

Integrating Digital Trends into Candidate Journeys and Employer Branding: A Book Review

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Given the evolving landscape of recruitment, the integration of technological and media trends has revolutionized recruitment processes, transforming how companies attract potential future colleagues. “Digitales Recruiting entlang der Candidate Journey. Maßnahmen und Best Practices für erfolgreiches Employer Branding” by Michael Lorenz and Frank Nientiedt (2023) offers insights and guidelines on integrating digital components at every stage of the candidate journey. The book serves as a comprehensive guide to the complex field of digital recruiting strategies. From raising awareness to making a final hiring decision, Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) break down the stages of the candidate journey, explaining how digital tools can be used to optimize recruitment processes and outcomes. Drawing on related research and specific industry best practices, the book discusses various aspects of digital recruitment, including social media recruiting, applicant tracking systems, predictive analytics and more. The implementation of digital technologies to create a seamless and candidate-centric recruitment process is a primary focus. The book highlights the potential of digital recruiting strategies by providing methods on how to leverage social media platforms to enhance employer branding or how to use algorithms powered by artificial intelligence to identify top talent. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) target an audience of HR and recruiting specialists, as well as hiring managers, who are looking to adapt and enhance recruitment performance. This work provides valuable insights applicable across different industries and organizational contexts, addressing both the need to keep up with emerging trends and the demand for practical guidance in navigating

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the components of digital recruitment. In subsequent book review, key elements and insights are examined, focusing on the book's scientific approach and its applicability to corporate contexts.

In the following the book by Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) is categorized within the context of related literature and scientific frameworks. Initially, the book's relevance to corporate settings and its role in connecting academic discourse with practical corporate applications are analysed. Subsequently, compared is the book to additional literature that provides a general guide to recruiting, the candidate journey and experience, as well as aspects of social media recruiting. This comparison involves both parallel and distinct analyses relative to the books "Praxishandbuch Recruiting. Grundlagenwissen – Prozess-Know-how – Social Recruiting" by Robindro Ullah and Michael Witt (2018), "Candidate Experience. Ansätze für eine positiv erlebte Arbeitgebermarke im Bewerbungsprozess und darüber hinaus" edited by Tim Verhoeven (2016), and "Praxishandbuch Social Media Recruiting. Experten Know-How/ Praxistipps/ Rechtshinweise" edited by Ralph Dannhäuser (2023).

Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) provide an in-depth examination of digital recruiting strategies that align with the candidate journey, grounded in research and industry best practices. The authors adopt an application-oriented approach to the topics discussed, illustrating how digital recruiting concepts can be adapted to changing preferences and candidate behaviours. They reference theories that explain the factors influencing candidates' decision making and emphasize the importance of personalized and candidate-centric processes. By incorporating insights from behavioural psychology and consumer behaviour research, Lorenz and Nientiedt aim to understand how digital components can be tailored to meet evolving expectations at each stage of the candidate journey. Moreover, they describe data-driven decision making processes to highlight the significance of using analytics in assessing the effectiveness of digital recruiting practices. As technology continues to evolve, particularly with advancements like artificial intelligence and analytics, the authors stress the need to keep pace with these cutting-edge changes. Implementing such technologies in recruitment processes demonstrates a forward-thinking approach and helps gain a competitive edge in the labour market. From a digitalization perspective, the book offers valuable insights applicable to both corporate and academic contexts. It is noted that the candidate journey is presented from the company's perspective. Although the candidate experience is linked to the candidate journey, it includes additional components not covered in this

journey. The book primarily focuses on digital components, suggesting that the consideration of non-digital elements would complement the discussion. The viewpoint on recruiting practices provided is highly specialized yet detailed. To develop a more comprehensive understanding of the candidate journey, further literature must be consulted. Examples from specific industries and their applicability to other industries require critical examination with respect to individual companies. The book's scientific depth is limited in some areas, despite the substantial practical insights and industry examples provided. Various studies are referenced throughout the chapters, adding weight and a solid foundation to the statements made. However, from a scientific and academic perspective, these studies are only briefly mentioned and used as a basis for arguments without detailed descriptions or explanations of the methodological basis for their selection. More detailed information would be necessary in a strict scientific context. Nonetheless, the explanations given are suitable for integration into corporate contexts. By bridging scientific knowledge with practical implementation, the book makes valuable attempts to apply scientific methods within corporate settings.

Referenced is the book by Ullah and Witt (2018) to compare approaches of recruitment literature. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) focus on digital recruiting strategies within the candidate journey, whereas Ullah and Witt (2018) offer a comprehensive overview that includes both traditional and digital approaches. Their works delve into various aspects of recruitment, covering topics such as active sourcing strategies, candidate assessment methods and employer branding concepts. These books provide a broad examination of recruitment practices, extending well beyond just digital components. Through practical examples and expert insights, they elucidate the complex nature of recruitment for HR and recruiting specialists. Both books contribute valuable insights to corporate processes, albeit from different perspectives and with varied emphases. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) concentrate on the opportunities presented by digital advancements and trends. On the other hand, Ullah and Witt (2018) cater to companies with diverse recruitment needs, offering guidance on traditional sourcing strategies and candidate assessment frameworks in addition to digital methods. By effectively bridging theory and practice, both books enhance understanding of recruitment and its related elements, providing adaptable insights that are relevant for both academic discussion and practical application in corporate settings.

