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**Use of social media tops global hiring trends**

**Dubai, September 10, 2013**

Thirty-seven per cent of HR professionals say that companies are increasingly using social and professional networks to find and hire the best talent, according to a new report.

LinkedIn, the world’s largest professional network, with more than 238 million members worldwide and over nine million in the Mena region, today released results of its third annual global recruiting trend survey.

Less than one-third (30 per cent) of those surveyed regarded upgrading employer branding in a competitive talent market is an essential element in attracting the best candidates, and can halve the cost-per-hire.

The study noted that at any one time, only 20 per cent of professionals are actively looking for a new role. The vast majority are passive candidates which, thanks to social media, can now be discovered by recruiters, it said.

Access to new data and insights that can inform strategic decisions of the business was considered vital by 24 per cent of the respondents, while 21 per cent said referrals were still the best sources of hires for a lot of companies, and social media insights are powering new tools that can help businesses increase the talent they have access to.

Ali Matar, Head of Talent Solutions, LinkedIn Mena, said: "The way in which companies identify and hire the best talent has changed, and this new data reveals that social media is the biggest driving force behind this change. Online networking continues to be a strong influence in career opportunities for professionals around the world.”

Masoud Golshani-Shirazi, vice-president of Human Resources, at Aujan Coca-Cola Beverages Company, said: “Social media, and LinkedIn in particular, is now a central part of our recruiting strategy, allowing us to discover and approach great candidates. A quarter of our senior hires came through LinkedIn in 2013 and our average cost-per-hire has been slashed by a fifth.”

LinkedIn Talent Solutions enable recruiters to build identify and manage talent and also improve their employer brand, he added.

Headquartered in Dubai Internet City, LinkedIn opened its Mena office in October 2012 and has over one million members each in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. – **TradeArabia News Service**