onrec

ISSUE 139

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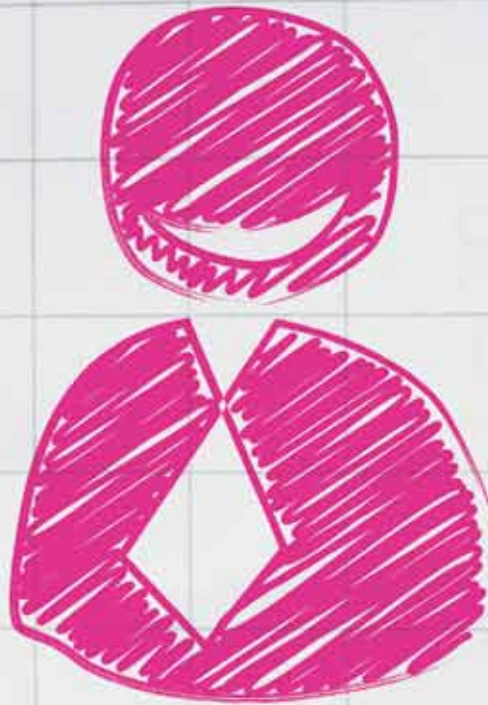+ Online recruitment icons
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FROM THE EDITOR
PREFACE

Welcome to the May / June edition of the Onrec Magazine

I am very pleased with our speaker line up for the 1st October Conference (*see page 6*) we have an interesting mix of employer branding, examples of successful employee and candidate engagement and insights into online recruitment strategies of companies like Direct Line. The days content will range from how the economy will impact recruitment now and in the future to tips on how to make the most of mobile recruiting. Pavlos Paschali (*see page 32*) who has written an article for this edition of the magazine will be providing a legal update on the latest employment law issues and looking at recruiting via social media.

The event will provide am opportunity for learning and discussion about hot topics impacting the online recruitment industry.

There is a two for one offer runs until 28th June! So book up quick to take advantage of the offer!

David Hurst, Onrec

onrec

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NEWS

The Onrec Online Recruitment
Conference and Exhibition 2013

2 for 1 ticket offer ends 28th June 2013

1st October 2013 | The Grange City Hotel, London

Now in it's 9th year, the online recruitment conference will cover the impact of the economy on the UK recruitment industry, how to manage your employer brand, make full use of social media to communicate with candidates and the latest online recruitment industry thinking.

HR Practitioners will provide insights in to how their organisation has embraced online recruitment along with advice from industry experts. The one day conference will include top speakers, who will offer their professional insight into the world of online recruitment and the latest developments in the sector.

Alongside the conference, our exhibition hall will offer a platform for suppliers to the industry to showcase their products and services to HR professionals, job boards, recruitment advertising execs, and all those involved in the online recruitment industry.

Speakers Include:

John Husselbee, Chief Investment Officer, North Investment Partners
Will today's economy make recruiting easier?

Katie Reed, Online Marketing Consultant and Jason Gowlett, Head of Resourcing, Direct Line Group
Creating a careers site tailored to the candidate experience

Fredrik Tukk, Senior Branding & Marketing Manager, Strategy & Relations, Maersk
Strategic Recruitment via Facebook

Matt Alder, MetaShift
Managing your employer brand in a social, searchable and mobile world

Claudia Tattanelli, Global Director, Universum
How to build a strong winning employer brand for today's graduates

Stephanie Weiss, Trainer & Recruiting Specialist, AIRS

Pavlos Paschali, Specialist Employment Law Solicitor, Levenes Employment

Price for the full day event is £350+VAT (*We currently have a 2 for 1 ticket offer which expires 28th June 2013***)**

Price includes:
1. Full Conference Pass
2. Exhibition Pass
3. Hot Lunch
4. Morning & Afternoon Refreshments
5. Drinks reception

The Online Recruitment Exhibition is free to attend

Come and see some of the companies providing the most advanced online recruitment technology and best candidates for your vacancies.

Require other information?
Any queries for conference passes or exhibition information please contact Stuart Gentle on 0208 846 2756 or email stuart@onrec.com.

www.onrec.com/events/conference/ conferenceuk13

IOR partners with
Recruitive

Recruitive becomes the next approved technology partner to join the IOR

Multi job posting and candidate management software provider Recruitive becomes the next approved technology partner to join the IOR.

Richard Clarke, Managing Director at Recruitive comments:

"We are absolutely delighted to have been accepted by the IOR as a partner. The IOR is rapidly becoming the professional body of choice for recruiters and we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship supporting IOR members."

Azmat Mohammed, IOR Director General comments:

"We are very excited by our partnership with Recruitive. Our members will have the chance to try its innovative and award winning products at discounted rates."

Twenty percent discount off multi Job posting and candidate management software tools is available to IOR members. Recruitive are also offering IOR members thirteen months for the price of twelve in the first year plus a free trial of their technology.

Recruitive's suite of highly effective award winning software tools are as follows:-

JobMate – Multi Job Posting Software
Post Social – Social Recruitment
Visible Boost – Boost Job Applications
CV Mate – Candidate Management
Job Pigeon – Job Board Solution

For further details about Recruitive visit www.recruitive.com or call Recruitive on 0845 60 00 550.

Connect™
from EPLOY

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Create a community, build a portal with **Eploy Connect™**

Share, Collaborate, Communicate, Automate. Only Eploy®.

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NEWS

Bullhorn takes 2013 by the horns

New London office is a prelude to a year of international investment and expansion

Recruitment software specialist Bullhorn unveils its global plans for 2013 today as it announces London as the company's international hub.

Taking Bullhorn global is Peter Linas, who is now international MD. Linas comments: "The most exciting thing for us in 2013 will be our expansion into new regions. We're investing in our products, our people and in our physical expansion. We're currently hiring our first employees in mainland Europe who will be based in the Netherlands and have added another three to our team in the north of England."

Linas continues: "Taking our CRM, Bullhorn Reach, and the Bullhorn Marketplace into non-English speaking markets is a huge challenge but our prospects in those countries are ready for an integrated cloud solution that addresses the unique workflow requirements of the recruitment sector. We're currently working on expanding the functionality of our mobile platform."

Linas hints that existing users will see big changes to Bullhorn's accessibility by the end of the year, including browser independence, meaning that Bullhorn will be usable in Safari, Firefox and Chrome, as well as Internet Explorer.

In the heart of London's 'Tech City', Bullhorn's new offices are hard to miss from street level and signify a year of great change for the company – which has gone from start-up to UK market leader in under four years.

Have you got news to share?

Let us know by emailing editor@onrec.com

Job vacancies remain high but salaries suffer

The number of job vacancies in the UK held steady at 460,493 in May but only because employers are keeping a lid on wages and hiring at low salary levels

The number of job vacancies in the UK held steady at 460,493 in May but only because employers are keeping a lid on wages and hiring at low salary levels, according to the latest UK Employment Market Report from Adzuna.co.uk, the search engine for jobs.

The average advertised salary in May was 1.7% lower than twelve months ago, a drop of £571 over the course of year and fell 0.2% month-on-month, currently standing at £33,617 p.a. Taking inflation into account, the real terms drop in salaries is even more pronounced. With CPI inflation running at 2.7% in May, the average advertised salary has fallen by 4.4% (£1,504) in real terms since May last year.

The only regions where average salaries have increased in the past six months are London (+3%) and the South East (+1%). Wales and Eastern England have seen the steepest drop, with average salaries falling by 4% in each region since last November.

Flora Lowther, head of research at Adzuna, explains: "Until last month, job numbers had increased every month this year, which is testament to the resilience of the labour market in an environment where economic growth is anaemic. But salaries have paid the price. Rather than making redundancies and freezing hiring, employers are keeping a lid on the wages of existing employees and hiring new staff at lower salary levels. Wages have fallen by over £1,500 in real terms since last May, which indicates a fall in employer confidence."

