

5-15-2012

# EMPLOYER BRANDING VIA SOCIAL NETWORK SITES - A SILVER BULLET TO ATTRACT IT PROFESSIONALS?

Franziska Brecht  
*Humboldt-University Berlin*

Andreas Eckhardt  
*Goethe University Frankfurt*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2012>

---

## Recommended Citation

Brecht, Franziska and Eckhardt, Andreas, "EMPLOYER BRANDING VIA SOCIAL NETWORK SITES - A SILVER BULLET TO ATTRACT IT PROFESSIONALS?" (2012). *ECIS 2012 Proceedings*. 89.  
<http://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2012/89>

This material is brought to you by the European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS) at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in ECIS 2012 Proceedings by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact [elibrary@aisnet.org](mailto:elibrary@aisnet.org).

# **EMPLOYER BRANDING VIA SOCIAL NETWORK SITES - A SILVER BULLET TO ATTRACT IT PROFESSIONALS?**

Brecht, Franziska, Humboldt-University Berlin, Spandauer Str. 1, 10178 Berlin, Germany,  
franziska.brecht@wiwi.hu-berlin.de

Eckhardt, Andreas, Goethe-University Frankfurt, Grueneburgplatz 1, 60323 Frankfurt,  
Germany, eckhardt@wiwi.uni-frankfurt.de

## **Abstract**

*Due to a shortage of IT professionals, many companies intensify their efforts to be perceived as attractive employers in this field, especially by means of social network sites (SNS) such as Facebook. However, it is unknown whether these presences do really attract IT professionals, and if so, whether this is more due to the utilitarian (job search related) characteristics or to the hedonic (entertaining) characteristics of the SNS. In our study, we compared the usage behavior of IT graduates with that of a different group of graduates (in this case: humanities graduates). Our results reveal that corporate SNS presences are suitable to effectively attract IT professionals. Our study proves that the usage behavior of IT graduates is predominantly driven by utilitarian aspects of the SNS presences, while we could verify that humanities graduates use such SNS presences predominantly for entertainment purposes. Therefore, it seems advisable that companies choose the design for their SNS presence with particular regard to the target group that they want to attract and recruit.*

*Keywords: Employer Branding, Recruiting, Social Network Sites, IT Professionals, Hedonic and Utilitarian Information Systems, Structural Equation Modeling.*

# 1 Introduction

There are three reasons leading to a shortage of IT professionals: an increasing demand of such experts due to the growing importance of IT in companies; decreasing numbers of students of computer science and information systems (Choudhury et al., 2010); third, the demographic transition in developed countries leading to a skills shortage (Frank et al., 2004). Therefore, attracting, recruiting, and retaining qualified IT professionals is one of the biggest challenges IT executives face nowadays (Luftman et al., 2009). This leads companies to increase their recruiting efforts, but also to bring out new innovative strategies (Agarwal and Ferratt, 2002). For that purpose, social network sites (SNS) offer new opportunities that can be used for recruiting, as they provide a platform that enables a company not only to market its products, but also to promote its image as an employer. The latter is commonly referred to as employer branding, which aims at designing ‘... *the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company*’ (Barrow and Mosley, 2005) – the so-called employer brand.

The advantages of employer branding via SNS are evident: job seeking graduates, who had, ten years ago, mainly the possibility to search for job ads in newspapers, on websites or online job boards, nowadays can e.g. participate in company-related discussion boards on platforms such as LinkedIn, get informed about corporate events via Facebook fan pages, or watch recruiting videos on YouTube.

Yet, the potential of employer branding with regard to IT professionals via SNS has been explored only marginally, if at all. Therefore, the study at hand aims at providing a first step by answering the following research questions: What characteristics (utilitarian vs. hedonic) of an SNS presence have an influence on users’ acceptance of corporate SNS presences? This has also been a long-term concern in the human-computer-interaction of IS research (Hassenzahl 2006)). Current approaches in this field show that it is necessary to put experience before functionality (Hassenzahl 2010), and to discover what really matters to humans.

Therefore to answer our research question, we conducted a survey among two different user groups and analyzed the data by means of a Structural Equation Model (SEM). Due to a large survey of the German job market conducted by Weitzel et al. (2011), which identified university graduates’ norms and values, we chose humanities graduates, because they have the fewest similarities with IT graduates as concerns their online job searching behavior. The paper begins with the research background of our study, which is followed by the hypotheses of our research model. Subsequently, we describe the development of the constructs. Following the subsequent data analysis, we will discuss our findings and their managerial implications.