The candidate journey is a primary focus in the work of Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023), as it is in the book edited by Tim Verhoeven (2016). Both books offer insights into the candidate journey and the candidate experience, albeit from different perspectives. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) focus on digital recruiting components tailored to each stage of the candidate journey. In contrast, Verhoeven (2016) delves deeper into the dimensions of recruiting processes and emphasizes the importance of a positive candidate journey as a crucial element of employer branding strategies. Verhoeven (2016) integrates psychological theories and qualitative research to detail the nature of the candidate experience, from raising awareness to securing post-hire commitment. Both works provide insights that are applicable to corporate processes. Given the scarcity of talent and increasing competition in global labour markets, Verhoeven's (2016) approach to fostering reliable connections with candidates is particularly relevant. By prioritizing a positive candidate experience and commitment, organizations are urged to enhance their employer branding strategies. Verhoeven (2016) presents a perspective that is less focused on technology. Both books address the related topic of employer branding and contribute to academic discourse while guiding HR and recruiting specialists in implementing more effective candidate experiences. They highlight the importance of improving organizational efficiency and candidate satisfaction by refining employer branding concepts and the candidate journey from differing viewpoints.

The second main focus of Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) concerns social media recruiting within the candidate journey, a theme also prominent in the book edited by Ralph Dannhäuser (2023). Both works offer insights into how digital and social media channels are integrated into recruiting efforts. Specifically, Dannhäuser (2023) zeroes in on the use of social media channels in recruitment processes, providing expert insights, practical tips, and addressing legal considerations related to social media recruiting based on professional expertise and practical experience. Additionally, a tailored guide for HR and recruiting specialists on incorporating social media platforms into recruitment strategies is provided. Both texts are applicable to corporate processes, yet they illustrate social media recruiting from distinct perspectives. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) cover the entire candidate journey within companies, while Dannhäuser (2023) narrows the focus to social media recruiting as a specific component of digital recruitment. Social media's role is increasingly critical in enhancing brand awareness and strengthening candidate commitment. Through bridging theory and practice, both authors enhance the understanding of digital recruitment and its

social media aspects, offering valuable insights for both academic and corporate contexts. Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) as well as Dannhäuser (2023) approach digital recruiting strategies from unique angles but share a commitment to improving organizational performance and recruitment outcomes by integrating more digital elements and social media aspects into recruitment processes.

The book by Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023) serves as an intermediary resource for both academic discourse and practical application in corporate settings, addressing the candidate journey from a digital recruiting perspective and positioning it among general recruiting strategy guides and specialized literature on tools and topics in digital recruiting, particularly social media recruiting. By synthesizing insights from these works, organizations can develop comprehensive recruitment strategies that utilize the full spectrum of digital and social media channels, thus maximizing their capacity to attract and retain talent.

Another look has to be taken onto arising trends. Gamification is an emerging trend in the field of recruiting. Kirovska et al. (2020) introduce gamification as a novel approach within recruiting, incorporating game elements to enhance the candidate experience and increase candidate commitment. Gamification incorporates game-like aspects into recruiting processes and practices, transforming ordinary tasks into engaging experiences. Jansen (2023) delves deeper into the concept of recruitment, which merges recruiting and entertainment components to optimize the experience within recruiting processes. Jansen (2023) argues that gamified assessments provide a more appealing and accurate method of evaluating candidates' skills and their suitability for a position. Furthermore, Jansen et al. (2022) present empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of gamification in e-recruiting. Through a series of experiments, the authors demonstrate the positive impact that gamified recruiting processes have on candidates' appreciation, commitment, and intentions to apply. By integrating gamified components into recruiting processes, organizations can mitigate candidate fatigue, enhance the candidate experience, and gain more reliable insights into candidates' skills. Given the upcoming trends of recruitment and gamification in the field of recruiting, the necessity of integrating social media into the candidate journey and tailoring recruiting practices to the target group is emphasized. The overall approach of digitalizing the candidate journey, advocated by Lorenz and Nientiedt (2023), is supported and highlights the importance of the discussed subject to recruiting strategies.

In an era where the economy is driven by disruptive technologies, social media trends, and data streams in a highly competitive labour market (Uggerslev et al., 2012), this book comes highly recommended. Given the multidimensional nature of recruitment, further literature also stresses the importance of paying close attention to each specific part of the recruiting process (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). This book is considered essential reading for those with some recruiting experience, yet who need to gain deeper insights into the technological and digital factors that drive the candidate experience. Leveraging insights from behavioural psychology, data analytics, and technological developments, the authors establish a solid foundation for optimizing recruiting processes, particularly in relation to the digitalization of the candidate journey and experience. Although the book could benefit from a more extensive scientific perspective on recruitment topics, its practical implications and actionable insights make it a valuable resource for companies striving to master the complexities of modern recruitment. Given the industry-specific nature of its examples, companies should assess whether these examples can be applicable to their own situations. Additionally, it is crucial to consider whether digital trends, in particular, can be implemented as long-term instruments. Digital trends and platforms evolve rapidly due to technological disruption, necessitating that recruitment practices be flexible and adaptable. These practices also need to be tailored to the intended target group. "Digitales Recruiting entlang der Candidate Journey" is particularly suitable for companies or representatives eager to enhance their understanding of the digital aspects of the candidate journey and recruitment processes, and who aim to implement effective strategies and approaches in talent acquisition. The book provides a thorough and guided exploration of the digital components of recruitment processes from the perspective of the candidate journey.

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