Job vacancies in May were up 1.4% from 454,254 in the same month last year, but fell a negligible 0.1% from 460,977 in April.

Regional disparities

Adzuna, who collect every online job vacancy and analyse the data in real time (www.adzuna.co.uk/jobs/uk#stats), reveal there were pronounced regional variations in job vacancies in May. In Aberdeen, the easiest place to find a job in the UK, there were just 0.37 job seekers per vacancy. In the Wirral, the hardest, there were 56 per job.

The data reveals a prominent north-south divide in employment opportunities. All of the top 10 places with the lowest number of jobseekers per vacancy were in the south, while 8 of the 10 hardest places to find a job were in the north.

However, the divide has closed marginally over the past six months. Competition for jobs increased 4% in London, while falling 4% and 3% in Liverpool and Derby respectively.

Flora Lowther comments: "Strong UK-wide employment and vacancy levels are camouflaging a number of underlying weaknesses in the labour market. One of those is the health of regional job markets. In some areas, notably the North West, East, and parts of Yorkshire, the labour market is suffering, partly thanks to public sector austerity. In areas like the Wirral – where there are 56 jobseekers per vacancy – the weakness of the private sector means it hasn't been able to fill the space left by public sector redundancies, which has led to fierce competition for a small number of vacancies. The private sector is stronger in southern areas, so has been more resilient to public sector cuts, which is why there are fewer jobseekers and more vacancies."

NEWS & PARTNERSHIPS

Adecco Job Watch:
Vacancies up across the board

Numbers of permanent and temporary roles advertised during the end of quarter one were significantly up according to data from Adecco

Numbers of permanent and temporary roles advertised during the end of quarter one were significantly up according to data from Adecco.

The figures show that the Banking and Insurance sector was the key benefactor, with an impressive 32% rise in advertised vacancies. Sales (+25%) and Marketing, Advertising and PR (+20%) also saw dramatic increases.

Whilst the start of 2013 saw a considerable drop in available roles, possibly due to a rebalance following new budgets, the big jump from March to April can be explained by the end of the financial year enabling companies to assess whether they have the budget for more staff. The resulting increase in vacancies indicates a very healthy job market.

Vacancies in the IT sector showed the lowest pick-up with just a 5% increase in advertised vacancies. The fact that increases occurred across all industries is however a hugely positive sign for the job market as a whole.

These figures are based on Adecco's data and provide a snapshot of the job market across the country.

Steven Kirkpatrick, Managing Director at Adecco said:

"The impressive increase in vacancies seen across all industries is undoubtedly excellent news for candidates. This quarter does however reflect the fluid nature of the market which is prone to change. Whilst candidates can feel positive that increased vacancies should provide them with a greater choice of opportunities, it is important they remain alert in their job search."

Mobile is the essential skill for IT careers

IT professionals[1] have indicated that in just three years, all developers will need to have the skills or experience to deliver mobile projects

IT professionals have indicated that in just three years, all developers will need to have the skills or experience to deliver mobile projects.

As the infiltration of mobile into life and work increases, new research from IT recruitment specialists CWJobs.co.uk has found that two-thirds (60%) of IT pros have never worked on a mobile project – but deem their current skills adequate for working across multiple platforms. The majority (78%) believe the ability to work on web development projects is satisfactory experience for taking on a mobile role.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of IT professionals shared a desire to work on mobile projects with over half (53%) of them believing they currently have the experience to do so. This comes as further reports indicate a concern over the lack of technical mobile talent in the UK to meet mobile demand.

Richard Nott, Website Director, CWJobs.co.uk explains: "With the exponential growth of mobile and the commercial opportunities it presents to business, we need to make sure the UK has the talent to compete. IT professionals are demonstrating real interest in being involved in mobile projects – but there's a requirement from business for very specific technical skills in mobile candidates which is creating a perceived 'skills gap'".

"In order to fill this gap, companies could consider recruiting IT pros from within the business to fulfil mobile roles, or look at a recruitment drive for candidates with existing web skills. With tech pros indicating a three-year deadline, it's important to review these options now, or the UK may start to slip behind other competitive markets in its ability to produce and manage mobile projects.

BIG DEBATE

Richard Nott,
CWJobs.co.uk

With growing numbers of jobseekers, recruiters are seeing ever-increasing numbers of applications. To manage these, reports have suggested recruiters are using big data to process applicants, through the use of word recognition systems and survey tests in a bid to save time. As the use of big data in recruitment becomes more prolific, it is worth bearing in mind that applicants could become wise to the system, meaning recruiters will need to adapt their methods of keyword searching, or move to new methods of candidate sorting, in order to ensure they are delivering the right candidate for positions.

Chris Heron,
Plugin Recruiter

"Semantic advertising – Top talent is getting harder and harder to find, as a result advertising is having to become smarter and more impactful. This requires a more intelligent approach based on big data and improved use of engaging content. I think we are going to move away from the mundane and flat blanket advertising that clouds our industry and see far cleverer use online profiling to create a more personalised job advert that finds the job seeker rather than the job seeker finding the advert."

[BIG DEBATE QUESTION]

What are the future trends
for online technology?

Kevin Hegebarth,
HireIQ

One clear trend is toward "Big Data" – the use of powerful analytics to deal with exponentially expanding information. New, more sophisticated ways of analyzing data, for example, online audio analytics technology, can more reliably judge a number of key performance indicators more quickly and efficiently. More remarkably, automated systems are learning to parse the style and emotion of a candidate's speech.

Another sea change is the deep integration of recruiting with the social web. Eventually the recruiting process may take place entirely within a larger social context, fluidly and intuitively, erasing the push/pull dynamic of the job posting and resume.

RECRUITMENT ICON
CHRIS BOGH, EPLOY

Onrec: What were you doing before Eploy?
CB: Paul Burgess and I were both at university together and it was the time when the internet was really growing rapidly, with people using it a lot more. We were very excited about this and saw an opportunity to get involved by creating bespoke software and websites; this resulted in us setting-up ITS Software Systems 15 years ago. During this time we were creating a lot of websites for recruitment agencies, who had started to ask if we could develop ways for them to import candidate registration details from their website into their database systems of the time, which we did, and this progressed into looking at how we could filter this data before exporting it into their system.

We built custom tools to achieve this in the web browser; the whole concept of browser based software then became apparent to us. This was a completely new concept that was really in its infancy at the time - back then it was known in the mainstream as ASP software. It was through all of this work that we ended up creating a unique recruitment software system for agencies. We branded it Eploy, and we've not stopped since!

Onrec: What are your plans for 2013?
CB: We've recently launched our new web platform, Connect, which we've spent the last two and a half years developing. Connect is about the modern landscape of recruitment and

people being able to communicate in different ways.

Nowadays there are a number of ways people can communicate with each other, via social media, mobile devices and good old fashioned email and text. Connect provides the medium for all those involved in the recruitment process, from candidates, hiring managers and agencies, to be able to communicate in different ways via their recruitment system.

Mobile is going to have a massive impact this year. It's quickly gone past the point of being 'a nice to have'; it's now a necessity to make sure you are catering for candidates who want to manage and progress their careers through a mobile device. So for 2013, it's mainly

about promoting the mobile-enhanced benefits of Connect and introducing it to our clients and potential new customers. But it's not just candidates, recruiters and hiring managers also want to manage their workload on the move.

We've also got several exciting developments taking place in the background; our constant fascination with the internet (geeky some might say!) means we are always looking for ways to further develop Eploy to keep it at the forefront, and we are already looking at the next iteration of Connect. We never rest on our laurels!

Onrec: If you were not working in recruitment technology today, what would you do?
CB: I have always had an interest in computers and software, and I love looking at the forefront of technology and using the latest gadgets, so I dare say I would have been involved in this, in some way or another. I also like to write electronic music and play the piano. I like being creative and using technology to produce music; so if I ever did leave this industry this is something I would like to pursue further in the future.