## 2 Research Background

### 2.1 Recruiting IT Professionals

To reach and attract the scarce group of IT professionals, Weitzel et al. (2009) recommend ‘target group orientation’. This means that ‘*a company must familiarize itself with, and respect, the behaviors, values, and environment of different target groups of candidates and respond to their individual interaction modes and expectations by using communication and attraction channels and messages that reflect their personality, style, and needs*’ (Weitzel et al., 2009, p.186). After identifying the environments of their target groups, companies should be present wherever potential candidates are, whether it is in the real or the virtual world (Weitzel et al., 2009). Further, in order to attract IT professionals, the authors recommend ‘*to use complementary online resources such as blogs or social networking platforms to attract IT talent*’ (Weitzel et al., 2009, p. 186). Although, summarized in their approach that career presences on SNS represent ‘*an important component of the recruitment portfolio*

*and are especially appropriate when actively searching for new IT talent*' (Weitzel et al., 2009, p. 186), no empirical study has been conducted so far to validate these (merely case-based) statements about the use of career presences on SNS.

## **2.2 Career Presences on SNS for Employer Branding and Recruiting**

SNS are web-based services that allow users *'to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, [...] and] articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection'* (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). SNS can be classified into privately oriented SNS, such as Facebook, and into professionally oriented ones such as LinkedIn. Whereas the former aim at providing a predominantly hedonic value, the latter aim to provide a predominantly utilitarian value to their users (van der Heijden, 2004). This distinction was blurred when Facebook users eventually launched their careers and started to add professional contacts on their Facebook profiles (Skeels and Grudin, 2009). In addition, companies started to increasingly use both types of SNS for employer branding purposes (Laumer et al., 2010). Therefore, some SNS offer special accounts (hereafter: career presences), for companies or organizations (e.g. fan pages on Facebook).

In contrast to corporate career websites or online job boards such as monster.com, career presences can offer additional advantages for companies and users. First, career presences can provide more company related information than only the company's vacancies. Second, the career presences are more easily accessible to the target group, as many potential employees are using the SNS anyway. Third, some SNS allow for the visualization of the user's direct connections to other users. This is especially useful for recruiters, as they can approach strangers through a mutual acquaintance (Skeels and Grudin, 2009). Fourth, SNS offer features that allow for interactivity, e.g. polls, chat, and so-called 'likes'. On career presences, increased interaction between employers and users may lead to benefits on both sides. The interactivity allows for building up a sense of connectedness of the user to a specific company. For example, the user can present herself/himself to the company prior to the actual application process. Additionally, the company can get a first impression of the user (Brecht et al., 2011).

However, many companies do not seem to exploit these advantages. More specifically, many companies do not pursue a specific strategy to recruit their target group via career presences (Brecht et al., 2011). Further, many companies do not carefully select the information they publish online. Therefore, they miss the opportunity to purposefully attract applicants, to distinguish themselves from competing employers (Backhaus, 2004). Moreover, they may cause information overload, which can be caused by the permanent growth of SNS. More users and therefore more content make it increasingly difficult for users to identify interesting content. Information overload interferes with the hedonic experience, which can result in frustration and dissatisfaction (Koroleva et al., 2010).

## **2.3 Measuring the utilitarian and hedonic value of systems**

Utilitarian systems help the user to perform a specific task, whereas hedonic systems provide a certain mood as a value in itself, e.g. enjoyment while playing a computer game (van der Heijden, 2004). The distinction between utilitarian and hedonic systems is not as apparent as their names suggest. This is especially true for mixed systems. An example for a mixed system is the Internet: users can perform a specific task, such as searching for a job, or simply surf the Internet for fun (Sun and Zhang, 2006). Consequently, one should not distinguish systems based on the value they offer, but instead ask whether a certain task carries a utilitarian value or a hedonic value (Sun and Zhang, 2006).

In order to empirically measure the factors that influence technology acceptance of mixed systems, van der Heijden (2004) suggests to study the benefits users derive from such systems. In his research model, the hedonic value is operationalized as the construct 'Perceived Enjoyment', whereas the utilitarian value is operationalized as the construct 'Perceived Usefulness'. On one hand, 'Perceived

Enjoyment’ measures “*the extent to which the activity of using the computer is perceived to be enjoyable in its own right, apart from any performance consequences that may be anticipated*” (Davis et al. 1992, p.1113). On the other hand, ‘Perceived Usefulness’ measures “*the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance*” (Davis et al., 1989). ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ is conceived as purely intrinsically motivated, whereas the ‘Perceived Usefulness’ is conceived as purely extrinsically motivated (Davis et al., 1992).

In technology acceptance literature, ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ has been found to influence the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ (Venkatesh et al., 2002), but also to be influenced by the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ (Davis et al., 1992; van der Heijden, 2004). Those studies, which support the idea that ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ has an influence on ‘Perceived Enjoyment’, are often based on motivational theory (Deci, 1975) or on the motivational model of technology acceptance (Davis et al., 1992). For the purposes of this study, we adopt ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ as an antecedent for ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ and ‘Perceived Usefulness’, given the rationale that career presences that are perceived easier to use are more likely to be perceived enjoyable (Teo et al., 1999).

