

Employer Perspectives on Social Networking: Global Key Findings

Social Networking: Managing the Next Workplace Transformation

A new generation, steeped in the rules and habits of the digital age, is entering the workforce in large numbers, and will soon make up the majority of employees in every company. How this generation – as well as older workers – uses social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to stay in touch with others has increased exponentially in just a few years. It is a phenomenon that is rapidly transforming the world of work.

With this in mind, Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) recently surveyed over 34,000 employers in 35 countries and territories. The survey is intended to gauge employer attitudes toward the use of external social media in the workplace. Conducted in October 2009, the survey asked employers four questions:

- Does your organization have a formal policy regarding employee use of external social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn?
- In which of these areas has your policy been effective?
- In what two areas do you believe external social networks can provide the biggest boost to your organization in the future?
- Has your organization's reputation ever been negatively affected as a result of employees' use of social networking sites?

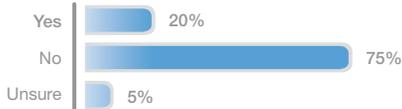
The global results revealed that an overwhelming three out of four employers indicated that their organizations had no formal policy regarding the use of external social networking sites in the workplace. Five percent of employers surveyed indicated they were unsure if their organizations did, in fact, have policies regulating the use of social media by employees.

However, one out of five employers responded that their organizations did have policies in place to regulate social networking in the workplace. And this number is likely to grow. Of those employers with policies in place, the vast majority (63%) indicated that these policies were most often effective in helping avoid productivity loss. Approximately four out of 10 employers indicated that policies were effective in helping protect intellectual property and other proprietary information. Only two percent of the surveyed employers indicated that their organizations' social networking policies were not effective.

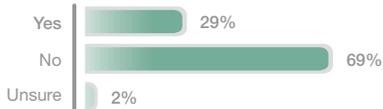
Manpower acknowledges that the risks associated with social networking in the workplace are not trivial. As the use of such sites becomes even more prevalent, Manpower believes that employers need to consider how social networking is likely to impact their organizations. After all, the widespread use of these sites by employees raises inevitable questions. For example, how can companies embrace the technology, minimize risk and unleash the potential of social networking in the workplace? And how can these sites actually serve the interests of organizations by enhancing productivity, collaboration and innovation, while also serving to attract and engage employees? Thus Manpower recommends that organizations that are currently exploring social networking policy implementation, do so by designing guidelines that help them take maximum advantage of potential benefits.

Does your organization have a formal policy regarding employee use of external social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn?

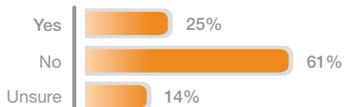
Global



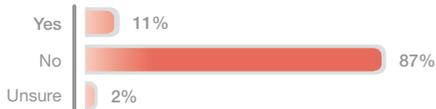
Americas



Asia Pacific



EMEA



Manpower Inc., *Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey*, 2009.

Of the more than 34,000 employers surveyed worldwide, 75% reported that their organization did not have a formal policy regarding the on-the-job use of social networking sites, while 20% reported that they did. A regional comparison revealed that employers in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region were the least likely to have formal policies in place: Only 11% of employers reported instituting policies while 87% reported their organizations had no policy in effect. In the Americas region, 29% of employers had enacted social networking policies, while 25% of Asia Pacific employers had policies in place. Clearly, the majority of organizations are adopting a 'wait-and-see' approach before developing their own formal policies on the use of social networking.

Americas

Survey results from the nearly 11,000 employers surveyed in nine countries throughout the Americas, indicated that employers here were more likely than their global counterparts to have a formal policy in place regarding the use of social networking in the workplace. Results from employers in Brazil (55%) were far above the region's average of 29%. Meanwhile, responses from employers in each of the other countries were at or below the regional average regarding the governance of social networking at work: Mexico (29%), Canada, Costa Rica and Guatemala (all at 27%), Argentina and Peru (26%), and Colombia (25%). Employers from the United States (24%) were least likely to have formal social networking policies in place.

