Recruiting a Social Media Candidate? Here's How To Evaluate their Twitter Know-How

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LONDON, UK (RPRN) 08/24/10 — There are quite a few people out there – including myself - looking for work in new/digital/social media.

Many are calling themselves “social media experts”. In fact, according to B.L. Ochman, there were over 12,000 self-proclaimed digital or social media gurus and experts on twitter in June 2010.

While some of them may indeed be experts, you’ll probably want to check out their credentials. You’ll often find that it is the ones who aren’t calling themselves “experts” who know what they’re doing and have the experience to prove it.

So what's a recruiter with little or no Twitter experience to do?

Here is my contribution to sort out the wheat from the chaff.

One good way to tell if someone “gets” this medium is to have a look at their twitter profile to see if they know how to use this platform. Surely if they work in digital marketing, they’ve at least got an account right?

What to look for?

Here are a few things to look for when evaluating a twitter profile for know-how:

Bio (and link)

Have a look at what they say about themselves and where they link to. Is it believable? Is the link a blog? A LinkedIn profile? A MySpace page? Unless they’re in music, or the film industry, linking to a MySp ace page is probably not a good sign since it has fallen from grace the past two years

Following/Followers:

The numbers here aren’t nearly as important as the quality of the accounts a person is connected to and the quality of the connections themselves.

Personally, I have a wide range of interests so I follow a lot of people and a lot of people follow

me. While I get that this probably means I know how to use twitter, there is no guarantee that my numbers aren't inflated by spammers. It's probably safe to say that at least a quarter of the average twitter user's followers

are spam and it's not terribly realistic to expect that one sustains contact with each and every one of the accounts that they are connected to.

A good way to tell is just have a look at the accounts involved by clicking "following" and "followers"

For a more in-depth look at why some numbers mean nothing on twitter have a look at this post by Glenn Lesanto with that exact title.

Lists:

Lists give you an idea of what someone's interests (and possibly areas of knowledge/authority) are.

You can see the lists a user creates (listed below Favorites) and the lists others put them on (click "listed" to view).

Favorites:

Have a look at the tweets they have marked as favorites. Are they funny, interesting, relevant? All of the above?

Tweets:

Most importantly, look at what they're tweeting. Are they using @ replies to have conversations? Are they sharing other people's ideas and content by retweeting (RTing) it? Are they participating in offline events or online chats by using #hashtags? Or are they just tweeting "get more followers"/"make money online" links?

Search:

You can search twitter for the candidiate's username to see what people are saying to or about them. This is also a useful tool for seeing the kinds of conversations they have on twitter.

Tools:

There are other tools outside of twitter that will help you evaluate a profile. However, their methodologies are not necessarily foolproof and may not give you an accurate picture of how the person in question uses twitter. If you want to use tools **oneforty.com**, a great resource for twitter-related applications, **lists** some analytic resources.

Was this helpful? Please let me know!

My personal twitter account is here: http://www.twitter.com/amoyal and my microblog for advice to brands on twitter is here: http://www.twitter.com/DearBrands

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Arié Moyal is a brand engagement strategist who has consulted with a range of companies on community enagement and social media strategy. His understanding of branding and his training in communications, public relations and psychology compliment his experience crafting international programmes and events to produce tailor-made, engaging and innovative engagement programmes.

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