### 3 Model Development and Hypotheses

Our research model consists of the endogenous constructs suggested by van der Heijden (2004) and Davis et al. (1989), and exogenous constructs designed for the purposes of this study. All endogenous constructs (‘Perceived Usefulness’, ‘Perceived Ease of Use’, ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ and ‘Intention to Use’) and their relationships are taken from the model (cf. section ‘Utilitarian vs. hedonic systems’) of van der Heijden (2004). As the relationships between the constructs have been validated several times before, they will not be hypothesized in this study. Our exogenous constructs were designed as a result of a pre-study of approximately 50 corporate SNS presences that companies use for employer branding: on privately oriented SNS (e.g. BMW on Facebook<sup>1</sup>); on SNS offering microblogging services (e.g. IBM on Twitter<sup>2</sup>); and on SNS offering video-sharing services (e.g. Siemens on YouTube<sup>3</sup>). Table 1 lists all exogenous constructs included in our model and examples of items. This table does not contain the scales for the endogenous constructs as they are taken from van der Heijden (2004) and Davis et al. (1989).

The exogenous constructs can be categorized into three factors that seemed likely to influence the attractiveness of these career presences to graduates:

- (i) the type of content (constructs: ‘Appointments’, ‘Daily Working Routine’, ‘Jobs’, ‘Corporate News’, ‘Entertainment’)
- (ii) the media richness, in which the content is presented (construct: ‘Media Richness’); and
- (iii) the degree of interactivity of the career presence and their features (construct: ‘features’).

With regard to the type of content (number (i) above), our pre-study revealed that most companies post information about external recruiting events such as job fairs and about internal recruiting events such as in-house recruiting workshops. This information is likely to be only of interest to graduates who are currently looking for an employment. We operationalize this information by means of the construct ‘Appointments’. It can be assumed that appointments do not hold any hedonic value. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**H1.** ‘Appointments’ will have a positive influence on ‘Perceived Usefulness’.

---

1 <http://www.facebook.com/pages/BMW-UK-Recruitment/120850697961035>

2 <http://twitter.com/IBMDEcareers>

3 [www.youtube.com/siemens](http://www.youtube.com/siemens)

Further, our pre-study revealed that companies post information reflecting the working atmosphere and the company culture. This information includes e.g. experience reports from employees, information about the daily working routine at the company such as work-life-balance, the possibility of representative participation, and information about salaries. According to Brecht et al. (2001), the biggest gap between offer and demand of specific content are insights on salaries and experience reports from insiders. This type of information is probably the most valuable, because it is normally not available elsewhere on the Internet, as this would make the company more vulnerable (Backhaus, 2004). Further, Gatewood et al. (1993) identify the working atmosphere as one of the relevant factors that determine where graduates apply first. This information is operationalized by means of the construct 'Daily Working Routine'. We assume that this information is only valuable for users who are currently searching for a job and that this information has little hedonic value. Therefore, we hypothesize:

**H2.** 'Daily Working Routine' will have a positive influence on 'Perceived Usefulness'.

Our pre-study revealed that only a few companies re-post vacancies on their career presences, as vacancies are mostly posted on employment websites such as monster.com, or on the corporate career website of a company. However, we assume that posting vacancies on career presences to be beneficial both for companies and users. On one hand, companies can receive more applications because users who are not searching actively for a new employment will not visit recruitment websites. However, those users might 'stumble' over vacancies on career presences because they are visiting SNS for other purposes. Thatcher et al. (2002) find that individuals tend to change their current employment situation when being exposed to vacancies, even when they were not searching for a new employment. On the other hand, it seems more convenient for users to find vacancies on SNS they visit for other purposes than on other websites. Therefore, we assume that information about vacant positions on career presences is crucial, as the long-term goal of employer branding is to recruit employees. This information is operationalized as the construct 'Jobs', containing information about vacant trainee positions, vacant positions in general and information about possibilities to directly enter the company. Information about jobs carries no entertaining value, which leads us to the following hypothesis:

**H3.** 'Jobs' will have a positive influence on 'Perceived Usefulness'.

Our pre-study showed that companies not only post job related information on career presences, but also information that serves the purpose of product branding or company branding. Therefore, we included the construct 'Corporate News', which represents information such as the company's net results, the company's products, their corporate social responsibility, and gained awards. We assume that posting this type of content serves three purposes. First, corporate branding and product branding influence the employer brand as all branding shapes the user's image of a company. The more positive a user's image of a company is, the more she/he is likely to apply at that company (Backhaus, 2004). Second, by carefully selecting this information, companies can attract users with different academic backgrounds: While many IT professionals are attracted by the fact that companies are positioned on an international level and competitive salaries, many professionals with a background in humanities are attracted to companies which emphasize their corporate social responsibility (Weitzel et al., 2011). Third, we assume this information to be entertaining or to be informative in general like reading a newspaper, i.e. irrespective of a job search. Thus, we assume 'Corporate News' to provide both hedonic and utilitarian value to the user:

