



## THE IMPACT OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE ON THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS WITHIN TOURISM CATERING COMPANIES

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**Abstract:** *The integration and immersion of different media has changed their business philosophy fundamentally, and consequently, in the field of employment, the manner and organization of the work of numerous tourism catering companies. A common element to the media and tourism catering companies is that they are motivated to exploit all available resources, aware of the fact that the focus of their strategy is no longer individual channels and media, but differentiated target groups with their various habits, needs and opportunities. The aim of the paper is to focus on the impact of media convergence on the improvement of the recruitment process within tourism catering companies in the Republic of Serbia. Research has indicated a need for a more rapid transformation of the human resources management function, in order to strengthen its strategic role and significance in tourism catering companies.*

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## INTRODUCTION

As new media, with their interaction and multimedia experience, represent a vital part of individual daily practices, Nikolić (2020: 142) indicates that the distinction between traditional and digital media is based on the neutrality of platforms, *i.e.*, that there is no specific and rigidly defined structure. New media offers new forms of media consumption that affects a company's decision - advertisers, to seek out solutions in media convergence, while the combination of several media generates synergistic profits (Ognjanov, 2009).

The proper management of converging communications can have a significant impact on the success of a business. The integration of all communication elements means a harmonization of messages with the behavior of an enterprise, as a stable development platform that ensures trust among target groups (Kostić Stanković, Todović, 2015).

Human resource management is a key element of any modern organization, and businesses that have noted the importance of investing in the most important intangible assets are now benefiting from the benefits of such decisions in terms of high ratings and increased profits (Dramićanin, 2021). In addition, as the most valuable resource, employees are the drivers and carriers of change, innovation, thus creating additional value, increasing efficiency of operations and launching the future success of the organization (Perić et al., 2018). In this context, Perić and associates (2019) particularly point to the importance of employee motivation and satisfaction, as only then will they be fully committed to fulfilling their business tasks and achieving the goals of the enterprise.

In a dynamic and changing environment, where the reflection on the hypermobility of human resources is clearly visible, geographic, demographic, psychological and behavioral segmentation of target groups represents the baseline for companies that prefer fast, efficient and cost-effective, affordable models of attracting as many candidates as possible, who meet the requirements of vacancies, until that objective has been met. A broad and diverse array of multimedia content, continuous monitoring of so-called digital tracks and two-way communication, that respects the value of feedback, can be a significant competitive advantage.

In global terms, digital media architecture has suffered significant changes, and because of the phenomenon of false, incomplete and non-transparent advertisements, more attention is paid to compliance with regulations, in order to prevent the creation of disinformation ballast, which threaten to undermine the credibility of content in chosen media and lead to the erosion of trust. (Sančanin, B. & Sančanin, S., 2019: 98).



## THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EFFICIENT RECRUITMENT PROCESS

By appreciating the fact that employees are the reason for an organization's growth and development, *i.e.*, that human potential is most valuable, the process of attracting candidates during the recruitment process followed by an adequate selection, can be a catalyst for building a more recognizable and higher quality image and reputation (Sančanin, 2021).

However, successful recruitment is not simply the attraction of as many candidates as possible, rather it is attracting those who meet the requirements as well as those who will come to realize, after the time foreseen for socialization, that the new job and company is the right choice for their future career development. In this respect, the importance of adequate communication and its role in the functioning of the organization should be emphasized, given research that has confirmed that there is a strong positive link between communication and the commitment of the employees to the realization of jobs (Dramičanin et al., 2021: 58).

Taking into account the inevitable changes that locations and regions experience in economic, environmental, and socio-cultural terms (Pavlović & Petrović, 2020), it is necessary to stress that delays in attracting and recruiting results in significantly fewer reported job seekers, as well as qualitatively low applications for posted vacancies (Turban & Cable, 2003). Continuous focus on growth and development highlights the new needs of tourism catering companies, in terms of staff with high levels of multifunctional skills, enviable technological literacy, entrepreneurial agility and ability to work in different cultures, structures and markets (Carpignano et al., 2019). The decision to start a complex recruitment process can be of decisive importance in the coverage of a segmented group of potential applicants, which is particularly evident in jobs with a marked seasonal character like tourism.

