



The Internet Is Taking Over the Job Search Process

Among the nearly 20% of employed people who changed jobs in 2014, 33% rated Internet sites as the most effective channel for finding their positions, says a new report from The Boston Consulting Group and Recruit Works Institute

Tokyo, December 16, 2015—Every year, nearly 20% of workers around the world change jobs. And many of them are using the Internet to do so. According to a new report jointly produced by The Boston Consulting Group and Recruit Works Institute, 55% of job seekers use the Internet to look for employment, and 33% rate Internet job sites as the most effective channel for finding a job. Those findings underscore the sweeping changes that the Internet has brought to the job search market. The report, titled *Job Seeker Trends 2015: Channels, Search Time, and Income Change*, is being released today.

A copy of the report can be downloaded at
http://www.works-i.com/pdf/151216_jst2015_eng.pdf

The report, which reviews findings of a survey of more than 13,000 job seekers from 13 countries, delivers a global view of the job search process today. The countries targeted by the survey cover 59% of the roughly 3 billion people employed globally, or 1.7 billion people, making this report one of the largest global surveys of job seekers' perceptions ever conducted. The findings raise strategic questions that can help employers fine-tune their recruitment and hiring strategies, craft their value propositions for potential employees, and deliver their messages through the channel that best suits their target talent pools. It also presents data that will help government agencies, human resource-related companies, and job seekers themselves to assess the evolving state of the job search market.

“One of the key capabilities that differentiates the Internet channel from referrals from family or friends is the Internet’s ability to process a much higher volume of applications,” said Kazumasa Sakurai, a BCG partner and a coauthor of the report. “We believe that key difference will drive the continued growth and evolution of Internet job search, and we look forward to seeing how future technological developments can continue to drive down the time job seekers spend searching for a new job without limiting—and in fact expanding—their employment options.”

“Job search behavior is drastically changing around the world, but until the publication of this report, we have had little insight into just how it’s changing,” said Yukio Okubo, the founder and general manager of Recruit Works Institute. “The unique evidence of job



search behavior in various countries presented in the report promises to deepen our understanding of the global job market.”

The Internet Has Profoundly Changed the Job Search Process

The Internet changes everything, and it has changed few activities more profoundly than it has the search for employment. Job seekers 30 or 40 years ago were largely limited to paper media such as newspapers and magazines and to introductions from family and friends. The widespread access to the Internet and mobile devices in the 21st century, however, has brought new sources and tools to job seekers. Today, the process is more standardized globally, and most people are able to collect job information and search for opportunities casually and efficiently.

Job search channels include commercial channels such as paper media (newspaper or magazine advertisements), Internet job sites (résumé portals, job forums, job posting sites, job aggregators), temporary- and permanent-employment agencies, job training programs, government-run programs, referral channels such as alumni networks and referrals from family and friends, and direct inquiries with employers. About 40% of global job seekers used only one channel in their search, and about 25% used two.

About 55% of survey respondents sought new employment through the Internet search channel, compared with 36% who consulted paper media, 33% who relied on referrals, 24% who inquired directly with a prospective employer, 20% who used public services, and 17% who worked through permanent-employment agencies.

According to the survey respondents, Internet job sites and referrals were the most effective channels for finding a job. Among all respondents, 33% rated Internet sites most effective, and 19% said referrals were the top channel. In contrast, 10% of respondents thought paper media was the most effective; for public services, the figure was only 5%. Considering these ratings as a percentage of the users of the channel in question, 60% of Internet job site users, 59% of referral users, and less than 33% of the users of paper media and public services said that the channel was the most effective.

The report’s findings make clear that the average users of the key channels have different profiles. The average Internet job site user is more educated and younger than the average job seeker. The average referral user is less educated and older.

Job Search Motivation and Income Improvement



One reason people look for new employment is to earn a higher income. But how often do employees achieve that? About 57% of job changers overall saw their incomes improve, although job changers who had lost their jobs when they began their search fared worse overall. Not surprisingly, income improvements were strongest—and search times shorter—in countries with annual GDP growth of 2% or more.

The Internet Both Lengthens and Shortens Search Times

Paradoxically, the advance of recruiting technologies has both lengthened and shortened the job search period. On one hand, Internet job advertisements allow employers to reach a wide target audience at the click of a mouse. On the other, job seekers today are able to subscribe to job posting updates and may thus spend a longer time casually browsing. On average, the global job changer in 2014 took eight weeks to complete his or her research and waited five weeks to receive an offer.

About Recruit Holdings

Founded in 1960, Recruit Holdings is a leading information services and human resources company in Japan. Through a wide range of services, Recruit is focused on variety of areas, including employment, education, housing, marriage, travel, restaurants, beauty, cars, hobbies, and lifestyles. Recruit Group has more than 30,000 employees and operates in more than 50 countries. For more information, please visit <http://www.recruit-rgf.com>.

About Recruit Works Institute

Recruit Works Institute is the research division of Recruit Holdings, which presents new concepts for people and organizations. With the mission of “building a global stage that allows each individual to work to their full potential,” the institute conducts surveys and research and publishes reports on labor markets, policies, careers, and more from a variety of angles. For more information, please visit <http://www.works-i.com/english>.

About The Boston Consulting Group

The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) is a global management consulting firm and the world’s leading advisor on business strategy. We partner with clients from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors in all regions to identify their highest-value opportunities, address their most critical challenges, and transform their enterprises. Our customized approach combines deep insight into the dynamics of companies and markets with close collaboration at all levels of the client organization. This ensures that our clients achieve sustainable competitive advantage, build more capable organizations, and secure lasting results. Founded in 1963, BCG is a private company with 82 offices in 46 countries. For more information, please visit bcg.com.



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