**H4.** 'Corporate News' will have a positive influence on 'Perceived Usefulness'.

**H5.** 'Corporate News' will have a positive influence on 'Perceived Enjoyment'.

The last content-related construct exclusively aims at hedonic purposes and thus stands in contrast to the constructs described above. The construct 'Entertainment' represents the particular content of a career presence which is being reposted from other websites, personal comments of employees from the company, the company's opinion about current developments in politics, sports, and society, as well as greetings and congratulations to fans, likers, followers, and employees. Ridings and Gefen

(2004) identified entertainment, in terms of deep insights of the operator’s daily business as one of the major factors for virtual community attraction. Especially, if the operating company reveals insights into the company’s culture, e.g. about the atmosphere and the communication within the company, users’ will be even more attracted. With view to the jobseeker, “inside” information on the corporate culture of a potential employer is one of the most important predictors for a jobseeker’s intention to join a specific company (Weitzel et al. 2011). Due to the reasons mentioned above and according to the theoretical underlying of the model by van der Heijden (2004), we assume that:

**H6.** ‘Entertainment’ will have a positive influence on ‘Perceived Enjoyment’.

As to number (ii) above, all these types of content can be presented in different formats such as text, pictures, videos, or pod casts. The degree of diversity of these formats in one presence is represented by the construct ‘Media Richness’ in our study. The richer the media is in which content is presented, the easier it is to communicate that content (Lengel and Daft, 1984). The measurement scale of this construct is based on Childers’ et al. (1985) style of processing scale. This scale was initially developed to measure how users carry out different mental tasks and which kind of media they prefer. The scale includes items such as “*I’m generally more audio oriented rather than visual*”. We adapted those items to measure ‘Media Richness’ (Table 1). Further, we assume that the higher the diversity of different media formats on a corporate presence is, the higher is the hedonic values of that presence:

**H7.** ‘Media Richness’ will have a positive influence on ‘Perceived Enjoyment’.

As to number (iii) above, we assume that the technical features of career presences are important, as this is the main advantage of SNS compared to ‘traditional websites’ such as corporate career websites or job boards. We assume that especially IT graduates enjoy such ‘Features’. Therefore, we hypothesize:

**H8.** ‘Features’ will have a positive influence on ‘Perceived Enjoyment’.

Constructs	Items: On corporate SNS presences, ...
Appointments	I would like to find information about when and where the company is attending job or career fairs; I would like to find information about internal recruiting events such as workshops.
Jobs	I would like to be informed about vacancies; I would like to get information about trainee programs.
Daily Working Routine	I would like to find out about the company’s employee structure; I would like to find out about employee participation; It is important to me to read employee interviews.
Corporate News	I would like to find information about the company’s annual report; I would like to get information about the company’s products.
Entertainment	I would like to read about distinctions awarded to fans/likers/followers or employees; I would like to find entertaining information, news or videos of other websites (reposting).
Media Richness	I like videos to get informed; I like text format to receive information.
Features	I very much enjoy participating in polls; I like to get in touch with the HR department through chat rooms.

Table 1. Constructs and items

## 4 Survey Development

As all exogenous constructs are self-developed or partially based on latent constructs (scales) from literature, we tested the reliability of the constructs by means of category shuffling. Category shuffling is a method to assess the validity of constructs and to improve the reliability of constructs at a pre-test stage (Nahm et al., 2002). For that purpose, we asked six experts to assign the items to the constructs, which led to an Overall Hit Ratio (OHR) – the ratio of correctly placed items and total number of

items (Landis and Koch, 1977) – of 75%. Accordingly, we refined items, which were not correctly assigned.

## **5 Data Analysis**

To analyze the hypothesized model, we used Partial Least Squares (PLS) modeling, which is a variance-based approach to SEM (Henseler et al., 2009). We used PLS-SEM because it has less stringent requirements concerning the distributional assumptions (Henseler et al., 2009). Therefore, models containing constructs from the technology acceptance model, such as our model (Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and Intention to Use), are usually analyzed with PLS (see e.g. Venkatesh et al., 2003), as they tend to be skewed. We applied SmartPLS 2 (Ringle et al., 2005) to analyze the model.

We sent an invitation with a link to our online survey via several university mailing lists. All respondents who indicated that they study or studied computer science or information systems are categorized as 'IT graduates'. All respondents who indicated to be an active or a former student of cultural science, social science, or linguistics, are categorized as 'humanities graduates'. Out of 443 completed questionnaires, 80 respondents were from our target group of IT graduates, and 64 were from our target group of humanities graduates. To observe graduates' usage of corporate career presences we provided an introducing text describing corporate career presences in Facebook. In order to enhance graduates' understanding, we also provided web-links to well-frequented corporate career presences in Facebook and requested the participants to check out these presences.

