

# Accessible eRecruiting Using Social Media

## An Employer Tip Sheet



## In today's marketplace, social media and eRecruiting go hand in hand

More and more employers are using social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter to advertise job postings and promote their companies, while job seekers are using them to network, learn about career opportunities, and apply for jobs online. But not all social media content is accessible to all people, which limits the reach and effectiveness of these platforms.

## Good News and Bad News

In a [national survey of people with disabilities](#) conducted by the Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT), 50.3 percent of respondents said they use social media when searching for a job. That's great news for the millions of employers who are leveraging social media in their eRecruiting. But in that same survey, 43 percent stated that they have issues with accessibility and usability when using social media to job search.

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## Accessibility Pain Points and Solutions

Thankfully, there are a number of ways to ensure that all users, including those with disabilities, can access and absorb the social media posts you use to search for candidates, connect with talent, and advertise your company's brand. Check out these simple solutions to common problems:

### Inaccessible Images

Eye-catching photos and images are a great way to liven up your social media posts—particularly on Facebook, which more than 66 percent of employers use to showcase their brand and generate referrals. But images are not always accessible to people with visual impairments.

#### Solutions:

- If an image accompanies your post, take the time to describe that image for those users who aren't able to see it. Your posts should describe what/who appears in the image and repeat any text that is displayed within the image.
  - ◇ [The Paciello Group: Notes on Providing Alt Text for Twitter Images](#)
- When posting photographs in an album on social media, caption each photograph with an adequate description.
- Use proper dimensions to size images for each social media platform, and include height and width information in your images' alternative (ALT) text tags. This will give users who are non-visual and using screen reader software an indication of the presence and nature of your visual content.
  - ◇ [BufferSocial's Mega Guide to Ideal Image Sizes for Your Social Media Posts](#)

## Inaccessible Recruitment Videos

Smart employers today are posting impactful recruitment videos on YouTube and then linking to them through other social media platforms. But videos are not always accessible to people with hearing or visual impairments.

### Solutions:

- Add open captions, or subtitles, to the recruitment videos that you post to aid those with hearing impairments. Ideally, your video production company can do this for you during the creation of the video. But alternatively, Facebook and YouTube both offer ways to add captions after the fact:
  - ◊ [How to Add Closed Captions to Facebook Videos](#)
  - ◊ [Creating Subtitles and Closed Captions on YouTube](#)
- Add audio descriptions to your videos to assist those with visual impairments, or provide a link to a video transcript. There are numerous approaches you can take.
  - ◊ [\[Video\]508 Accessible Videos – How to Make Audio Descriptions](#)
- If you share videos from other sources, try to find ones that already have captions and audio descriptions.

## Confusing Job Postings and Hashtags

Surveys show that 92 percent of employers use LinkedIn to post jobs openings, while 48 percent use Facebook and 39 percent use Twitter. But social media posts about job openings have a tendency to be long, poorly written, and full of confusing jargon—which can pose challenges to many users, including those with cognitive disabilities.

### Solutions:

- Keep information simple and to the point. Sharp, concise content usually results in accessible content. Use plain language and avoid confusing jargon.
  - ◊ [Plain Language Guidelines](#)
- Simplify your hashtags. Only use hashtags for key words or phrases, and make them easy to read.
  - ◊ #donothashtaglikethis
  - ◊ #do #not #hashtag #like #this
  - ◊ Use “camel case” for groups of words in a hashtag, #LikeThis
- Use periods to separate letters in acronyms to make them screen reader friendly (e.g., “C.I.A.” versus “CIA.”)

## Lack of User Support

In spite of your best efforts to provide accessible social media content in your eRecruiting process, there may be inherent limitations within the platforms themselves that pose challenges to your users. That’s when user support and additional access points come into play.

### Solutions:

- Make your contact information available on your social media account page. List a primary phone number and e-mail address where a user can reach your organization with questions, or provide a link to your company website that lists the appropriate contact information.
- Make your social media content available through more than one channel. Provide easy points of entry for more information. Some of the most common ways are to post threads on your website, provide options to sign up for daily e-mail digests of social media posts, or to add a social media widget to your company website.
- Provide links or contact information for official social media support and accessibility assistance. Often, social media providers, themselves, have their own accessibility tips and help desk support. Educate yourself about them and provide links to those resources for your followers.

## And Remember...

Social media posts aren’t truly accessible if they link to inaccessible content. So if your eRecruiting posts link to websites or job applications, those must be accessible, too. Turn to PEAT for more information about general accessible technology best practices.

## Learn More:

- [DigitalGov: Social Media—Accessibility Issues and Solutions](#)
- [DigitalGov: Toolkit on Improving the Accessibility of Social Media in Government General Social Media Accessibility Tips](#)
- [DigitalGov: Federal Social Media Accessibility Toolkit Hackpad](#)
- [PEAT: TalentWorks—Make Your eRecruiting Tools Accessible](#)