Asia Pacific

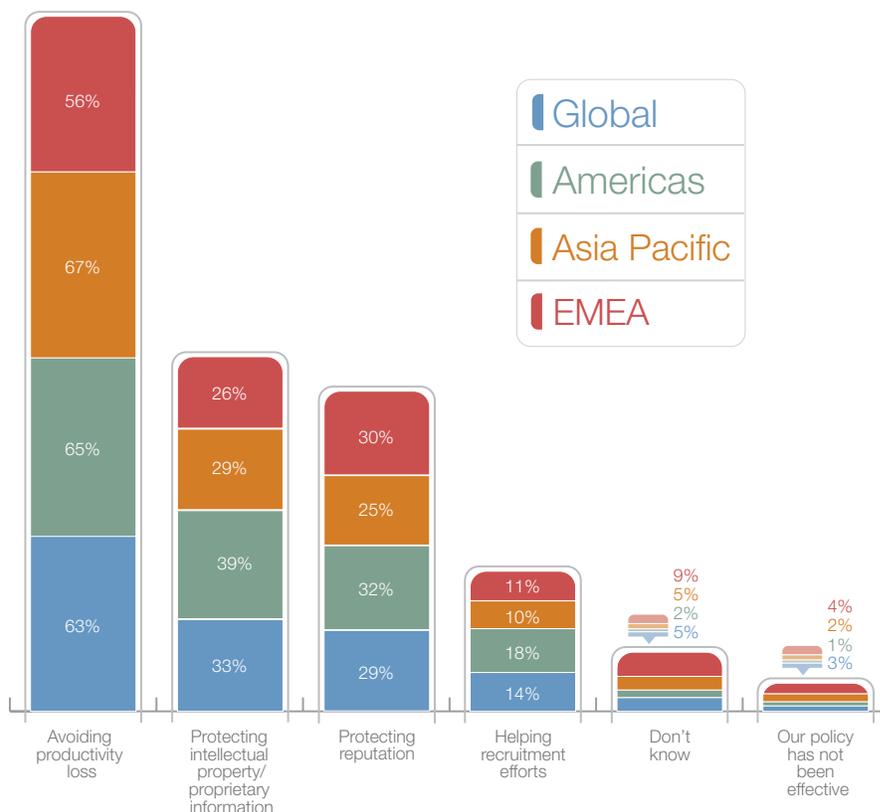
Of the over 7,700 employers surveyed from the Asia Pacific, 25% indicated that their organizations implemented policies regulating the use of social networking in the workplace. Employers from China (33%), New Zealand (32%), Australia (31%) and Hong Kong (27%) were above the regional average. On the other hand, employers from Japan (25%), Taiwan (23%), Singapore (14%) and India (11%) were at or below the regional average. Among employers who reported no policy in place, those from Singapore (84%) were far above the regional average of 61%. Notably, nearly eight out of 10 (78%) Indian employers were not sure if their companies had social networking policies in place.

EMEA

In the EMEA region, results from more than 16,000 employers in 18 countries indicated that organizations here were the least likely to implement organizational social networking policies in comparison to the other surveyed regions. Employers from Poland (1%) were far below the regional average of 11% and the global average of 20%. Other employers below the regional average include France (2%), Austria, Czech Republic (both at 4%), Germany, Switzerland (both at 6%), Belgium, Romania, Sweden (all at 7%), Greece, Italy and Spain (all at 10%). Employers at or above the regional average were from Hungary, Norway (both at 11%), Netherlands (13%), Ireland (15%), the United Kingdom (22%) and South Africa (40%). In France, 97% of employers indicated that their organizations had not implemented formal policies regarding social networking, considerably above the region's average response of 87%.

In which of these areas has your policy been effective?

Among employers who responded that their organizations implemented formal social networking policies, all were asked to identify in which area of their operation their policy has been most effective. (Employers were invited to respond with more than one reason for implementing the policy.) By far, more employers (63%) reported that their policy was most effective in preventing productivity loss. One in three (33%) employers indicated that the policies helped their organization protect intellectual property and proprietary information. Protecting their organization's reputation was identified by nearly three in 10 (29%) employers as the most effective result, while 14% indicated that policy implementation helped their talent recruitment efforts. Only 3% of employers with established social networking policies reported that the policies were not effective.



