7 myths about social media screening – busted

introduction

Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter plus many more are now household names for everyone from generation Z to millennials through to the silver surfers. Around the world there are approximatley 3 billion social media users so not only is it here to stay, its also a significant source of information. According to SHRM, 71% of recruiters have said social checks are effective in decreasing time-to-hire.

Many companies are increasingly considering the use of this information as a formal part of their recruitment process. There are some challenges with social media screening but in the main, there are more myths. The main challenge can be to ensure that your use of social media in the recruitment process is compliant and understanding what exactly "compliant screening" means.

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myth 1: *including social media screening in your recruitment process is not legal.*

Well, that all depends on how it's done. You need to ensure that it's compliant. A line manager casually checking out a candidate on Facebook is unlikely to be compliant. This would disclose too much protected information such as religion, race, and sexual orientation (to name just a few).

So how do you make it compliant? The candidate should provide relevant consent and the results returned will remove protected information ready to present. Also ensuring that you have the correct candidate, just googling their name is going to return a significant number of false results.

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myth 2: *recruiting managers can conduct social media screenings.*

There is nothing stopping a recruiting manager putting the candidates name into google or seeing what they have on Facebook but that doesn't mean they should. For starters, as we point out in myth 1, you can't be making recruitment decisions based on protected information and it would be very hard to defend that this hadn't been considered. Also the amount of data held online is vast so without the correct tools (including AI) and experience it can be very time consuming to navigate and collect all the open source information.

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myth 3: *social media screening is invasive.*

We understand people's need for privacy and everyone has control of their own privacy setting on their social media accounts. However, if the information is public then that's who can see it, your customers and staff. So the information is already out there and you have a right to know if the candidate you are considering is publicly sharing content that could be racist or intolerant, sexually explicit, potentially illegal or perhaps violent. Taking that one step further you could argue that you have a responsibility to know about such behaviour which could affect your business, your clients and your staff.

myth 4: *we don't need social media screening, we already do other background checks like criminal records.*

Background checks are an imperative part of any recruitment process, however they focus on the past, confirming the CV and looking for potentially serious issues. With social media screening you can add a different aspect that not only supports background checks but can give a snapshot of who the candidate is today. This will also give you an untarnished view of that candidate, not just the person you meet in the interview.

Top 5 Reasons Employers Pass on Applicants Due to Social Media Posts

Careerbuilder.com Survey

According to an April 2016 **survey by careerbuilder.com**, 49% of hiring managers who screen candidates via social networks said they've found information that caused them not to hire a candidate.

TOP FIVE TYPES OF CONTENT THAT ARE A TURN-OFF TO EMPLOYERS

46.0% **43.0%** **33.0%** **31.0%** **29.0%**

PERCENT (%)

ANSWERS

ANSWERS

- Provocative or inappropriate photographs, videos or information – 46%
- Information about candidate drinking or using drugs – 43 %
- Discriminatory comments related to race, religion, gender, etc. – 33%
- Candidate bad-mouthed previous company or fellow employee – 31%
- Poor communication skills – 29%

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myth 5: *it's only really the likes of Facebook and Twitter that matter.*

Of course, they do matter as that's where the majority of people interact but that doesn't mean we can ignore other existing or new social media platforms. On Tumblr there are 500 million active users per month, Snapchat has 200 million active users per month, Reddit has 100 million active users per month and even MySpace is still plugging away with 20 million active users per month. They are just a few of the numerous social media platforms out there.

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myth 6: *this is only an issue for big businesses.*

The impact of a bad hire on a small business can be catastrophic. Larger organisations appreciate the need for background checks to support the recruitment process and minimise their exposure to risk but that risk is multiplied in a smaller company. Imagine if you employ 10 people for example and one turns out to be not what they claimed, that's 10% of your workforce.

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myth 7: *social media screening makes sense before employing someone but ongoing it's a waste of time and money.*

Carrying out more regular checks isn't about spying on or watching employees to judge them. The goal is to monitor content in the critical areas. Consider what happens after a candidate becomes an employee - the risk is now increased as they are through the door and representing your company. Wouldn't you want to know if they're sharing inappropriate and/or illegal content on social media?

at **giant screening**, we can complete social media checks for your whole workforce, email hello@giantgroup.com for more information.

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about **giant**

Since 1992 **giant** have provided specialist, end to end workforce management software and support services to large and small recruitment agencies, internationally.

We invest heavily in our cloud-based software which ranges from candidate sourcing and onboarding through to timesheet management, billing and payroll. Our support services include candidate screening, employment solutions and legislative risk management; whilst at our specialist division, **giant finance+**, we provide tailored funding, software and support services for start-up to medium sized recruitment agencies.

You can relax knowing your data is safe with us. Our commitment to compliance protects your business from risk and our rigorous international security standard ISO 27001 ensures that your data is GDPR secure.

Our principles are simple: customer 1st. This is the core to everything we do as a group and screening is no exception. We grow and retain our customer base through exceeding expectations and ensuring that everything we do is focused on our client's needs and not our own.

As part of **giant group**, who have been delivering compliance solutions to their clients for 25 years, we have the expertise, knowledge and systems that many providers envy.

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