### **5.1 Demographics and Control Variables**

In order to account for socio-demographic differences between the two subsamples, we introduced control variables into the corresponding models: age, gender, working experience and turnover intention. With regard to age, we find that the majority of our respondents are between 20 and 30 years of age. With regard to gender, we find that 1/3 of the IT graduates sample is female, whereas 2/3 of the humanities graduates sample is female. The control variables 'Age' and 'Gender' do not influence the 'Intention to Use' in neither of the two models. We measured the working experience in years as a single-item construct. We find that the majority of our respondents in both subsamples have 1-5 years of working experience. Further, we find that the construct 'Working Experience' of the respective graduates sample does not influence the construct 'Intention to Use'. The turnover intention was measured by means of a multi-item construct with self-developed and pre-tested items such as 'I am searching for new job challenges' or 'I could imagine changing my job within the next year'. We find that that 59% of the IT graduates are amenable to change jobs and 41% are currently settled. Among the humanities graduates, 56% are amenable to change jobs and 44% are currently settled. In both models, only the construct 'Turnover Intention' positively influences the construct 'Intention to Use'. Therefore, the differences measured between the two subsamples are predominantly due to their different academic backgrounds.

### **5.2 Measurement Model**

We evaluated our measurement model by determining its reliability and its validity (Table 2). First, we can assume indicator reliability, as all indicator loadings are above 0.707, a threshold defined by Chin (1998). Second, the values for construct validity in our model, determined by the composite reliability, are all above or just beneath 0.8, which is satisfactory even for more advanced stages of research (Nunally and Bernstein, 1994). Third, the convergent validity can be assessed by means of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Most constructs fulfill the recommended criterion of  $AVE > 0.5$  (Chin, 1998). The discriminant validity can be assessed by means of the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981, p. 46) and is also satisfied in this model. It postulates that a latent



construct shares more variance with its assigned indicators than with another latent variable in the structural model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981)).

Construct indicators sub-sample	AVE		Composite reliability		R <sup>2</sup>	
	1	2	1	2	1	2
Appointments	0.768	0.804	0.930	0.942	0.000	0.000
Entertainment	0.543	0.443	0.873	0.819	0.000	0.000
Corporate News	0.516	0.439	0.864	0.820	0.000	0.000
Features	0.384	0.449	0.693	0.800	0.000	0.000
Intention to use	0.848	0.845	0.957	0.956	0.395	0.430
Daily Working Routine	0.421	0.481	0.848	0.878	0.000	0.000
Jobs	0.662	0.735	0.854	0.893	0.000	0.000
Media Richness	0.437	0.537	0.753	0.850	0.000	0.000
Perceived Enjoyment	0.753	0.779	0.924	0.933	0.291	0.331
Perceived Ease of Use	0.769	0.750	0.930	0.923	0.000	0.000
Perceived Usefulness	0.754	0.871	0.902	0.953	0.402	0.430

Table 2. Psychometric properties of the measurement model (1 = IT graduates; 2 = humanities graduates)

