-digitalen-hr-funnels-zur-gewinnung-von-fachkraeften/> (9 November 2023)

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