Onrec: What do you think will have the biggest impact in the UK recruitment industry in 2013?
CB: Mobile. It's not the same as the other "fads" that were supposed to revolutionise recruitment. It is something that recruiters have to seriously look at and adopt, because for one reason or another everyone has mobile devices. Be it on a mobile or tablet, this is what candidates are using to browse the internet, at home or at work. The majority of candidates are just not using their PC anymore; they might use their PC later, to fill in an application form or update their CV, but the initial part of the recruitment process is now done on a mobile device.

It's not just candidates either, it's also hiring managers - I know myself when we recruit here at Eploy that I'll take home the iPad and sit on the sofa and go through candidate CV's - its just so much easier to do. We also speak to a lot of managers who are constantly travelling around the country or who work 'out of hours', and for them being able to do all the administrative elements of their job on their mobile device, means that when they are back in the office they can be more productive.

All the different communication channels being used by recruiters is also impacting on changes in working practices, and there is a focus coming back to what we were emphasising a few years ago – using dedicated tools to reduce the administration processes and speed-up communication via social, SMS, Email etc. throughout the recruitment journey, from application to onboarding. Importantly, the

recruiters we speak to, say that by being able to reduce time-consuming admin processes they are able to be more proactive in other areas.

Being able to be pro-active is essential in the modern recruitment landscape.

Onrec: What is your biggest achievement?
CB: It has to be creating Eploy, with Paul, and what we've achieved here as a company. On our own, we started the business from nothing 15 years ago and through word of mouth and recommendations we have been able to grow the business organically year on year, doing what we do well. We are very proud of Eploy; it's a product we continue to sweat blood and tears over to ensure that it is the best it can be technically for our customers.

A lot of software companies these days set-up with huge investments so that they can quickly develop a product to market; whereas with our approach we have been able to continuously develop a system over a 15 year period in line with the needs of the UK recruitment market - this gives it a strong foundation and an integrity that a lot of modern-day software systems don't have. So yes, we are very proud of Eploy and the team we have built-up, who all fully believe in the system and our customer-focused approach to how it's developed, sold, implemented and supported.

Onrec: What makes Eploy different from its competitors?
CB: From a technical point of view, our software is very flexible and so can be adapted for a number of uses.

Although recruitment is inherently the same, everyone tends to do something slightly differently and we've never tried to force them into a way of working. Of course we will advise them, but the flexibility of Eploy is very important because it enables customers to create a solution that suits their own business style.

It is also very feature-rich; there a lot of systems on the market that have come from nowhere and latched on to the latest buzzwords of 'social' and 'mobile friendly', but when you actually dig down into these systems and try to use them on a day-to-day basis there is not much there, no substance behind them. Whereas with Eploy we have the heritage - the complete package with a lot of intelligent features.

Uniquely, we also have Eploy-powered recruitment portals for RPO, agencies, hiring managers and candidates; they add significant value to all the people that interact with a recruitment website and increase the number of services that can be offered. Another key differential is that Eploy is a browser independent system and is completely compatible and accessible from all PC's and mobile devices, as well as being compatible

with all operating systems including Apple Mac. This enables us to offer a truly mobile-enhanced integrated solution.

It is also important to reference that our approach to customer service is also very different; we offer a lot of guidance and we really see ourselves as a technology partner to our clients. This consultative, hands-on approach stems back to the early days of Eploy when recruitment agencies asked if it's possible to develop 'this or that'; this remains core to everything we do, and Eploy gives us the flexibility to be able to continue this underlying principle of 'if it can be achieved, we will do it'. In fact we like to be challenged technically!

Onrec: What are your future plans for developing Eploy?
CB: With our customers we will keep improving Eploy and expanding its functionality in line with new technology, while keeping an eye to what is happening in the world of social media and mobile and everything that entails; plus there will surely be something else around the corner that nobody has thought about yet.

From our experience though we know things never change completely, and it must also be recognised that there are a lot of companies out there who still haven't embraced things we launched two or three years ago; so its good for us to keep going out there and teaching people about what they can do with the technology and bring them up-to-date.

Onrec: Which business leader or other general public figure do you admire most today?
CB: It would be really obvious to say people like Steve Jobs or Branson; while they are inspirational figures, there are also many people not in the public spotlight that are amazing too. I admire anyone who has the courage of conviction, despite the odds being stacked against them, to do something they are really passionate about like Dyson and Trevor Baylis.

Onrec: If you could turn back the clocks, what would you change?
CB: Even though this sounds clichéd, I wouldn't change anything. We have all made mistakes, but as long as you learn from them, you can use them positively to shape you into a better person.

Onrec: What do you enjoy outside work?
CB: Aside from music, which I've already mentioned, my other big passion is kite-surfing. When I get time, I do like to get away from the computer screen and go to the coast and practice my skills but I won't be giving up the day job anytime soon!

HR SOFTWARE

The latest in HR software - from analysing your boss to gamification

There is always something new in the world of software. Along with maximising efficiencies as usual, this year there are products to help you comply with the latest legislation, ways of analysing your bosses' behaviour, onboarding, social media and gamification. With a myriad of options, from software as a service, bought software on site or outsourcing, there is bound to be something to help your business.

The benefits of upgrading or investing in new software are plentiful as they bring not only financial, time and resource savings but also provide an opportunity to address issues that might exist in the business, comments Roger Moore, General Manager, Bond Teamspirit. 'Excessive administration has always been the bane of HR's life, but by automating routine tasks, the team is given space and time to be far more strategic.' There is new government legislation to bear in mind when investing in new software this year. Roger Moore explains 'The introduction of pension auto-enrolment in October 2012, as well as the switch to Real-Time Information (RTI) by HM Revenue & Customs for PAYE data, is forcing organisations to place greater emphasis on the quality of their data. In light of this, when installing new HR software, it is vital to pay great attention to areas such as data entry and workflow. For instance, RTI demands that employers file far more personal information than previously, and the earlier in the process these details are collected, the better in terms of efficiency and accuracy.' Moore advises that when discussing integration and workflows with potential vendors, find out what they offer in the way of payroll or time and attendance modules. He says even if the organisation isn't ready to upgrade these systems yet, it will be a far more seamless approach when the decision is made.

To help with the new legislative changes, MidlandHR recently launched a new Real Time Information (RTI) and auto-enrolment (AE) ready version of its HR and payroll software, iTrent. According to Declan McGrath, their Managing Director MidlandHR has invested considerable resources in enhancing iTrent to meet these new legislative changes, reducing administrative time and cost and minimising set up and configuration costs. The company has actively participated in

> **Mid January figures were 56% higher than December 2012 and 25% higher than January 2012, demonstrating the scale of the growth of the job board.**
>
> Rob Searle, CareerStructure.com

various consultation exercises with HMRC and DWP and was instrumental in helping to shape and influence legislative change. McGrath claims that iTrent's advanced functionality minimises the risk and impact of RTI for example, checking employers' RTI submissions before they are submitted to HMRC. It also addresses the complexities of the upcoming Pensions Reform legislation, with users able to access and view all the relevant information they need on summary screens. With the flexibility to accommodate different approaches to the assessment and enrolment process, users can choose the most appropriate route to meet their own business needs, either undertaking the workforce assessment and auto-enrolment separately or as one process. McGrath reveals that the latest version of their software also includes a number of other enhancements, in areas such as Absence, Learning, Employee Self-Service, Performance Management and Recruitment. It can be delivered as a cloud-based software as a service, an on-premise software solution, or as part of a comprehensive range of HR and payroll outsourced services.