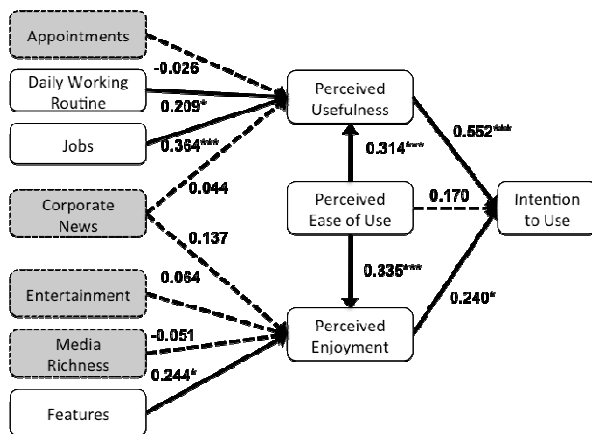


Figure 1. Structural model: IT graduates

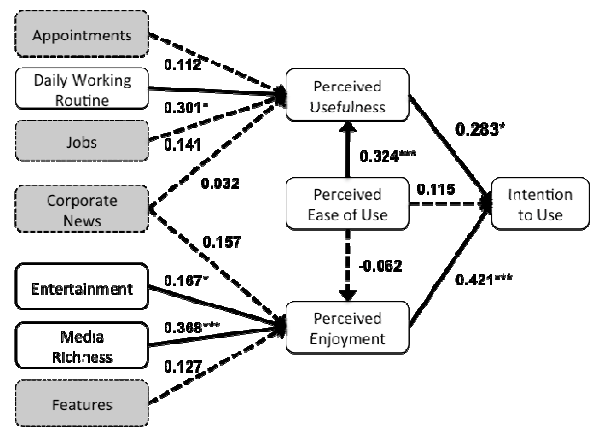


Figure 2. Structural model: humanities graduates

The structural model is depicted in Figure 2 and 3 (insignificant path coefficients are represented as dotted lines (\*\**p* < 0.01; \*\**p* < 0.05; \**p* < 0.10)). Important criteria to evaluate the structural model are R<sup>2</sup>, the level and the significance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2011). Our target construct ‘Intention to Use’ yields a value for R<sup>2</sup> of 39.5% for IT graduates and 43% for the humanities graduates, which seems very good, as we are in an exploratory phase of research with the aim to predict behavioral intentions. To test the significance of the path coefficients, we used the bootstrapping procedure with 4,000 samples as recommended by Henseler et al. (2009), 80 cases for the IT graduates as well as 64 cases for the humanities graduates, individual sign changes, and a case-wise replacement for missing values. In both models (IT graduates and humanities graduates) ‘Appointments’ and ‘Corporate News’ do not influence the ‘Perceived Usefulness’. Further, in the humanities graduates’ model, ‘Jobs’ does not influence ‘Perceived Usefulness’. In the IT graduates model, the ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ is neither influenced by ‘Entertainment’ nor by ‘Media Richness’.

An analysis of the effect sizes enables us to determine to what extent the participants of our study found either the hedonic or the utilitarian value more important. According to Cohen (1988), effect sizes of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are termed small, medium, and large. For IT graduates the utilitarian value of career presences is clearly more important, as in their group the ‘Perceived Usefulness’ has a large effect on the ‘Intention to Use’, while at the same time the ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ has only a small effect on the ‘Intention to Use’ (Table 3). It turns out that humanities graduates found the

hedonic value more important than the utilitarian value: the ‘Perceived Usefulness’ has a small effect on the ‘Intention to Use’, whereas the ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ has a medium effect on the ‘Intention to Use’.

	f <sup>2</sup> (IT graduates model)	f <sup>2</sup> (humanities graduates model)
Perceived Usefulness	0.397	0.091
Perceived Enjoyment	0.073	0.233

Table 3. Effect sizes (f<sup>2</sup>)

## 6 Discussion

While prior IS research on human-computer-interaction discovered that users predominately attribute technologies as either hedonic or pragmatic (Hassenzahl 2006), we are able to enhance this theoretical understanding in our research approach. We show in our research that differing user groups (IT graduates and humanities graduates) could attribute different aspects to the same technology, in this case corporate career presences. Furthermore, we show that based on these hedonic as well as utilitarian attributes, users’ intention to use career presences in SNS is either more driven by perceived usefulness or perceived enjoyment. Thus, we could outline that the use of distinct technologies is less driven by its design and functionality and more driven by users’ perceptions and expectations as assumed by (Hassenzahl 2010).

In the following, we will discuss the differences between the two samples with regard to the factors identified in our pre-study (cf. Figure 2 and 3). The ‘Perceived Enjoyment’ of humanities graduates while being on career presences is influenced by the entertaining content on the presence (‘Entertainment’), the ‘Media Richness’, in which the content is presented, and the available ‘Features’. For IT graduates, only the available ‘Features’ influence their enjoyment on career presences. ‘Appointments’ do not influence the ‘Perceived Usefulness’ for neither of the two samples. One reason for this may be that the announcement of a recruiting event might only be interesting for graduates that are currently looking for a job. In addition, the event must be accessible to them. Reports about these events are probably more interesting for graduates who attended the event. Furthermore, many companies might predominantly put content about appointments on their career presence because this is the main activity of HR departments. Therefore, many graduates might experience information overload or social overload on career presences.

Brecht et al. (2011) already showed the importance of company insights concerning e.g. the work-life-balance and salaries (‘Daily Working Routine’). Also, Cappelli (2001) stated that ‘*diversity, employee benefits, and balancing work and family*’ as well as “*pro bono engagement*” are considerably influencing the user, where to apply. We can confirm this finding for both graduate groups concerned in the study at hand. More importantly, for humanities graduates this type of information is the only predictor determining the perceived usefulness of career presences on SNS. However, IT and humanities graduates do not seem to be interested in ‘Corporate News’ on career presences. Both graduates groups find this type of information neither entertaining nor useful (cf. Figure 2 and 3). This seems surprising, as the company’s image and the image of its products strongly influence the decision of graduates to apply to that company (Backhaus, 2004). This result might also be explained by information overload (Koroleva et al., 2010).

Companies usually use separate channels for each type of branding, i.e. company, product and employer branding. Therefore, ‘Corporate News’ may reach the graduates through other channels than SNS career presences, rendering corporate news on career presences superfluous.

