

# **Social Media Research Report**

**Summer 2009**

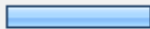




**725 Washington St  
Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 763-3774**


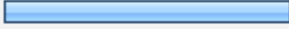
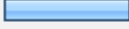
# Social Media Research Report

This survey was conducted by CompAnalysis in July 2009 to measure the impact social media are having on human resource departments. The 69 organizations reporting have given us an interesting snapshot of the current business use of social media. Overall, it seems that while there is a general lack of well-defined policies concerning employer/employee usage of social media sites, there is an increasing tendency among human resources departments—not just marketing departments—to begin using these sites. We also see concerns related to how social media will affect workplace relationships and productivity.

Just over half of the respondents are not yet using social media tools for business purposes, but 27.5% are, and another 15.9% are considering such use.

Does your organization's human resources department intentionally use any social media tools such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or similar websites for business purposes?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		27.5%	19
No		58.5%	39
Considering		15.9%	11
Please describe any other social media tools you use:			17
<i>answered question</i>			69
<i>skipped question</i>			0

In addition, most respondents do not have an organization-wide policy with respect to the use of social media, as shown below. Interestingly, 44.8% either have policies or are considering the implementation of such policies.

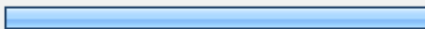
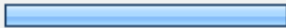


Does your organization have a policy with respect to the use of social media?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		20.9%	14
No		55.2%	37
Considering		23.9%	16
<i>answered question</i>			67
<i>skipped question</i>			2

Of the organizations already implementing policies concerning social media use, the primary focus is on guidelines concerning what content employees may post online about the organization itself or the employee’s job. Employee non-business use of social media sites is addressed in large part due to the new threat of cyber harassment and overall productivity loss.

*I believe that it [social media] affects our younger employees in how they build a sense of community within the organization; I think it will help retain these employees. Conversely, I think it alienates the older workers and they look down upon those who socialize online rather than the “real” way.*

*We have already had complaints of people being concerned with co-workers asking them to be friends on Facebook as many (at least the non Gen Y staff) want to keep their personal life separate from work.*

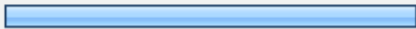


*I could see in some organizations with entry level employees the need for education around boundaries for work and personal life.*

What elements does the policy include?		Response Percent	Response Count
Employee non-business use of social media during work hours		81.8%	9
Clear guidelines with respect to content that employees may post online about the organization or their jobs		54.5%	6
Using social media content to acquire information about individuals for recruiting purposes		9.1%	1
Other HR functions		0.0%	0
Other		18.2%	2
if Other, please describe:			3
<b>answered question</b>			<b>11</b>
<b>skipped question</b>			<b>58</b>

Organizations do not report widespread training in the business use of social media for any types of employees. Only about 8% of the participating employers report having any training programs.

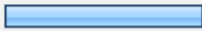
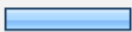
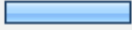
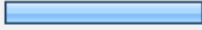
Does your organization train any of the following types of employees in the business use of social media?				
	Yes, have training program	Considering creating training program	No	Response Count
Senior management	7.9% (5)	7.9% (5)	84.1% (53)	63
Middle management	8.1% (5)	6.5% (4)	85.5% (53)	62
Staff	7.9% (5)	7.9% (5)	84.1% (53)	63
	<i>answered question</i>			64
	<i>skipped question</i>			5

Nearly 80% of the companies responding are already enforcing a policy designed to restrict employees' personal Internet use, which presumably includes social networks, at work. Many employers cite increased employee text messaging and personal email during work hours as a reason for the policy.

Does your organization have a written policy with respect to employees' personal Internet use at work?				
		Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes		79.7%	51	
No		17.2%	11	
Considering		3.1%	2	
	If Yes, please state reasons:			29
	<i>answered question</i>			64
	<i>skipped question</i>			5

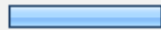

About one third of the respondents' searches are for references to the organization in terms of brand names and/or employee names. The most commonly cited potential actions based on search results refer to improving employee communications in general. Others search social media sites for information that may inform their sales and marketing efforts.