Top tips for a clear and focused selection process from Midland HR :

- Be objective
- Consider key areas for improvement
- Establish the scope of your project
- Identify key milestones
- Set specific and measurable objectives
- Identify project requirements
- Define any important deadlines

The matter of where companies host their data is an issue that may come further to the fore soon, suggests First Choice. As a UK company, they say their hosting services and policies reflect the strictures of the EU's Data Protection Directive which is an important component of EU privacy. They advise that legal positions on data privacy vary around the world. 'In the US, for example, data protection relies on some regulation and self-regulation, rather than strict government legislation. According to the letter of the law, candidates should be informed if their data is hosted outside the EU. Furthermore, under the Patriot Act, the US government may interrogate the data of any US company anywhere in the world or any data hosted by US companies.'

Fairsail further explains why we must think globally, saying the HR systems of the future will not simply be about storing employee records but a way to bring together and

manage teams on a global scale allowing employees across departmental and geographical boundaries to collaborate and achieve success. There are a few things to look out for when purchasing HR software according to Fairsail:
• Software that can cater for the global needs of an organisation whatever its size, allowing for multiple employment rule sets, calendars, currencies and languages
• A system that delivers comprehensive HR analytics for the business user; including global consolidated and local single country reporting
• Software which is functionally complete, easy to use and rapid to deploy
• A system which can easily link with existing technology such as payroll, pensions and benefits systems

There are two areas where Fairsail predicts HR software thriving; global businesses and auto enrolment. Regarding global businesses, they report a large number of clients that are small to mid-size organisations experiencing rapid global expansion. These companies are keen to find one single solution that can manage everything from employees and currency conversion to local employment rule sets.

Susan Vitale, Chief Marketing Officer at iCIMS, Inc., is also of the opinion that HR software is more advanced than ever, with features in HR software that allow companies to engage candidates and provide an experience that is tailored to each new recruit. 'For example, Onboarding software is now equipped with enhanced features that can reduce paperwork, efficiently manage tasks, and streamline communication. Automated email notifications allow companies to trigger email reminders to new recruits and internal resources alike. Companies can showcase their company culture with branded communications for prospective hires and personalised online portals for new employees. Online portals that house dynamic content such as welcome messages from managers and introductions to team members can be tailored to each new hire with specific pictures and videos depending on their department, location, or title within the company. These portals expose new employees to corporate policies and company culture and reduce manual paperwork administration for employees and HR. Task management tools ensure a

smooth transition for new hires by creating and organising tasks for both the new recruit and internal responsibilities like setting up phones, computers, and employee accounts. Reporting centers allow companies to create custom searches and reports giving them access to data like program effectiveness and new hire activity.'

For Nicholas Roi, managing director of Silkroad UK, the trend that everyone is getting behind right now is social: using social platforms to enhance existing HR processes, in particular recruitment, onboarding and performance. 'For example, in the past, basic performance appraisals took place on an annual basis. Today, employers use social media to inform of-the-moment feedback. In turn this is used to maintain and update staff learning, development and training programmes throughout the year. The emphasis is now on continual and instantaneous feedback, and legacy systems simply don't have the functionality for this.' Another emerging trend says Roi, is the concept of gamification and its use within the Learning and Training space. Gamification, in its simplest form Roi explains, is the use of game thinking and game mechanics in order to engage users and solve problems. As he points out, the next generation of employees have all been exposed to gaming consoles, computers etc and this provides a natural and familiar environment for them.

When choosing, what should customers look out for? Any pitfalls?

When choosing the right HR software, you need to establish your goals – are you trying to automate processes or drive engagement? asks Jeremy Langley, Business and Development Director at Lumesse. 'Technology is an enabler and it can only help you solve your challenge if you know what your processes are and work flows are based around these. You should also look at your reporting needs to understand how technology can help you draw the link between your work and its impact on business performance. Similarly you'll need to consider new and changing trends including cloud, mobile, social and generational differences to understand whether your system can support and report back on new and developing business needs.' Importantly, Langley believes you'll need to be clear about which software model is a best fit for the business. 'For example, a software as a service (SaaS) offering is flexible in terms of payment and configuration. However, on premise solutions are often very customisable – yet there are significant costs involved in both installation and tailoring solutions. Before making your decision for one model above the other, make sure you involve finance and IT in the process so that they are bought in and support your platform of choice.' Langley reports that according to research and advisory firm, Bersin by Deloitte, 7 out of 10 organisations are looking at HR software to improve the user experience. 'Therefore, when selecting HR software, you need to establish your end user (this could be HR, employees, management) and ensure the user experience is intuitive, easy and simple. Otherwise, you risk losing limit the product return on investment as overly complicated user experiences limit adoption.'

This is certainly a something for HR of the future: software to measure the effectiveness of your boss! Inspiring Business Performance's new Leadership Employee Index (LEI) software tool claims to do just that! It lets companies measure the impact of a leader's behaviour against likely business success or failure. Employees can rate their company directors or managers against key leadership behaviours, such as ethics, trust, ability to influence and inspire. The results rank an individual leader's conduct and style to identify their strengths and weaknesses. These are compared against the behavioural traits required to deliver company objectives and performance. As John Telfer, managing director of Inspiring Business Performance comments, "Using the LEI to measure management and leadership behaviour, rather than just skills, provides a insight into a CEO's or director's impact on current and even future business performance and bottom line." The tool was used to help South Africa's rowing team win gold at the London 2012 Olympics. The sports industry is known for its highly competitive and inspirational team-led behavioural approach to success, but one that is notoriously difficult to maintain motivation in. Data from the LEI can also be used for forward gap analysis, where specific behaviours can be identified as key to the success of forthcoming company projects or new product developments so that the best leader or manager can be appointed.

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LAUNCHES

1> OnlyMarketingJobs launches two new niche job boards

OnlyMarketingJobs.com, the multi-award-winning job board, has launched two new brands. OnlyDigitalJobs.com and OnlyAgencySideJobs.com are designed to assist hiring companies and third-party recruiters attract more relevant staff within the growing digital and agency-side sectors. OnlyMarketingJobs.com began trading in 2009 and has since built the largest online community of marketing, advertising and creative professionals in the UK, whilst via its events division runs digital marketing conferences within UK regions and, most recently, Dubai.

www.OnlyDigitalJobs.com
www.OnlyAgencySideJobs.com

2> Gerald Eve's new career site to power recruitment

Gerald Eve the leading national firm of chartered surveyors and property consultants has unveiled a new career site incorporating the latest artificial intelligence web technology powered by MyPeopleBiz. Gerald Eve has a network of nine offices and more than 348 employees including 90 partners and 55 associates – one of the highest partner-client ratios for the sector. The firm's Head of HR Sarah Draper has been instrumental in implementing new technology to support the firm's commitment to its people and to growing the business

www.geraldeve.com
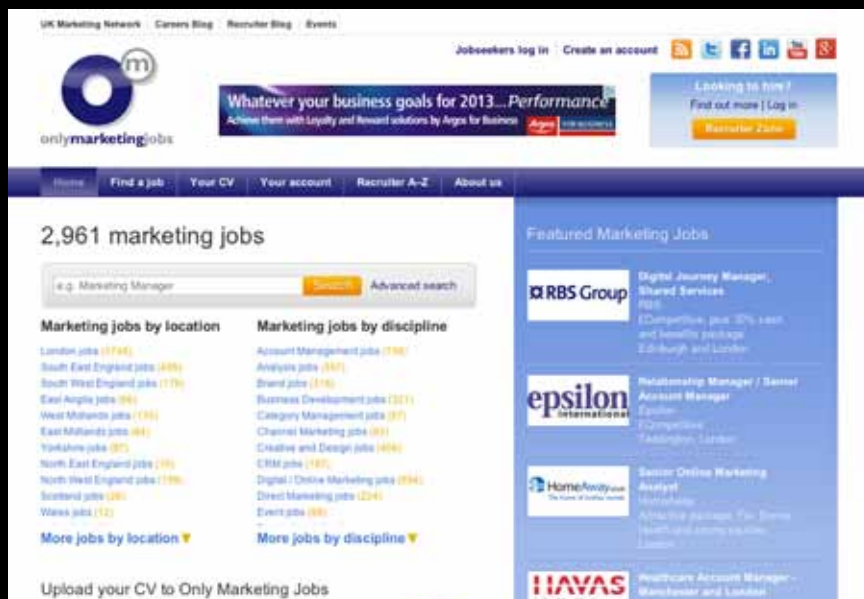
3> PeopleClues and Avionté Staffing Software Help Staffing Companies Identify the Right Candidates