Last, while IT graduates attributed only little importance to the hedonic value of career presences, there is a clear positive influence of the factor ‘Features’ to that end. This may be explained by the fact that IT graduates enjoy technical features. At the same time, neither entertaining content nor the media richness in which the content is presented turned out to be significant.

## 7 Limitations

As the results of every empirical survey our study is limited in some ways. First of all, it only represents a single example of graduates' usage of corporate career presences in SNS within a distinct cultural or geographical region. We could successfully weaken other limitations: as with every self-reported data, there is a possibility for common method biases (CMB) resulting from multiple sources such as consistency and social desirability (Podsakoff et al. 2003). In order to test for CMB, we performed statistical analyses for our research models following the procedure by Podsakoff et al. (2003). We included a construct for method variance in the PLS model. The method variance construct included all the principal constructs' indicators and calculated each indicator's variances substantively explained by the principal construct and by the method. The ratio of substantive variance to method variance is substantially smaller than the general ratio of 42:1.

## 8 Managerial Implications: who, where, how, and what?

Our results reveal that target-oriented employer branding on SNS is suitable in order to attract IT professionals (cf. subsequently under 'who'). We found that IT professionals are different from other professionals as concerns their usage of SNS in order to obtain information about potential employers ('what' and 'how') and the type of SNS to obtain this job information ('where'). In particular:

*Who?* We recommend that companies should first identify their target group. Our results reveal that different target groups are attracted by different kinds of information, features or different degrees of media richness on the career presence. Companies should formulate their target group strategy accordingly.

*Where?* We recommend that companies first identify the specific SNS where many candidates of their target group can be found. Our results show that IT graduates predominantly use professionally oriented SNS compared to humanities graduates, who predominantly use privately oriented SNS. However, as privately oriented SNS are hugely popular, a purely utilitarian presence on such SNS seems to be a promising alternative to successfully recruit IT graduates.

*How?* We recommend including a variety of features on the career presence. Our results show that IT graduates perceive different features as entertaining. We assume that this is due both to the technical interest of IT graduates and the interaction with the HR department they enable.

*What?* Last, our results show that information about the daily working routine and aspects such as the work-life balance are important for both graduates groups. Therefore, we recommend to include information about the daily working routine on every career presence. We assume that this type of information is among the most valuable ones for users, as this information is the hardest to find elsewhere on the Internet. Further, our results show that the existence of job offers on career presences makes the presence more useful for IT graduates. Therefore, we recommend publishing job offers on career presences, even if they are published elsewhere. We assume that IT graduates will find it convenient to have all information that is relevant for the job search on one platform.

## 9 Conclusion

The results of our survey among IT graduates respectively humanities graduates are threefold: First, we show that information systems can both carry a hedonic value and a utilitarian value at the same time. We prove that different user groups can have a different appreciation of more hedonic systems respectively more utilitarian systems. Second, we find that career presences on SNS are suitable for effective employer branding with regard to IT professionals, and hence a potential silver bullet for

attracting IT professionals. Third, target group orientation on career presences on SNS is necessary, as we show that IT graduates are more interested in the utilitarian value of career presences than professionals in other fields, i.e. they are more interested in job-related information than in entertainment.

## References

- Agarwal, R. and Ferratt, T.W. (2002). Enduring Practices for Managing Information Technology Professionals. *Communications of the ACM* (5) 9, 73-79.
- Backhaus, K. (2004). An Exploration of Corporate Recruitment Descriptions on Monster.com. *Journal of Business Communication* (41) 2, 115-136.
- Barrow, S. and Mosley, R. (2005). *The Employer Brand: Bringing the Best of Brand Management to People at Work*. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.
- Boyd, D. M. and Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* (13) 1, <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html>
- Brecht, F., Koroleva K. and Günther O. (2011). Increasing Global Reach: Using Social Network Sites for Employer Branding. In *Proceedings of the Wirtschaftsinformatik (WI), Zurich*, paper 17.
- Cappelli, P. (2001). Making the Most of On-Line Recruiting. *Harvard Business Review* (79) 3, 139-146.
- Childers, T. L., Houston, M. J., and Heckler S. E. (1985). Measurement of Individual Differences in Visual versus Verbal Information Processing. *The Journal of Consumer Research* (12) 2, 125-134.
- Chin, W.W. (1998). The Partial Least Squares Approach to Structural Equation Modeling. In *Proceedings of Modern Methods for Business Research*, Marcoulides, G. A. (ed.), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ, 295-336.
- Choudhury, V., Lopes, A.B. and Arthur, D. (2010). Issues and Opinions: IT Careers Camp: An early intervention strategy to increase IS enrollments. *Information Systems Research* (21) 1, 1-14.
- Cohen, J. 1988. *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences (Second Edition)*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, NJ: Hillsdale.
- Daft, L. and Lengel, R.H. (1986). Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness and Structural Design. *Management Science*, (32) 5, 554-571.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P. and Warshaw, P. R. (1989). User Acceptance of Computer Technology: A Comparison of Two Theoretical Models. *Management Science* (35) 8, 982-1003.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P. and Warshaw, P. R. (1992). Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation to Use Computers in the Workplace. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* (22) 14, 1111-1132.
- Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic Motivation*, Plenum Press, New York.
- Fornell, C.G. and Larcker, D.F. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research* (18) 1, 39-50.
- Frank, F.D., Finnegan, R.P. and Taylor, C.R. (2004). The race for talent: retaining and engaging workers in the 21st century. *Human Resource Planning* (27) 3, 12-25.
- Gatewood, R.D., Gowan, M.A. and Lautenschlager, G.J. (1993.) Corporate image, recruitment image, and initial job choice decisions. *Academy of Management Journal*, (36), 414-427.
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M. and Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM – Indeed a Silver Bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, (19) 2, 139-152.
- Hassenzahl, M. and Tractinsky, N. (2006). User Experience - a research agenda. *Behavior & Information Technology*, 25(2), 91-97
- Hassenzahl, M. (2010). *Experience Design – Technology for all the right reasons*. Morgan & Claypool Publ.
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. and Sinkovics, R. (2009). The Use of Partial Least Squares Modeling in International Marketing. *Advances in International Marketing*, (20), 277-319.

