



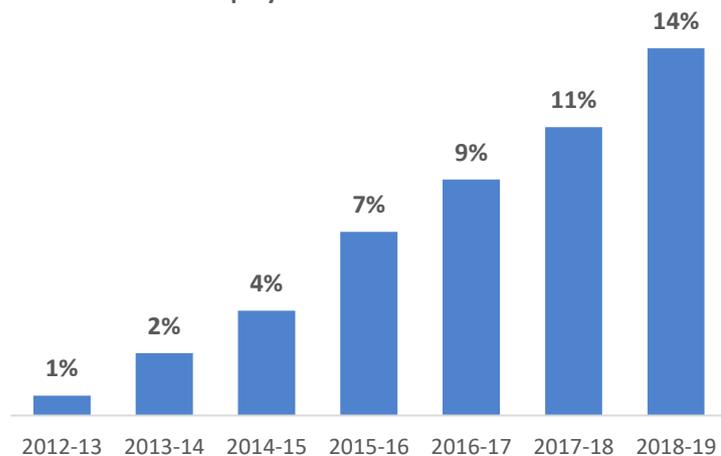
Recruiting through Facebook job groups

Employers' use of social media increasing

There are a number of different ways employers can advertise a vacant position ranging from traditional methods such as in newspapers or through word of mouth, to more modern ways like online jobs boards. With social media use on the rise, more employers than ever are embracing social media as a recruitment tool.

In 2012-13, just 1 per cent of vacancies were advertised on social media; this has now jumped to 14 per cent in 2018-19 (see Chart 1). Among the social media platforms used for advertising vacancies, Facebook 'job groups', in particular, have grown in popularity, offering a free online forum for employers to advertise available positions and for job seekers to find employment.

Chart 1: Proportion of vacancies advertised by employers on social media



Source: Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, 2012-19

A community-based approach

A large number of Facebook job groups, sometimes with thousands of members per group, have been set up in almost every region in Australia (see Figure 1). While most job groups are based on

Figure 1: Selected Facebook job groups and number of members



Source: Facebook, rounded numbers as of August 2019

the geographic location of members, some job groups also cover specific industries or occupations. For example, there is a group for Trucks and Transport Jobs and an Australian Dental Nurses and Assistants Jobs group. To join these groups, job seekers and employers can search, for example, 'jobs in Melbourne', or 'construction jobs', and opt to join the relevant group. While job groups vary by region, occupation or industry, their overall purpose remains the same – to match job seekers with job opportunities.

How do job seekers and employers use Facebook job groups?

A key feature of Facebook job groups is the interaction amongst group members, with a two-way exchange of information occurring between job seekers and employers.

Once accepted as a member of a Facebook job group, a user can publish text posts, upload photos, and comment on other members' announcements. For example, a job seeker may publish a post detailing their intention to find work and would typically include their available work hours and desired industry or occupation. The more information in the advertisement, the more likely that it will attract attention and comments from potential employers (see right for an example of this type of interaction).

After any available work in warehousing, labouring and construction... Have over 8 years' experience driving forklifts. Available to start immediately.

Jobs in Brisbane Facebook group member post (job seeker)

We have a casual warehouse hand position available. If interested please send résumé to [email address].

Jobs in Brisbane Facebook group member, reply to original post

Calling Beauty Therapists... [We] are looking for a number of therapists in full/part time roles... Great rates of pay and amazing benefits! Get in touch to find out more via the Facebook page... 😍

Perth Jobs Facebook group member post (employer)

Would you be open to hiring university students at all?

Perth Jobs Facebook group member, reply to original post

We have casual roles which would suit a student...

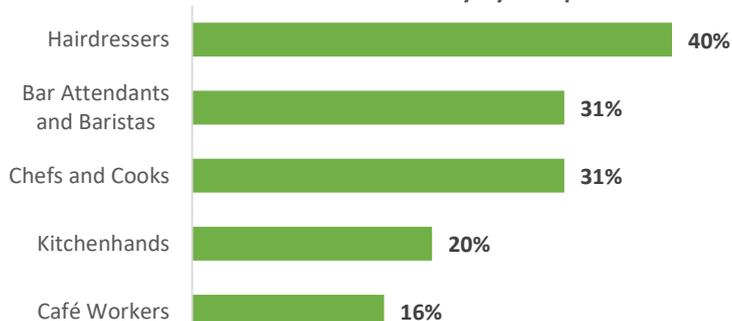
Perth Jobs Facebook group member, employer's reply to comment

Once an employer joins a Facebook job group they can browse and comment on job seeker posts, or choose to publish their own vacancy. Once an employer has uploaded details of a vacancy, job seekers can comment on these posts requesting further information, with employers often publicly replying with the relevant information (see left example).

Occupations advertised on Facebook

Employers in the services sector often use Facebook for recruitment. Four in ten employers who recruited for hairdressers advertised the vacancy on the social media platform, while 31 per cent of employers with vacancies for bar attendants and baristas used Facebook (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: Proportion of employers who used Facebook to advertise their vacancy by occupation



Source: Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, 2017-19

Online support for job seekers

Group members often post photos of “staff wanted” signs they see in shop fronts to help people in the group find work, whilst also giving the original advertisement further exposure. Users ‘like’ these posts, with many ‘tagging’ their friends in the comment section below to alert them to the information posted.

Am I the only one who’s applied for over 100 jobs to hear nothing back?

Jobs in Brisbane Facebook group member

I work in recruitment and would be happy to have a look at your résumé.

Jobs in Brisbane Facebook group member, reply to original post

Group members also provide support for discouraged job seekers, with posts uploaded by those that are struggling to find work often attracting comments of encouragement and advice (see left for an example of this interaction).

Employer attitudes to Facebook recruitment

For many employers, job groups provide an easy way to access labour quickly and target job seekers. They also enable employers to screen potential employees. By assessing individual Facebook profiles, employers are able to shortlist applicants based on how they present themselves online. To broaden their audience, employers can also post advertisements in multiple groups to extend their reach. For example, a Central Coast based employer could post vacancies free of charge in the Central Coast, Newcastle, and Hunter region groups. This ensures their advertisement reaches a large local audience, at no cost to the business.

It’s good exposure... It’s free... and a lot of people use it.

– Employer, Central Coast

If people have time to be sitting around reading Facebook... they’re probably not inclined to be working.

– Employer, Canberra

While this method works for some employers, others find it less suitable. After receiving no hits on their job advertisements, one employer reported that they turned to an employment agency, where they had ‘two people ready to start the next day’. Employers sometimes also have negative perceptions about job seekers who use Facebook (see comment at left).

Data sources include the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business’ *Survey of Employers’ Recruitment Experiences*, with qualitative examples taken from various public job groups (*Jobs in Brisbane* and *Perth Jobs*) and employers contacted via information they included in vacancy advertisements in local Central Coast and Canberra job groups.