PeopleClues, an industry leader in workplace assessments, today announced details of its strategic partnership with Avionté Staffing Software, a leading provider of software for staffing and recruiting firms. Through this partnership, PeopleClues' industry-leading pre-employment job fit assessments are integrated seamlessly and available as part of Avionté's enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution to help staffing firms match t! he right candidates with the right positions and companies.

www.peopleclues.com

4> 247recruit Launch 1clickCV "Apply By Mobile" Service

247recruit have launched "1clickCV" to make it easier for candidates to apply by mobile from any job board. 1clickCV allows candidates to create their own online CV and then apply faster by auto-filling application and registration forms. They can also use a Job Manager tool to keep track of all their applications in one place from any device. Each candidate gets a unique 1clickcv.com URL that they can send to anyone who wants to view their online CV. The service is 100% free for candidates. Further information is available at 1clickCV.com.

www.1clickCV.com

5> Drapersjobs.com launches Fashion Industry Salary Tracker

Drapersjobs.com – the best online destination for all roles in fashion, today launches the first ever salary tracker service for the fashion industry. The salary tracker, which is free and easy to use, allows you to compare your own job title to current market trends in order to see if you are being paid what you are worth, as well as researching the salaries for other roles you would like to apply for. The Drapersjobs.com salary tracker requires no registration and enables you to browse by job title and location, giving you an instant breakdown of the average salary by UK location for particular job types. Searching within the salary tracker also feeds through the latest jobs matches from Drapersjobs.com that match your search, resulting in a more efficient job search experience.

www.Drapersjobs.com

6> Milkround ups on-campus promotion with launch of Brand Ambassadors

Students will be seen on campus putting their marketing skills into practice as Milkround launches its Brand Ambassadors scheme. Seven students have been recruited by the UK's number one graduate recruitment website to promote the brand on their campus and register their friends and colleagues for its personalised services.

www.milkround.com

7> ePayMe launches new website – www.epayme.co.uk

Setting new standards and pushing the boundaries within this ever growing sector seems to be a fashion for ePayMe. Today sees the launch of the long awaited site that is focused purely on value added services to both agency and contractor. With the introduction of a fully automated end-to-end service from registration, timesheet submission and approval, invoicing, expense claims and submissions with upload features, full documentation and pay slip functionality. Not to mention the social media aspects to keep up to date with changes, legislation and TAX related news.

www.epayme.co.uk

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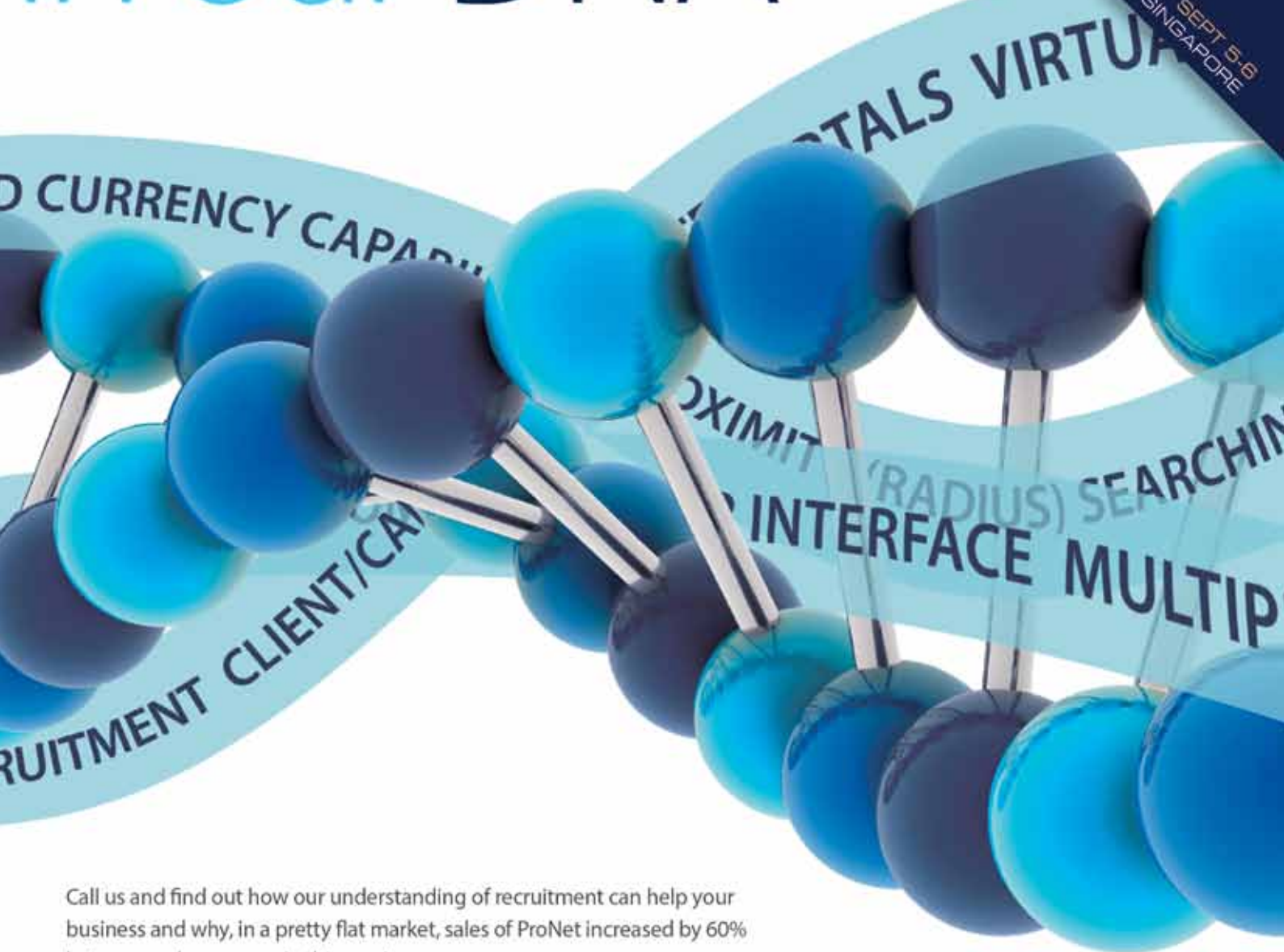
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RECRUITERS VIEW

Any movement out of the recession?

Lee Biggins, Managing Director of CV-Library: "We've certainly seen a rise in the number of jobs being posted onto CV-Library over the last six months. On top of this we're seeing a lot more activity from candidates, highlighting that they're becoming more confident in seeking new opportunities and they don't feel too scared to move away from their "safe jobs". I think this was one of the big drawbacks throughout the recession, not only were there not as many jobs available but candidates were too scared to leave their current workplace because of the risks. We've seen a 62% increase in CV uploads and a 94% increase in job applications in Q1 2013 compared to 2012; a clear sign that more jobs are available and candidates are gaining their confidence again. I personally feel we're on our way out of the recession but only time will tell, as many people were saying the same thing 12 months ago."

