

Implications of humor in social media job adverts

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Can humour on social media help managers find the most appropriate candidates for the job vacancies they hope to fill? Writing in the *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, researchers from Finland, suggest that humorous recruitment campaigns can increase exposure for a given job ad but conversely the approach might lead to flippant applications at which point it might be difficult to separate the serious candidate from an inappropriate one. The team also suggests that choosing a particular social media channel over another may skew the type of applicants they receive for a given job, for better or worse.

Eeva-Liisa Oikarinen of Oulu Business School and Jaakko Sinisalo of Oulu University of Applied Sciences have carried out a case study of the [social media](#) recruitment campaign of a high-profile company operating in the architecture industry. The campaign used amusing text and graphics to entice people to apply for a specific vacancy and to differentiate the company from others in the [market](#) for job applicants.

The use of humour in consumer marketing is well known, indeed humour in marketing is probably as old as selling itself. However, in marketing an employment vacancy has been little used and advertising of [jobs](#) tends to be a rather dry affair. The team points out that where it has been used little research has been done to track the pros and cons. There is the potential, as with any marketing, for humour to be a double edged sword, the team suggests, with it having the potential to harm a company's credibility and reputation if the [humour](#) is misplaced or causes offence.

Conversely, the humorous campaign can backfire if a responsive candidate is found and yet the work environment does not fit the jocular image projected. Moreover, some serious candidates perfectly suitable for the job may be put off from applying by the flippant nature of the [campaign](#).

More information: Personality or skill: A qualitative study of humorous recruitment advertising campaign on social media. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. [DOI: 10.1504/IJIMA.2017.082990](#)

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