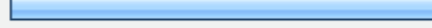
Does your organization ever search for the organization name, brand name and/or employee names within social media sites?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			33.9%	20
No			54.2%	32
Considering			11.9%	7
If Yes, please state reasons:				9
<i>answered question</i>				59
<i>skipped question</i>				10

What potential actions would you expect to take based on the results of your search on social media?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Improve employee communications in general			38.1%	8
Identify individuals who may require coaching			23.8%	5
None			23.8%	5
Other			38.1%	8
If Other, please describe:				8
<i>answered question</i>				21
<i>skipped question</i>				48

While it is clear that recruiting appears to be human resource's main use of social media sites, specifically the use of *LinkedIn*, 82.3% say that the organization does not use these sites to find information about employees being considered for an internal promotion or transfer, and only 29.5% of these companies use these networking sites to seek information about job candidates. Many respondents (and we support them in their inquiry) are unsure of how to handle increasing privacy issues as they relate to hiring, promoting, or even firing an employee based on use of these sites.

*LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook... We have NOT hired based on Tweets we've seen and have hired based on positive comments from others. We are interested in employees who are comfortable and can do business within communities.*



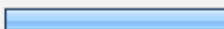
When recruiting, does your organization ever use social media to find information about job candidates?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			29.5%	18
No			50.8%	31
Considering			19.7%	12
If Yes, which sites and why?				13
<i>answered question</i>				61
<i>skipped question</i>				8


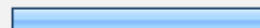
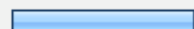

Does your organization ever use social media to find information about employees being considered for a promotion or transfer?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			4.8%	3
No			82.3%	51
Considering			12.9%	8
If Yes, which sites and why?				0
<i>answered question</i>				62
<i>skipped question</i>				7

In addition, 42.6% of the respondents feel that social media use now affects and will continue to affect the organization's culture. Interestingly enough, only 11.7% of companies believe the human resource function will change significantly because of the new social media environment. It is clear however, that many companies are aware of the social media sites and are working to incorporate these communication vehicles into company culture.




*Proper utilization of social networking can be used to promote culture within the organization and create an online buzz about the organization, thus resulting in higher quality job candidates. However, this new type of interface can also lend itself to abuse (Employee spending too much time online and not enough working; cyber-harassment; inappropriate uses of information found online, etc.)*

*It's [social media] how people communicate and educate themselves about current issues, best practices—better to be prepared and embrace it, or get left in the dust.*

In general, do you feel that social media use affects or will affect your organization's culture?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		42.6%	28
No		14.8%	9
Not sure		42.6%	28
if Yes, how?			17
<i>answered question</i>			61
<i>skipped question</i>			8

How do you see the HR function changing in light of the new social media environment?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Not at all		5.0%	3
Minimally		48.3%	29
Moderately		35.0%	21
Significantly		11.7%	7
Please describe:			22
<i>answered question</i>			60
<i>skipped question</i>			9

The survey responses indicate that human resources has not and does not generally use social media to communicate with employees or to increase engagement. In fact, 77.0% of respondents do not use any form of social media to improve employee morale and/or involvement.

Does your organization use social media tools to improve employee morale and/or engagement?			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			9.8%	6
No			77.0%	47
Considering			13.1%	8
			If Yes, how?	6
			<i>answered question</i>	61
			<i>skipped question</i>	8

Regardless of an organization’s current experience with social media sites, these data suggest that human resource departments should develop policies that address appropriate and beneficial use of social media both for employees and for the organization.

*As a small company it’s easy to talk to each staff member face to face. As the company grows and more “millennials” are hired, employees will expect to use social media and it will need to have been implemented well to be ready for them.*

*As we progress, we will use it for recruiting. We will see a reliance on it for fund development. We see how it is affecting employee attention and time. We will have to adjust to this cultural transition.*

CompAnalysis will continue to track trends relative to the interface between human resources management and the rapidly increasing use of the social media in ways that affect the employee/employer relationship. Meanwhile, we believe that it is prudent for employers to examine their practices and policies with respect to transparency, and especially in terms of how they view their employees. Are employees seen as fully adult business partners who are trusted to act ethically and responsibly? Or ... are employees viewed as undisciplined adolescents who require rules, regulations, and monitoring to assure that their actions are not harmful to the public image of the company?

Ultimately, the social media are just another form of communication. The difference is the potential for widespread reach and impact. Managing the power of such communications will be challenging for all of us. Stay tuned.

## Contact Information:

**Shari Dunn, Managing Principal**  
510-763-3774 x 102  
sdunn@companalysis.com

**Rita Haronian, Research Director**  
510-763-3774 x 100  
rharonian@companalysis.com

**725 Washington Street, Suite 302**  
Oakland, CA 94607-3924

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