A survey from CareerBuilder earlier this year stated that 50% of UK employers are in a better financial position than they were a year ago. The release also shows that as Europe continues to battle the recession, 30% of employers in the UK are planning to hire this year. "The job outlook presents varying degrees of growth and deceleration as governments and businesses strive to rebuild and expand and deal with large deficits," said Matt Ferguson, CEO of CareerBuilder. "Hiring activity in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) is projected to be significantly higher than other markets while recruitment in Europe remains sluggish as leaders struggle to resolve a debt crisis that has global

implications. The overall hiring picture is improving, but companies will remain watchful as they navigate headwinds and manoeuvre through somewhat precarious economic terrain."

Full-time, Permanent Hiring in 2013 - Predictions from a Careerbuilder Survey

Emerging economies are the most aggressive in terms of hiring plans despite a slowing in economic expansion. Brazil houses the largest percentage of employers adding headcount (71 percent), in part influenced by plans to host the upcoming World Cup and Summer Olympics and a better performing manufacturing sector. Although impacted by weakened trade and market demand, China's and India's GDP have grown at a rate that far outstrips the rest of the world's major economies. More than half of employers in China and two-thirds in India plan to hire in 2013. Russia has hit record low unemployment and still benefits from metals and energy exports despite a fall off in demand in China and Europe. There is also a more aggressive push for high tech investments. Nearly half of Russian employers plan to add jobs.

European nations continue to battle another recession. The global decline further exacerbated the effects of austerity measures designed to manage down debt. One-third of Italian employers (33 percent) expect to downsize staffs, the highest of the top 10 economies. Hiring activity in France is expected to be flat with nearly one in four employers planning to add or decrease headcount. While 30 percent of U.K. employers plan to hire, 21 percent are anticipating a decline for a net increase of only 9 percent adding jobs. Germany, which has been somewhat insulated from the crisis but not immune, is more optimistic with nearly three in 10 employers planning to hire and 15 percent expecting a decline.

In the U.S., concerns over the fiscal cliff during the time of the survey may have resulted in more conservative predictions, but hiring activity has been on a gradual upward trajectory. Twenty-six percent will add new jobs this year.

Rounding out the top economies, Japan continues to work to resuscitate business investment and consumer spending after a devastating tsunami in 2011. While 22 percent of employers in Japan plan to increase staff, 19 percent expect to downsize.

Brazil – 71% increase, 5% decrease, 20% no change
India – 67% increase, 13% decrease, 17% no change
Russia – 48% increase, 15% decrease, 36% no change
China – 52% increase, 27% decrease, 21% no change
U.S. – 26% increase, 9% decrease, 55% no change
Germany – 29% increase, 15% decrease, 53% no change
U.K. – 30% increase, 21% decrease, 46% no change
Japan – 22% increase, 19% decrease, 56% no change
France – 24% increase, 24% decrease, 48% no change
Italy – 19% increase, 33% decrease, 43% no change
  Remaining percentage is undecided.

Top Jobs

Across major markets, employers are most likely to hire for positions that are closely tied to revenue and innovation. Common themes of hiring in Sales, Customer Service, Information Technology and Production came through in the study, though it is notable that China was the only market that listed Research & Development in its top three areas for recruitment. When asked to identify the top areas their organizations will be hiring for, employers pointed to:

U.S. – Sales, Information Technology, Customer Service
China – Sales, Research & Development, Production
Japan – Information Technology, Engineering, Customer Service
Germany – Information Technology, Sales, Production
France – Production, Sales, Information Technology (IT tied with Customer Service)
U.K. – Sales, Administrative, Customer Service
Brazil – Customer Service, Information Technology, Administrative
Italy – Production, Sales, Administrative
Russia – Production, Customer Service, Engineering
India – Information Technology, Marketing, Customer Service

This positive trend continues with a subsequent survey -The Spring 2013 Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)/Success Factors Labour Market Outlook (LMO) survey report suggests that employment growth is set to continue in the second quarter of 2013.

The report shows that the net employment balance – which measures the difference between the proportion of employers who expect to increase staffing levels and those who intend to reduce staffing levels, has increased to +9 from +5 for the previous quarter. The net employment balance for the private sector is +21, up from +16 last quarter. This is the fifth consecutive quarter of projected growth according to the Labour Market Outlook report, which continues to accurately predict official employment statistics quarter on quarter.

However, despite these positive findings, the survey shows that with 45 applicants applying for every low-skilled job, the labour market is still a 'battleground' for job seekers, particularly those with less experience, skills or qualifications.   The survey results are consistent with anecdotal reports of employers who report being inundated when they advertise vacancies. Meanwhile, the median number of applicants employers receive for medium-skilled roles is 29, while highly- skilled vacancies typically receive 10 applicants.

The report also shines a light on the extent to which certain groups are excluded from the recruitment process. 14 per cent of employers said they would not consider employing school-leavers and 11% would not recruit from the ranks of the long-term unemployed.

Gerwyn Davies, CIPD Labour Market Adviser, comments: "With more than forty applicants typically chasing every low-skilled job already; there's a danger that the stricter requirements being imposed by government on benefit recipients to look for work, coupled with the ongoing shift towards online recruitment, may lead to even more applicants for employers to consider for each vacancy in the future. It is very tempting for employers to feel overwhelmed by such a high volume of applicants and to set a high bar for their needs today. However, employers should see it as an opportunity to draw on a wider pool of talent for their needs tomorrow to help address skills shortages and improve their talent pipelines. Our recent report exploring employers' recruitment practices highlights the importance of employers ensuring that they don't inadvertently screen out candidates of different ages or backgrounds for the wrong reasons, for example, by requiring degrees for roles where they are not needed.   Such an approach would marginalise young people most and add to the pool of wasted young talent".

Here's a good news story for online recruitment as a business, an employer

> **We've certainly seen a rise in the number of jobs being posted onto CV-Library over the last six months. On top of this we're seeing a lot more activity from candidates.**
>
> Lee Biggins, Managing Director of CV-Library

and as an anecdotal indicator of the employment market . Leicestershire based FlexPlus has exceeded all expectations and achieved an amazing 37% growth in the last 12 months with turnover increasing from £11m in 2011 to £15m in 2012, says Adrian Hobbs, Managing Director of FlexPlus. The first quarter of 2013 has seen an unprecedented increase in demand for their Online recruitment product and OnSite and OnDemand staffing services. They have strengthened key departments by taking on 9 new permanent staff members, bringing the number of permanent employees up to 38, plus 3 new apprentice positions, and also contracted-in the skills of 4 more business experts in the areas of HR, PR, and logistics. And the future? "Such has been the demand for our Online Recruitment Services solution that we are projecting a 100% increase in turnover in 2014", says Adrian Hobbs. "So we are Flex-ing up again to take advantage of rising confidence throughout the majority of our customers which will hopefully take hold and start to reverse the upward unemployment trend by early summer."

The Influence of Online Recruitment on Encouraging Diversity

Online recruitment has revolutionised the way people are hired globally, and in many ways. Onrec asked experts about how they perceive it has influenced diversity, and how new technology can further encourage diversity.

The 21st Century boom in online recruitment activity has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on diversity within the workplace, claims Robert Bowyer, Director at Venn Group. 'Of course the speed, cost, and geographical reach of hiring online are all attractive prospects to recruiters and HR managers. But the added bonus of this shift is the objectivity of the process.   Sourcing candidates online removes any element of unconscious bias from the recruitment process. If it ever existed, it eliminates subconscious perceptions formed in response to a candidate's name, gender, age, nationality or appearance. Candidates are sifted and sorted according to business objectives rather than underlying personal preferences. An electronic selection process means that candidates are judged solely on their application, education and experience. And this automated process levels the playing field for all applicants, particularly in the all-important initial stage of the selection process.'