- Koroleva, K., Krasnova, H. and Guenther, O. (2010). 'STOP SPAMMING ME!' - Exploring Information Overload on Facebook. In Proceedings of the 16th Americas Conference on Information Systems.
- Landis, J.R. and Koch, G.G. (1977). The Measurement of Observer Agreement for Categorical Data. *Biometrics* (33) 1, 159-174.
- Laumer, S., Eckhardt, Andreas; Weitzel, Tim Electronic Human Resources Management in an E-Business Environment. In *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, 11(4), 240-250.
- Luftman, J., Kempaiah, R. and Rigoni, E.H. (2009). Key Issues for IT Executives 2008. *MIS Quarterly Executive* (8) 3, 151-159.
- Nahm, A. Y., Solís-Galván, L. E., Rao, S. S. and Ragon-Nathan, T.S. (2002). The Q-sort Method: Assessing Reliability and Construct Validity of Questionnaire Items at a Pre-Testing Stage. IE Working Paper, DO8-103-I, ([http://latienda.ie.edu/working\\_papers\\_economia/WP02-08.pdf](http://latienda.ie.edu/working_papers_economia/WP02-08.pdf)).
- Nunnally, J.C. and Bernstein, I. (1994). *Psychometric Theory*, New York: McGraw Hill.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2003) Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology* (88) 5, 879-903.
- Ringle, C.M., Wende, S. and Will, S. (2005). *SmartPLS 2.0 (M3) Beta*, Hamburg, <http://www.smartpls.de>. Accessed 11-28-2010.
- Ridings, C. M., and Gefen, D. (2004). Virtual community attraction: Why people hang out online. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(1).
- Skeels, M. M. and Grudin, J. (2009). When Social Networks Cross Boundaries: A Case Study of Workplace Use of Facebook and LinkedIn. In *GROUP'09 Proceedings of the ACM 2009 international conference on Supporting group work*, Sanibel Island, Florida, USA, 95-104.
- Sun, H. and Zhang, P. (2006). Causal Relationships between Perceived Enjoyment and Perceived Ease of Use: An Alternative Approach. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* (7) 9, 618-645.
- Teo, T. S. H., Lim, V. K. G. and Lai, R. Y. C. (1999). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in Internet usage. *Omega* (27) 1, 25-37.
- Thatcher, J.B., Stepina, L.P. and Boyle, R.J. (2002). Turnover of information technology workers: Examining empirically the influence of attitudes, job characteristics, and external markets. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, (19), 231-261.
- Van der Heijden, H. (2004). User Acceptance of Hedonic Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly* (28) 4, 695-704.
- Venkatesh, V. (2000). Determinants of Perceived Ease of Use: Integrating Control, Intrinsic Motivation, and Emotion into the Technology Acceptance Model. *Information Systems Research* (11) 4, 342-365.
- Venkatesh, V., Morris, M.G., Davis, G.B. and Davis, F. D. (2003). User Acceptance of Information Technology: Toward a Unified View. *MIS Quarterly* (27) 3, 425-478.
- Weitzel, T., Eckhardt, A. and Laumer, S. (2009). A Framework for Recruiting IT Talent: Lessons from Siemens. *MIS Quarterly Executive (MISQE)* (8) 4, 175-189.
- Weitzel, T., Eckhardt, A., von Westarp, F., von Stetten, A., Laumer, S. and Kraft, B. (2011). *Recruiting 2011*, Weka Publishing House.