

A Comparative Study of the Attributes of Two Popular Internet Recruiting Providers

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Abstract

The Internet has become a very convenient and effective means to access information. Many job seekers are now using the Internet to help them with their job search. Likewise, recruiters are also using the Internet to communicate job openings to prospective candidates around the globe. However, there are hundreds of Internet recruiting providers in the e-recruiting sector. Each Internet recruiting provider has common as well as unique resources and attributes. This study examines the resources and attributes that are provided to job seekers and recruiters of the Internet job databases. In particular, this research investigates how these resources and attributes in the two most popular Internet job databases, Monster.com and HotJobs.com, are meeting the needs of job seekers and recruiters. New graduates looking for jobs, persons interested in advancement opportunities, faculty advisors, and career counselors will find this study useful. Human resource managers, corporate recruiters, software engineers, systems designers, scholars interested in online research, and Internet Service Providers of online services will find the outcomes reported interesting.

Keywords: Online job databases, Internet recruiting providers, e-recruiting providers, Internet job board attributes

Job seekers normally have to use one or a combination of three methods to get a job. First, they may have to beat the pavement, visit companies of interest, drop off their resumes, and hope that the company will have an opening that needs their skills. Second, they may have to respond to classified advertisements, mail off their resumes, and wait for the company who may or may not respond to their application. Finally, job seekers may also have to make those very uncomfortable telephone calls to inquire about job openings, send their resumes to prospective firms, and hope that the company will call them for an interview. To find a job in another state, job seekers may have to travel to that state. Irrespective of the methods used, the job search process can be a tedious and expensive endeavor, especially for new graduates and individuals that may have been laid off during the economic downturn.

Within the business sector, there are always some companies that are developing and expanding while others are downsizing. Some companies may be hiring persons to develop new products and services in preparation for the next economic boom. As always, some firms are hiring workers to replace positions due to turnovers and retirements. Finally, some companies may be hiring people because their line of industry is

expanding even though the rest of the economy is experiencing a slow down. Irrespective of the hiring reasons indicated above and the economic slow down, companies are faced with a declining pool of seasoned mid-level workers. Given the shortage of skilled labor, companies need to scramble and hire good employees quickly and in a more focused way (Kay 2000). To get good candidates, companies must move very quickly to locate and hire. Common ways of corporate recruiting include the hiring of agencies, advertising in audio, video, and print media, and participating in job fairs. All of these can be a very expensive endeavor and may succeed in reaching only a small number of candidates.

More and more technology competent workers are using Internet job databases to look for job opportunities. Online job databases are increasing in popularity because the job seekers can reach thousands of potential employers without leaving their homes. By registering with a handful of sites, individuals can get their resumes to hundreds of employers (Raths 1999). The biggest advantage for using Internet job databases is that most of them are free to job seekers.

Corporations have also jumped onto the Internet recruiting bandwagon because online employment

advertising has proven to be cost-effective and can also reduce the cycle time of traditional hiring practices (McGarvey 1999). The average traditional method costs \$1,383 but the same advertisement using Web advertisements only costs about \$152 (Kay 2000). In fact, it is believed that career management Web sites may be fast replacing newspaper classified advertisements as the recruitment tool of choice (Raths 1999; Marks 2000).

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internet job databases are becoming the recruitment tool of choice for both job seekers and corporate recruiters. According to a study conducted by Forrester Research in 1998, about 70% of companies are using the Internet to recruit job candidates (Murphy 1999). Many users believe that the Internet may become the only tool used for recruiting in the future (Vaas 2000). However, there are hundreds of online job related Web sites on the Internet. The decision to choose between these sites can be time-consuming. While they are overlapping functions, each online database also offers unique resources and attributes that the others do not (Dyrlil 2001).

2. STATEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVE

An effective Web-based recruiting provider must offer functions and resources that meet the needs and activities of its users, be it job seekers or corporate advertisers. While both groups may share similar objectives, the former to get a job and the latter to fill a position, the activities and resources needed may be different. This study examines the resources and attributes that are provided to job seekers and recruiters of the Internet job databases. In particular, this research investigates how these resources and attributes in the two most popular Internet job databases, Monster.com and HotJobs.com, are meeting the needs of job seekers and recruiters.

New graduates looking for jobs, persons interested in advancement opportunities, faculty advisors, and career counselors will find this study useful. Human resource managers, corporate recruiters, software engineers, systems designers, scholars interested in online research, and Internet Service Providers of online services will find the outcomes reported interesting.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data for this study were obtained from a previous study (Rivera 2001) and an examination of two major e-recruiting providers, Hotjobs.com and Monster.com. These two providers are among the top ten e-recruiting providers in the world (Boone & Julian 2001). Together, these two Web-based job service providers account for over 90 percent of the online new job seekers market (Boyle 2000).

Sixteen variables were selected for this study. Each of these variables concerns a type of major resource and activity performed by job seekers and corporate or institutional recruiters on the Internet job recruiting sites. Six of the resources and variables were related to the job seekers. The rest of the resources and attributes were related to corporate or institutional job recruiters. A list of the resources and activities, in descending order of importance, and the affected user group is presented below:

- A. Job seekers (eBusiness Advisory Services 2000):
 1. Search for jobs.
 2. Research companies (examples: benefits, products and locations).
 3. Search for salary information (example: relocation calculator and sample salaries).
 4. Post a resume.
 5. Get career advices (examples: expert answers, monthly news and writing techniques).
 6. Use chat rooms and bulletin boards.
- B. Corporate or institutional recruiters (Kay 2000):
 1. Access to candidates.
 2. Target specific audience.
 3. Reduce job-posting costs.
 4. Increase speed of hiring.
 5. Eliminate middlemen.
 6. Increase posting convenience (Examples: real-time and 24/7 availability).
 7. Increase distribution of postings.
 8. Increase quality of candidates.
 9. Reduce paperwork.
 10. Resume management and others.

Each of the database was visited to determine how well the needs of the job seeker as well as the corporate or institutional recruiter were met. First, each of the databases was examined to see if the respective job seeker and job recruiter activities were supported. Second, if the activity was supported, it was further studied to determine if one of the job databases is providing a better resource than the competing provider studied. In cases where details about a variable were not available or could not be obtained by navigating the site, comments from the existing literature about the two databases were obtained. Examples of such comments used to augment the findings reported in this paper include published works in journals and magazines, Web evaluation sites, and industry reports.

4. FINDINGS

An examination of the six variables produced some very surprising results. Monster.com and HotJobs.com have some very distinct differences in the type of resources and attributes available. HotJobs.com does have one major advantage or feature important to job seekers that is not found in Monster.com (Raths 1999).

HotJobs.com provides job seekers with more security attributes such as block features, privacy or viewable settings, and screens recruiters before posting. However, HotJobs.com does not have the type of desirable support features for two of the six major activities that were popular among job seekers. They are:

1. No structured methods for job seekers to research companies.
2. No salary calculator to help job seekers determine compatible salaries.

In about half of the variables examined, the two databases have similar resources and attributes. However, the number of functions supported, the ease of navigation or use, and their scope of coverage can also be greatly different. In general, Monster.com appears to provide a broader array of functions and their policy seems to be more job seeker friendly and generous. Other major findings obtained from the examination of the six variables and the attributes and resources supporting them are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Job seeker Comparison of Monster.com and HotJobs.com

Activity	Monster.com	HotJobs.com
Search for Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International network • Create several search agents • Ok Navigation, but wordy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International network • Create several search agents • Easy Navigation
Research Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured way of researching companies by company name, location, and industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No structured methods
Search for salary information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary Calculator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Salary Calculator
Post a resume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Resume Builder • Allows job seeker to have a maximum of 5 resumes • Does not screen • Does not allow Privacy/Viewable settings • Does not have block feature • Has confidential setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut and Paste resume • Job seeker has only 1 resume • Screens recruiters • Allows Privacy/Viewable settings • Has block feature • Confidential setting not required
Get Career advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive Career advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited advice
Use Chat Rooms and Bulletin Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured weekly Chat rooms • Experts answer Bulletin Board Posts 2 days a week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstructured Chat Rooms • Unstructured Bulletin Boards