Bowyer believes that it is vital that organisations truly understand that a diverse workforce can positively impact the bottom line. 'This can be broken down into two stages. The first, it seems, should be an easy concept to achieve- which is to mirror a company's customer base. Attracting employees from all races, religions, social class, and gender, that reflect a target audience, can be instrumental to the performance and therefore revenue of a business. As such it ought to be a commercial imperative. Secondly, employers should consider the importance of diversity of knowledge. If you only hire people who are like you, there's the danger that everyone in your organisation will think the same. You need to have a diverse workforce so that fresh perspectives can be brought to the table in order to compete with other businesses in your space. '

Of course, Bowyer knows we still have some way to go before there is a truly diverse workforce across all sectors. 'But ultimately, the ease and accessibility of online recruitment has helped to deter decision makers from hiring 'people like me' by default. Employers and recruiters now have access to a geographically and socially diverse pool of talent - which they

> ## The ease and accessibility of online recruitment has helped to deter decision makers from hiring 'people like me' by default.

Robert Bowyer, Director at Venn Group

are taking full advantage of, and reaping the benefits.'

'In recent years, people have become much more aware of the benefits of having a diverse workforce. By employing people with different ages, backgrounds and experiences, companies are likely to have access to a wider range of ideas and have a far greater understanding of the needs of different target markets, says Barbara Kolosinska, sales director at C&M Recruitment Consultancy. 'But what's important isn't necessarily that the UK's workforce needs to be more diverse; it is that the best group of people get the best jobs. The problem, perhaps, has been that some people from diverse backgrounds haven't previously been given as many opportunities as other candidates to develop their skills at entry-level positions and so their CVs are not as rounded.'

Kolosinska says that online recruitment can at least partly rectify this simply through the ease of the process and the wealth of applications that are commonly received. 'By using job boards or recruitment agencies, companies have access to candidates from all manner of backgrounds with different qualifications and experiences. This therefore allows employers to easily select from a shortlist of diverse candidates and create a more varied workplace. By previously choosing to advertise vacancies solely in specific places, such as sector-specific magazines or geographic areas, companies may have unwittingly narrowed their search and the type of candidate that is likely to apply. Through advertising their new roles on their own website, job boards or with recruitment agencies, businesses can open up their job opportunities to a far wider sample of people than they previously had access to.'

Technology that really helps

There are features that can be included to encourage diversity, explains Kolosinska. 'In terms of technology, companies who are serious about increasing the diversity of their workforce could consider implementing measures such as making their online process more accessible for the visually impaired. Small tweaks such as improved colour contrast and alternative text for images can allow candidates to fully access both a company's website and its employment opportunities. Also, businesses that use timed online tests as part of their employment process should (and, in fact, legally must) allow candidates with disabilities to have longer to complete such a task, while telephone and Skype interviews could also be introduced as a way for employers to make themselves more accessible to all candidates. Kolosinska concludes 'If companies implement these practices, then online recruitment can have a genuinely positive impact on the employment process and the diversity of workplaces right across the country.'

A new product that makes reading easier is DiversityTalks- it's a speaking toolbar which reads aloud onscreen information to people visiting a company's website, launched by WCN recruitment. This enables a higher level of accessibility for users such as clients and job candidates, says Sarah Callery WCN's Channels & Alliances Manager. The toolbar speaks in over 20 foreign languages, enlarges text and changes colour contrast. This brand new technology developed by DiversityJobs.co.uk has

already been installed onto two websites - Eversheds, a global law firm, and MITE, a strategic outsourcing company. The technology runs across the whole website including their corporate recruitment site, says Callery. As she points out; having some talking technology on a general website is no good for recruitment if, as soon as the candidate starts to actually apply for a post, the talking support stops. From an accessibility and usability point of view it is incredibly unhelpful and frustrating to the potential candidate, and damaging to the company's employer brand. 'The level of online reading support means that Eversheds and MITIE are far more globally accessible to the growing number of people who struggle to read websites, whether as a result of a disability, or because of a language barrier'. For example, Callery cites1 in 10 people in the UK have dyslexia to some degree; 10 million people have a disability and 2 million of these have significant sight loss, plus 1 in 6 is from an ethnic background. 'Companies are increasingly recognising that they cannot hope to attract the biggest and best pool of people if their site immediately alienates so many people who need reading support.'

Of course, the social media phenomenon has a part to play in all online recruitment nowadays. Simon Swan, co-founder of Hiring-Hub.com, comments "The diversity of online recruitment solutions on offer provides companies with a number of options. Recruiting through social platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter, to online marketplace apps like Hiring-Hub.com, gives companies the flexibility to tailor their
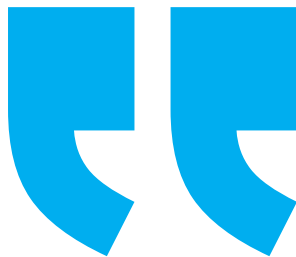
> "Companies are increasingly recognising that they cannot hope to attract the biggest and best pool of people if their site immediately alienates so many people who need reading support.

Sarah Callery WCN's Channels & Alliances Manager

recruitment methods." Swan notes 'It's about accessibility. Technology has to be uncomplicated and simple to operate so that people do not shy away from using these methods through fear of change. By providing employers with a number of options, they are able to choose a recruitment method that is best suited to both the company and the role they are trying to fill.' Swan believes tailored technology allows employers to select from a range of 'best in class' candidates. 'Working on a crowdsourcing model is a

really efficient way of gaining access to a much wider pool of talent, but with the efficiency of only dealing with one single point of contact. Online crowd sourcing technologies are simple to use and often prove easier, faster and better value for recruiters.'

This positive role of technology can only increase in the future, and will be beneficial for everyone. We look forward to seeing how the recruitment picture will have changed in ten years time.

HAVE YOU LOOKED AT YOURS LATELY?

Have you looked at your company website recently? How much time is spent keeping it up to date? In fact, have you ever tried it out as a prospective candidate? What did you think- and did you give up at the first hurdle? It's a good test. Todd Wheatland, VP of Head of Thought Leadership and Marketing at Kelly Outsourcing and Consulting Group believes employers are not investing enough time or focus on the careers section of their website. Wheatland continues: 'The tools available today are phenomenal, but it's amazing how few people actually walk a mile in their candidate's shoes and go through the process of searching, finding and applying for vacancies on their own websites. Those that do are frequently horrified.' Wheatland says this whole concept of 'candidate experience' is a buzzword that's come up again recently in recruitment, and thinks it's a trend that will only get stronger. 'The increasing socialisation of all aspects of business and life means that companies can no longer view the candidate experience as

separate from the brand experience – they are one and the same. A company's brand values must be consistent with the experience people have when they are applying for work; any gap will be seized upon and have negative repercussions in a social world, not just on brand perception, but ultimately on sales.'

Chris Bogh, Eploy's Technical Director explains that part of getting candidates to your website is about building a brand, making people want to work for you, and your website provides the first opportunity to excite people and encourage them to apply or register for jobs. 'It's an extension of your marketing strategy because a poorly designed careers section, one that simply has a logo stuck on top of the page or one with a third-party URL, can be damaging to your brand image – plus you might not only lose them as a candidate but a future customer as well.'

Better by design- both looks and technology

Bogh says there are two ways of looking at design; one being the physical design in terms of how it looks and secondly the approach from a technology point of view. 'The biggest mistake a lot of companies make is that they have a design that looks visually fantastic, but underneath the system there is no substance because its lacking in technical functionality. A good website design is one that not only serves to promote a company's brand, but also provides a positive recruitment experience for candidates and serves to drive the recruitment function in terms of automating processes and capturing data. Latest features are enabling candidates to promote jobs to their family and friends via social media sites, location based intelligent services and of course mobile. We use the phrase 'mobile enhanced' now because it's about more than having a recruitment system that is mobile friendly; it is about offering a superb user experience on a mobile that can genuinely rival the desktop experience, and one that can intuitively

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manage and support all the different communication channels, i.e. social media, email and SMS.'