Source: Manpower Inc., Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey, 2009

Americas

In the Americas region, 65% of respondents indicated that minimizing productivity loss was the chief benefit of implementing a social networking policy; 39% reported their policies helped protect intellectual property and proprietary information; 32% indicated the policies helped protect their organization's reputations; and 18% said that workplace social networking policies helped them in their recruiting efforts. Responses in each of these four categories exceeded the global average. More employers in Brazil (76%) identified productivity loss as the most effective outcome of their implementation of social networking policies, while only 52% of Argentinean employers cited this as an effective result. Employers in the United States were more likely than their counterparts in the region to identify policy effectiveness with 70% citing the goal of minimizing productivity loss; 69% citing protection of their organization's reputation; 67% naming protection of intellectual property and proprietary information; and 41% indicating that implementing a formal policy helped their recruiting efforts. U.S.-employer responses in each category exceeded the regional and global averages.

Asia Pacific

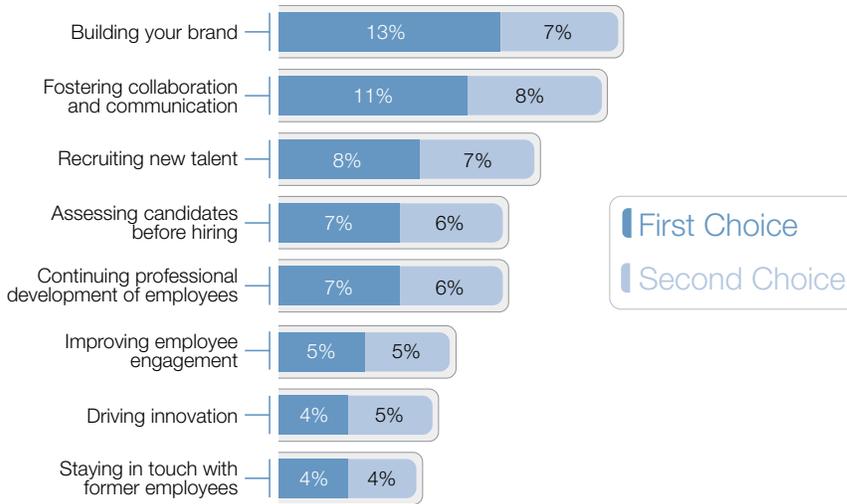
Among Asia Pacific employers, nearly seven out of 10 (67%) identified social networking policies as effective in minimizing productivity loss. Employers in Australia and New Zealand (both at 76%) were more likely to cite this as the most effective outcome, while only 52% of Hong Kong employers did so. Over six out of 10 (62%) Japanese employers cited policy implementation as an effective approach to protecting of intellectual property and proprietary information, while only 5% of Taiwanese employers did so. Protecting their organization's reputation was named by 41% of Singapore's employers, but by only 2% of Taiwanese employers, as the most effective result of policy implementation. Established social networking policies were identified by 21% of Singaporean employers as beneficial to their recruiting efforts while employers from Hong Kong and Taiwan (both at 0%) indicated that policies had not affected employee recruitment.

EMEA

Along with their counterparts in the Americas and Asia Pacific regions, the majority of the EMEA region's employers (56%) most often cite avoiding productivity loss as the most effective result of social networking policies. Employers in Belgium (78%) are the most likely to assign this outcome to established policies, while those in the Czech Republic (15%) are the least likely to do so. Unlike their counterparts in the Americas and Asia Pacific regions, employers in the EMEA (30%) indicated that protecting their organization's reputation ranks second as the most effective result of policy implementation. In fact, 65% of Czech Republic and 55% of United Kingdom employers cited this as the most effective outcome. Over one quarter (26%) of the region's employers identify policy implementation as an effective means of protecting intellectual property and proprietary information. However, policy implementation aiming to protect intellectual property and proprietary information is identified by 45% of Polish employers and 42% of employers in the United Kingdom as one of the main outcomes, far exceeding the region's average. Policy implementation was cited as a boon to recruitment efforts by 11% of the region's employers, with nearly one out of four (23%) Greek employers identifying an established social networking policy as an effective aid in recruitment.

In what two areas do you believe external social networks can provide the biggest boost to your organization in the future?