Recruitment can be of internal and external character, with different recruitment methods being applied in relation to the source (Abdulli, 2013). Petković (2008) views recruitment as a process in which an organization highlights its needs regarding the number and structure of workers, and candidates confirm their desire to work in a particular organization. Bogičević (2003), and then Budaković and Peštek (2018) detect the finding of the best candidates and their long-term retention as the primary tasks of recruiters. Therefore, recruitment of human resources is an intensive and continuous process where both sides should be satisfied, *i.e.*, representing a two-way relationship of power (Searle, 2003).



Table 1. Recruitment methods used by employers

SOURCE OF RECRUITMENT	EMPLOYERS WHO USE IT SOURCE OF RECRUITMENT
Company Web site	87%
Employment website	82%
References	78%
Newspapers and magazines	73%
Colleges and high schools	60%
Professional associations	58%
Employment fairs	55%
Practice	52%
Talent hunters	52%
Network search for work biographies	38%
Radio/TV ads	11%

Source: DecCenzo & Robbins, 2009

The labor market structure is changing, and new generations are more demanding and have higher expectations. The requirements, before HRM managers, that apply to attracting and selecting candidates are increasingly moving away from the traditional approach. The reputation of the company is important because it provides better access to resources, especially to human capital, talents, and new employees, which increase the level of knowledge within the organization (Virijević-Jovanović & Jošanov-Vrgović, 2017, 44-45). In order to obtain credible and useful information, which are of importance when making a final decision on the selection of the most eligible candidates such an approach must be developed, combining traditional and modern techniques (Slavić et al., 2017). The relevance of identifying, attracting, and retaining talent is largely based on the continuous building of a recognizable identity, image, and reputation. Such an approach inevitably leads to the creation of a vision of a desired employer, which will attract significantly more candidates during the recruitment process. Knowledge of an employer, image and reputation are important dimensions that affect potential candidates applying for a position (Turban & Cable, 2003; Cable & Yu, 2006). The significance of recognition and attractiveness, within a target group, is best reflected when a job vacancy is advertised, when the damage caused by the lack of a positive view of the company is directly reflected in



the outcome of employment (Brooks et al., 2003). The expected long-term lack of qualified staff creates unique challenges for companies, which are increasingly differentiating towards successfully attracting qualified candidates. As a result, many companies are focusing on advertising to create "employment brands" and thus offering a tempting professional proposal that is convincing and differentiated (Ewing et al., 2002: 3).

The accelerated transition from traditional to digital media, in the process of attracting job seekers, is accompanied by uncontrolled user-generated content on social media, which in the future could seriously undermine the image and reputation of a company and affect a reduction in job applications.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted within the territory of the Republic of Serbia in May and June 2021 through *the Google Forms* platform. The questionnaire was completed by a total of 133 respondents (76.69% female) holding positions in human resources management or managers in charge of recruitment and selection, at tourism catering companies. The age of the respondents was within the range of 22 to 64 (AS = 45.51; SD = 10.74). The majority of respondents had completed primary or vocational studies (41.35%), or master studies (30.83%). The length of service, within the company the respondent was currently working in, was 1 to 32 years (AS = 10.17; SD = 7.02), while the total length of service was in the range of 1 to 40 years (AS = 19.67; SD = 10.22). The research was anonymous and free of charge, with mandatory individual consent with respect of the objective of the research. Analyzes was performed in the SPSS for Windows v24 (IBM corp, 2016) program.

The research framework was based on the hypothesis: H<sub>1</sub>: *Media convergence contributes to improving the policy and practice of human resource recruitment processes within tourism catering companies.*

Media has been sorted into two categories: traditional (press, radio and TV) and Internet media. Although there are different advertising variables on the Internet, this research took under consideration ads published on companies' websites and on social networks. The third category of independent variables was that the vacancy was posted on both types of media.



RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION RESULTS

To answer the H<sub>1</sub> hypothesis: "Media convergence contributes to improving the policy and practices of the human resource recruitment process in tourism catering companies", several  $\chi^2$  tests were applied for one variable. The  $\chi^2$  test for one variable was applied under circumstances when it was necessary to examine the frequency of choosing certain categories of answers within one question. Based on the results we received information on how many respondents selected each of the response categories (observed frequency), and what the expected frequency of answers was (number of respondents divided by number of response categories). The difference between expected and observed frequencies was residual, indicating whether a specific response category was selected more often or less than the theoretical average (expected frequencies). The results have been presented in tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table 2. Advertising in traditional and digital media; and media convergence for managerial positions

			Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always	$\chi^2$ test
Manager	Advertising in traditional media	Observed f.	6	15	34	25	53	$\chi^2(4) = 49.4,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-20.6	-11.6	7.4	-1.6	26.4	
	Digital media advertising	Observed f.	4	2	4	22	101	$\chi^2(4) = 270.1,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-22.6	-24.6	-22.6	-4.6	74.4	
	Advertising in traditional and digital media	Observed f.	5	3	10	25	90	$\chi^2(4) = 200.1,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-21.6	-23.6	-16.6	-1.6	63.4	

Legend: f - frequency

Table 3. Advertising in traditional and digital media; and media convergence for a technical job or professional level

			Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always	$\chi^2$ test
Technical or professional level	Advertising in traditional media	Observed f.	5	9	26	34	59	$\chi^2(4) = 70.7,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-21.6	-17.6	-0.6	7.4	32.4	
	Digital media advertising	Observed f.	3	4	4	21	101	$\chi^2(4) = 268.6,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-23.6	-22.6	-22.6	-5.6	74.4	
	Advertising in traditional and digital media	Observed f.	2	6	6	32	87	$\chi^2(4) = 192.9,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-24.6	-20.6	-20.6	5.4	60.4	

Legend: f - frequency



Table 4. Advertising in traditional and digital media; and media convergence for a traineeship position

			Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Always	$\chi^2$ test
Intern	Advertising in traditional media	Observed f.	55	29	24	20	5	$\chi^2(4) = 49.9,$ $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	28.4	2.4	-2.6	-6.6	-21.6	
	Digital media advertising	Observed f.	5	1	7	23	97	$\chi^2(4) =$ 243.4, $p < .001$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	-21.6	-25.6	-19.6	-3.6	70.4	
	Advertising in traditional and digital media	Observed f.	29	17	22	32	33	$\chi^2(4) = 7.1,$ $p = .130$
		Expected f.	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	
		Residual	2.4	-9.6	-4.6	5.4	6.4	

Legend: *f* - frequency

The results suggest that advertising, especially in traditional and particularly digital media, is conducted, in the majority of cases, for all three positions: managerial, professional/technical level and intern. When it comes to media convergence or advertising both in traditional and digital media simultaneously, convergence is present when vacancies are advertised for the managerial and for the professional/technical level. However, for intern vacancies convergence is not present ( $\chi^2(4) = 7.1, p = .130$ ).

Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>: "Media convergence contributes to improving the policy and practices of the human resource recruitment process within tourism catering companies", has been partially confirmed.

## CONCLUSION

Media convergence ensures that the vacancy notice, more quickly, reaches the segmented target groups of potential candidates, with lower costs compared to advertising only in traditional media or only in digital media. The research showed that employers in tourism catering companies do not choose to advertise vacancies for those job seekers who are on the labor market as interns. The vulnerability of the intern category on the labor market can be the result of personal, economic, or social factors, which places them at an even greater disadvantage in the recruitment process, when appreciating the principle of equal opportunities and the availability of labor rights. Therefore, the conclusion of this research suggests that active labor market interventions further strengthen the employment of interns (informing unemployed interns, providing intensive and individual assistance and support services), and profile measures for their employment, through the integration of training, employment incentives, subsidies aimed at creating new jobs, as well as through incentives for self-employment.



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