With more and more clients wanting to do more with their recruitment websites and engage and connect with candidates via these different communications channels, Bogh reports a marked trend in companies wanting their full service approach. He cites Matalan as an example, and says by building a career portal from the outset means it will operate a lot better as compared to self-built portals or those driven by API's which can often be limited. Bogh claims 'This provides a higher level of recruitment functionality to improve the overall candidate experience, maximises reach and facilities a more strategic approach to recruitment planning, tracking and reporting. Importantly, it also massively reduces admin by automating key tasks within the recruitment process, which then frees up valuable time for the recruiter to focus on building personal relationships and be proactive – being proactive is very important in the modern recruitment landscape.'

According to Jo Carr, Resourcing Service Director at Independent, the careers area of the website should be more than a glossy marketing tool. In Carr's opinion, it should provide an efficient and positive application experience and keep candidates informed. From the employers' perspective it allows organisations to engage in an ongoing, positive dialogue with both active and passive candidates, helping to build talent pools and increase the number of direct hires into the business. Carr advises that key considerations for the careers section of any corporate website should be around conveying the right messages regarding organisational values and goals; ensuring the language and tone reflect corporate culture and that that they appeal to the target candidate audience, which may be multi-generational. Carr emphasises that being complacent about messaging and failing to consider the motivations, aspirations and habits of potential candidates could alienate an entire generation.

> # A poorly designed careers section, one that simply has a logo stuck on top of the page or one with a third-party URL, can be damaging to your brand image. "

Chris Bogh, Eploy's Technical Director

Of course with the advent of social media, there is now dialogue elsewhere too. Carr says though the corporate website is one of the few arenas where an organisation can maintain control of its brand and reputation and while it's critical that employers maximise this, potential candidates (and customers) are going to test credibility by exploring third party opinion. ' Poor customer, employee or ex-employee commentary on Glassdoor or Facebook, for example, will inevitably undermine the positive messages being generated by a slick corporate website.' Carr advises that while it's not possible to eradicate negative feedback, staying informed and connected with candidates and addressing any common issues upfront can be a worthwhile strategy.

It's fair to say that companies who do not place their job vacancies on their corporate website are missing a trick, comments Barbara Kolosinska, sales director at C&M Recruitment Consultancy. 'Not only does this method of recruitment reduce costs, but it is also a free advertising opportunity and ensures that all candidates who search the website and apply for jobs are truly interested in working for the specific business - which is a great way of promoting the company's brand.' The latest figures from the evenbase winter survey show that just over 80 per cent of job seekers consider looking on companies' individual websites to see their latest vacancies – the same number who search job boards says Kolosinska. 'But while this figure is undoubtedly high, the problem for many companies is that job hunters won't instinctively know that new jobs exist on these sites. In fact, for small companies, many job seekers won't even have previously heard of the business, so this is undoubtedly a risky way for companies to source new employees.' Not surprisingly, given her background, Kolosinska feels there is still room for consultancies. She also points out that by solely relying on their own website to fulfil their recruitment needs, companies may be missing out on the wider range of candidates that can be found on job boards or though recruitment agencies.

So, have you looked at your company website recently and tried it as a prospective candidate? Maybe you should. If done well, it will reap rewards. If neglected it could be doing you more harm than good.

FORTHCOMING CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT LAW
WHAT RECRUITERS NEED TO KNOW...

Pavlos Paschali, specialist employment law solicitor at Levenes Employment

The middle of 2013 sees a raft of important changes to employment law taking effect. We'll take a closer look at the aspects of these new laws which might affect recruiters both in the work that they do, and also as employers usually of a small to medium size.

On 25 April 2013 both the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 (ERRA 2013) and the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 came into effect. These set out a number of new provisions, which will come into force over the course of summer-autumn 2013. The government's objectives were to remove what it believed were barriers to recruitment, to increase productivity and to streamline the employment tribunal system. Readers can decide for themselves whether they believe that these have been achieved! The most relevant parts of ERRA 2013 which come into force on 25 June 2013 are:
• The 2-year qualifying period for unfair dismissal will not apply where the main reason for dismissal is the employee's political opinions or affiliation. This is to give effect to a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights that the UK's current employment legislation did not give sufficient protection to the right of freedom of assembly and association.
• Significant revisions to employment tribunal procedure and the orders that an Employment Tribunal can make (this is discussed in more detail below).
• The government will have the power to limit the amount of the compensatory award in unfair dismissal cases. It will do this from July 2013 by limiting such compensation to either the maximum statutory limit of £74,200, or a year's pay, whichever is lower.
• For an employee relying on the protections available to whistle-blowers, their disclosure now has to be in the public interest, although they no longer have to be acting in good faith.

On 29 July 2013, new Employment Tribunal rules of procedure will come into force. These are designed to simplify the process and give tribunals more flexibility about managing cases. Most significantly,

fees will need to be paid in order to start a claim at the employment tribunal and to appeal. These fees are perhaps the biggest change to the employment tribunal process, which has remained free to users since its inception in 1964. By way of example, a claimant pursuing a claim of unfair dismissal which has a hearing lasting only 1 day will now have to stump up £1,100 in tribunal fees before their case will be determined. These fees do no only apply to claimants; employers will have to pay for applying to dismiss a claim, to review a decision, or to set aside a default judgment.

From an as yet to be determined date in summer 2013, so-called "pre-termination negotiations" will become inadmissible as evidence in unfair dismissal proceedings (except where certain very limited exceptions apply). The government's rationale for this provision is to make it easier for employers to have discussions with employees about ending their employment without a fear of those comments being used against them. Many employers already have such discussions with employees, and the new provisions will not excuse the need to handle such situations sensitively.

Also due to be introduced this summer is the 'portable' CRB check (now called a 'DBS check') by the launch of the Portable Disclosure and Barring Service. The government will set up an Update Service which will mean that once individuals have registered for a CRB check, it will become available for organisations to check online without the individual needing to re-apply. It will also be automatically updated online.

1 September 2013 will see the introduction of the much-maligned "employee shareholder" scheme. This will create a new class of employee, who, in return for a minimum of £2,000 worth of shares in his employer, will agree to give up certain of their employee rights. The attraction to the employee is that any gain on the first £50,000 of shares will be exempt from capital gains tax. An employer cannot compel existing employees to convert to this new status, but there is nothing stopping an employer from dictating that any new jobs are to be recruited on this new basis.

What are they important effects

of the new status? The employee shareholder would have the same rights as an employee but with the following exceptions:
• No right to request time off for study or training.
• No right to make a flexible working request (except in a limited way for those returning from parental leave).
• No right to bring a claim of ordinary unfair dismissal.
• No right to a statutory redundancy payment.
• The employee must give a longer period of 16 weeks' notice if they want to return early from maternity/family leave.
A number of protections are included however for existing employee and job applicants:
• Any existing employees who refuse to become employee shareholders cannot be dismissed or suffer a detriment as a result.
• Jobseeker's allowance will not be stopped if an applicant rejects a job offer as an employee shareholder.
• The employer's offer of employee shareholder status must include a statement setting out the employment rights that would be waived and the rights attached to the shares.
• The individual must receive independent legal advice about the offer, paid for by the employer, whether or not the offer is accepted.
• There will be a 7-day "cooling off" period from the day legal advice is received.

There are attractions to this new form of employment status for both employers and employees, although as a result of concessions made in the House of Lords there are now further layers of complexity. One of the key issues is likely to be how the employer's shares are to be valued and whether an inferior class of shares with limited rights will be sufficient for the new status to take effect. Quite how many employers will seek to overcome the hurdles for the promise of ostensibly simpler dismissals remains to be seen. The advice from lawyers, as always, is that a consideration of the likely issues at an early stage will be vital to ensure that a relationship under the new status gets off to a smooth start.

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