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Lights, Camera, Action!

Employers turn film makers as competition to hire the next generation of workers hots up

The face of Britain's labour market is changing, with more employers posting virtual job ads featuring 'behind the scenes' tours of their business in a deliberate attempt to woo a new generation of job seekers, new research out today reveals.

The research by Gumtree.com, the UK's largest jobs site, reveals a wide range of companies – from banks to florists and pub chains – who have gone 'virtual' by producing online 'film previews' of what lies behind the boardroom door.

While the clips, which average 3 minutes in length, range from high budget professionally shot films to more cost-effective handy-cam footage, the aim for each savvy employer is the same – to sell the company to dream young recruits and entice them to apply for interview.

In just three months, Gumtree.com has recorded a staggering 927% increase in the number of companies using their new classified 'dual tool', where employers can attach YouTube footage to their job ad.

The most popular footage shown is of bosses giving a casual 'walking tour' of the office, introducing other employees to get a 'feel' for their personalities, showing off desk where the new recruit will sit, healthy fare in the canteen, lush cocktails in the after-work bar and even the company's five-a-side soccer team at play.

Commenting on the trend, Sophy Silver of Gumtree says: "Company show reels are the next big thing in recruitment. A three minute video can give an applicant more of an insight into what a boss and the company are really like than a half hour formal interview when the focus is on the job-seeker, not the employer.

Britain's emerging young workforce is extremely tech literate and respond well to online media channels and social networking sites where they can meet their friends, view films and photos pictures and get to know new people in a shared virtual space.

By opting to recruit in this space using popular video technology, companies stand a much better chance of attracting the right calibre of recruit for their business."

While the benefits for recruits are obvious, there are several benefits for employers too – instead of wasting time shortlisting random CVs, they now get to interview recruits who have an understanding of the business and are hungry for the job.

The other benefit is cost – the approximate cost of recruiting for a £30,000 post is £4,000 through traditional channels, to include ad costs, HR time spent interviewing candidates and the bounty fee taken by recruitment agents. This compares unfavourably with the £20 fee to post a job online, with the cost of film footage free if a company uses its own handy-cam footage and uploads free of charge on YouTube. << This is to be discussed due to the conflict with recruitment pages that run ads>>

Language of Generation X and Y

This dynamic new online recruitment trend has turned the tables on the traditional job interview, with employers now the ones under pressure to make the best first impression, not the job seeker.

Sophy Silver of Gumtree.com adds, "By communicating in a different way to a traditional job advert, companies stand a better chance of attracting the right calibre of recruit for their business.

"With a behind-the-scenes preview, recruits avoid any culture shocks and nasty surprises on their first day. They're more likely to buy into the job and the company first online in the early stages, which improves their chances of staying for the longer term!"

Gumtree.com's top tips for video recruiting online:

1. Bring your business to life

Like a first date, don't be shy about your company's personality and culture. Your video should be as much about everyday life with the people as the job you're recruiting for.

2. Look your best

A quick tidy, smiling faces and bright colours are all going to give a positive feel to your video so stash away office clutter, smarten up staff who'll be making their acting debut and strategically place plants or flowers to brighten up the picture

3. Plan your script

You're selling your company to a prospective employee so it's important to get the right points across. Think about all the plus points to the job and the company e.g.: We invest in career progression by providing full training and at the end of an action-packed day we unwind with a cold beer from the company bar

4. Take your candidates on a virtual tour

Introduce key team members on your video and do a walk through of the workspace. Speed up less interesting sections in double time but make sure the candidate's new desk looks as enticing as possible; free from old coffee mugs with mould growing inside

5. Use modern technology

The higher the quality of your video advert the better. Use a camcorder or a mobile phone that can take clear footage and don't forget to edit it for the final cut

For more information or case studies please contact the Gumtree press office at Lexis Public Relations on 020 7908 6589 or email gumtree@lexispr.com