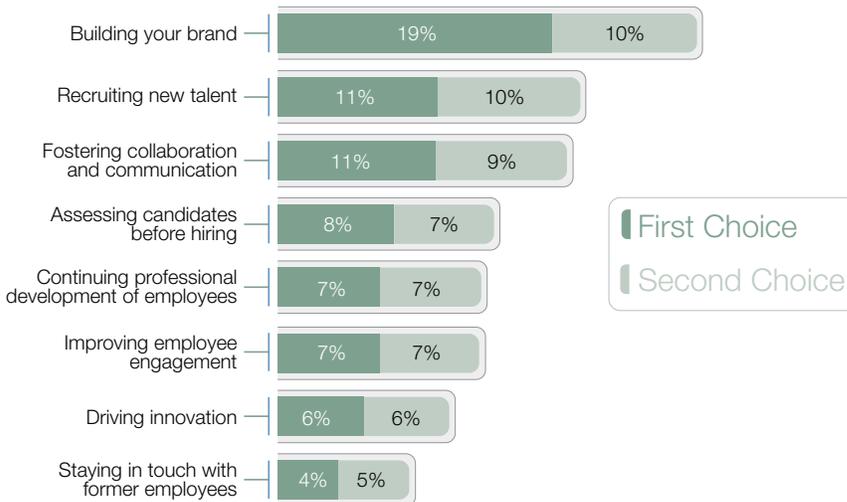
All respondents were asked to identify the top two aspects of external social networking that, in their opinion, might provide their organization with the biggest future benefit. Nearly six out of 10 employers identified some benefits associated with social networking, including: brand building (20%); fostering collaboration and communication (19%); new talent recruitment (15%); candidate assessment (13%); and professional development of employees (13%).



Source: Manpower Inc., Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey, 2009

Americas

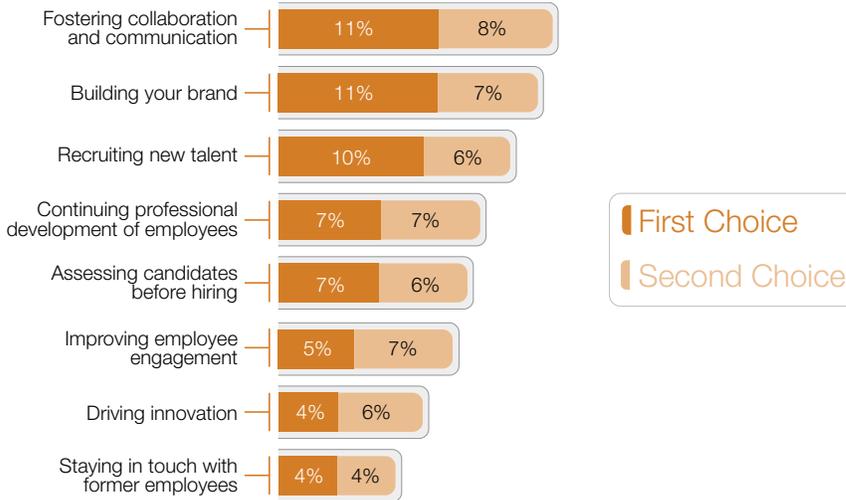
Throughout the Americas, nearly three in 10 (29%) employers indicated external social networking as a reinforcement to their brand-building efforts. Employers from Peru (42%), Colombia and Costa Rica (both at 41%) were the most likely to assign this benefit to social networking. Using social networking as an aid to recruitment efforts was identified by 21% of the region's employers, while 20% viewed social media as a boon to collaboration and communication.



Source: Manpower Inc., Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey, 2009

Asia Pacific

Asia Pacific employers were most likely to identify social networking as a promising method of fostering collaboration and communication (19%), while 18% viewed social networking as a potential means of building their organizational brand. Japanese employers were the most likely to view social networking as a possible collaboration and team-building tool, with nearly three of 10 (27%) employers identifying this as a potential benefit. Meanwhile, New Zealand (39%) and Australian (31%) employers were more likely to cite social networking as an aid to brand building.



Source: Manpower Inc., Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey, 2009

EMEA

Among the 18 countries surveyed in the EMEA region, employers most often identified social networking as a future vehicle to foster collaboration and communication (18%), while 15% cited brand building as holding the most potential for their organizations. Interestingly, 50% of Hungarian employers were the most likely in the region to cite collaboration and communication. Employers in Greece (26%), Italy (25%), Netherlands (24%), Spain and Switzerland (both at 23%) also responded at levels above the regional average of 18% on the subject of collaboration and communication. Elsewhere in the EMEA region, employers from Spain (27%), Sweden (22%) and Norway (21%) cited social networking as most promising for their organizational brand building efforts.