An in-depth comparison of the two Web-based job databases was further performed to better assess the variables that were common. The in-depth study was conducted by navigating through the respective resources and attributes. In instances where the information about the resources and attributes were not available online, secondary sources were obtained to augment the findings. A summary of the major outcomes from the in-depth study are presented below:

1. Both sites have strong international presence. However, Monster.com has a stronger international following because it has more employers and more jobs from around the globe. Monster.com also uses regional languages on its Web pages and this makes their Web site much more user friendly to job seekers who speak languages other than English.
2. Both sites allow job seekers to create multiple personal job search agents. A job search agent is created to automatically search the database

overnight for newly created jobs that meet users' criteria. After the search is completed, Monster.com will send a URL to the user via e-mail. The user can then use the URL to access the list of jobs. HotJobs.com does not e-mail the link. Instead, the user is provided the job description via e-mail.

3. Both sites provide an array of navigation tools for users to access posted jobs. However, HotJobs.com is easier to navigate because the index pages are just a list of links (Rivera 2001).
4. Both sites allow job seekers to post resumes. Monster.com has a standard resume builder that makes it easy for employers to search for job seekers with certain skills. However, using the resume builder can be time consuming and the required standard formats can cause someone with unique skills and experience to be overlooked (Salkever 2000). Monster.com allows a job seeker to have a maximum of five different active resumes

in the database at one time. Hotjobs.com only allows one resume in the database at a time

5. Both sites offer career advice features. HotJobs.com offers only limited career information on relocation, benefits, job tips, and career advice from industry experts on resume writing, interviewing, and career development in the section called Career Tools. Monster.com provides job seekers with a comprehensive career resource center. The section on resume development and packaging is especially helpful. Monster.com also has an Interview Center where job seekers can have virtual interviews and tips on teleconferencing, videoconferencing, global, team, and other nontraditional forms of interviews.
6. Both sites offer chat rooms and bulletin boards. Monster.com has a very structured environment that includes a weekly chat schedule where job seekers can talk to experts on selected topics and for networking with other job seekers in an informal and unstructured environment. HotJobs.com uses Chat rooms called communities that job seekers can swap job-searching tips and get career advice.

The examination of the ten variables relating to major activities of corporate and institutional job recruiters on Monster.com and HotJobs.com also produced some very interesting findings. Unlike in the case of job seekers,

Monster.com and HotJobs.com showed more common resources and attributes than differences. The common resources and attributes identified are:

1. Both sites have a recruiter agent tool that can be used to target specific audiences by specifying user requirements.
2. Both sites allow candidates to communicate through e-mail and provide features to job seekers to apply online helping to reduce cycle time.
3. Both sites allow recruiters to make direct contact with job seekers.
4. Both databases have a posting distribution with international reach capabilities.
5. Both systems are paperless.
6. Both online providers have resume management features that can help recruiters find more qualified candidates faster, decreasing the recruitment cycle and cost-per-hire.

Details about the ten resources and attributes afforded to corporate and institutional recruiters are presented in Table 2. Major differences about the features in the attributes between the two databases are discussed after the Table.

Table 2. Recruiter Comparison of Monster.com vs.HotJobs.com

Attribute	Monster.com	HotJobs.com
Access to candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 million job seeker accounts • 23.1 Avg. eye minute per month; 53% share • 61% share of seekers who use job boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.7 million job seeker accounts • 9.3 Avg. eye minute per month; 9% share • 61% share of seekers who use job boards
Target Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiter agents based on specific requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiter agents based on specific requirements
Job Posting Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard cost \$295.00 /60 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard costs \$195.00/30 days
Speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply on line • Reduces cycle time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply on line • Reduces cycle time
No middleman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact
Convenience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time job posting 24/7 availability • Can be cumbersome to sort through candidates • Posting does not require HTML tag use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time job posting 24/7 availability • Can be cumbersome to sort through candidates • Posting requires HTML tag use
Posting Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International reach
Quality of Candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger pool of qualified candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger pool of qualified candidates • On-line screening & testing available
Amount of paper work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paperless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paperless
Resume Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools available

Bases upon an in-depth study of the differing attributes, Monster.com appears to be a better career management

provider than HotJobs.com. To some recruiters, Monster.com may be less lucrative because it does

require a longer minimal posting time and a higher fee. However, the charge per day is lower when it is divided by the 60 days minimum. Some of the other differences include:

1. Monster.com has thus far peaked at 11 million job seeker accounts. With an average eye minute of 23.1 per month, Monster.com is getting a 53 percent share of visitors to Internet job databases. HotJob.com has thus far peaked at 2.7 million job seeker accounts. With an average eye minute of 9.3 per month, it is getting approximately 9% share of visitors. In addition, about 61 percent of new job seekers are using Monster.com. With 30 percent of the new seekers, HotJobs.com has about 30 percent of the new seekers and that means they are second only to Monster.com (Boyle 2000).
2. Monster.com has a standard cost of \$295.00 for 60 days. HotJobs.com's standard cost begins at \$195.00 for 30 days. HotJobs.com has a more liberal posting policy. However, as pointed out earlier, the cost per day is lower for companies that may want a longer posting period.
3. Even though both service providers are very convenient to use and do provide 24 hours for 7 days a week recruiter access, job posting at Monster.com is simpler. Postings on HotJobs.com require HTML tag use.

5. CONCLUSION

Indeed, the explosive growth of Internet recruiting during the past three years has dramatically changed the hiring process in many organizations (Kay, 2000). At the rate that job seekers and corporate recruiters are embracing the Internet for job-hunting related activities, it is highly possible that Web-based recruiting will become the career management system of the future. However, some online job databases are more effective than others with helping clients reach their objectives. Individuals and corporations must therefore select the one database that offers the type of resources and attributes that can best help them to meet their needs.

This study examined the two most popular recruiting service providers, Monster.com and HotJobs.com, and found that they offer many similar as well as different resources and attributes to job seekers and recruiters. The choice of a preferred database provider is, of course, dependent on the specific resources or attributes that must be available.

From the perspective of corporate and institutional recruiters, the two service providers have more resource and attribute similarities than differences. However, Monster.com has a more dominant share of the market. Some 90 percent of new job seekers are using Monster.com. For companies and institution looking for

fresh graduates, Monster.com is clearly the preferred service provider. This service provider also has over 50 percent of the job seeker market share. Again, companies and institutions interesting in getting a larger and more diverse audience may also find this provider preferable. After all, the difference in the posting fee is minimal. As a matter of fact, the cost per day is actually lower for companies that may want a longer posting time. For recruiters that do not know HTML, HotJobs.com definitely cannot be the service provider of choice.

For job seekers, there are major differences between the two job databases. HotJobs.com is definitely the sole provider for job seekers who must have adequate or certain security features. Beyond that security resource and the easier to navigate system, it is definitely less user-friendly because it is much less generous in the type of resources and attributes provided. For first time job seekers who may need expert advice and resume development assistance, Monster.com is definitely a more comprehensive service provider. Even among experienced users, Monster.com can still be the preferred online database source, because the service provider allows them to place multiple resumes that can be targeted at advancement opportunities in a number of specialized areas.

Among job seekers and corporate recruiters who do not require specific resources or attributes, Monster.com appears to be a better Internet recruiting provider. It definitely has more job seeker resources and attributes and has a much better access to candidates around the globe. From a user perspective, it is more stakeholder-friendly because it allows job seekers to post more versions of their qualifications and does not require corporate and institutional recruiters to know HTML.

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