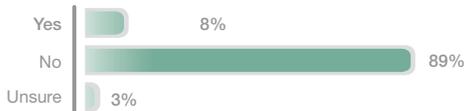
Source: Manpower Inc., Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey, 2009

Has your organization's reputation ever been negatively affected as a result of employees' use of social networking sites?

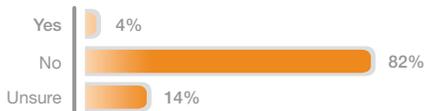
Global



Americas



Asia Pacific



EMEA



Manpower Inc., *Employer Perspectives on Social Networking Survey*, 2009.

The vast majority of the employers surveyed indicated that employee use of external social networking sites has not had a negative impact on their organization's reputation. This may suggest that, despite the occasional high-profile incident, it may be that the potential for damage to a company's reputation may be lower than many believe. While 4% of employers worldwide indicated that employee use of external social networking sites had negatively impacted their organization's reputation, nearly nine out of 10 (89%) reported that social networking had not. Meanwhile, 7% of respondents were unsure of the impact social networking had on their organization's reputation.

Americas

Employers in the Americas region were more likely than their counterparts elsewhere in the world to cite the reputational risk associated with external social networking. Of the 10,652 employers who responded to this question, 8% identified on-the-job social networking as harmful to their organization's overall reputation, compared to only 4% globally. Survey responses from employers in Peru (12%), Costa Rica (10%), Mexico (10%) and Argentina (9%) were higher than the regional average, while employers from Brazil (5%), Canada, the United States (both at 6%) and Guatemala (7%) reported incidents below the regional average. Employers from Brazil (93%), Guatemala (91%) and Colombia (90%) were most likely to respond "no" when asked if external social networking put their organization's reputation at risk.

Asia Pacific

Among the region's 7,710 surveyed employers, 4% reported that the use of external social network sites by employees had harmed their organization's reputation. This is similar to the global average. Employers from Australia (7%), Japan (6%) and Singapore (5%) were more likely to cite reputational damage from social networking, while those from India (0%), Taiwan (1%), China and Hong Kong (both at 2%) were less likely to do so. The percentage of employers indicating that social networking did not damage their organizations' reputations (82%) was

below the global average of 89%. Those regional employers least likely to assign organizational damage to social networking included employers from Singapore (92%), New Zealand (91%), Hong Kong (90%), India (89%), Australia (88%) and Taiwan (84%). Meanwhile, fewer than half (48%) of Japanese employers answered “no” when asked if external social networking had damaged their organization’s reputation; however, a considerable 46% of Japanese employers was unsure of social networking’s impact, representing an uncertainty level high above the regional average of 14%.

EMEA

Of all employers globally, those from EMEA were least likely to assign damage to their organization’s reputation as a result of social networking. Only 2% of the region’s more than 16,000 respondents indicated that their organizations had suffered damage as the result of employee use of social networks, while 93% reported no negative impact. Meanwhile, 5% were unsure. Results varied throughout the region. In Hungary, one out of 10 employers blamed social networking for organizational damage while the percentage of employers who reported damage in the Czech Republic and Switzerland stood at zero. Employers in Switzerland, along with those from France (both at 97%), were more likely to respond “no” when asked if social networking had damaged their organization’s reputation. The highest percentage of employers who responded “unsure” regarding the technology’s impact on their organization’s reputation were in Poland, Sweden (both at 12%) and Hungary (11%).

*These findings were originally highlighted in a Manpower Fresh Perspectives paper titled, **Social Networks vs. Management? Harness the Power of Social Media**, which can be downloaded at www.manpower.com/researchcenter.*

The World of Work Experts

Manpower develops research tools and reports to lend insight into labor market issues and trends around the world.

Some of these include:

- Quarterly Manpower Employment Outlook Survey
- Annual Talent Shortage Survey
- Borderless Workforce Survey

More research like this can be viewed at:
www.manpower.com/researchcenter

