

White Paper

# 9 Innovations That Will Change The Way We Recruit

HireGround Software Solutions

Since 1999, HireGround has established itself as a leading provider of Applicant Tracking Software (ATS). HireGround is recognized for its strong customer support, ease of use software, and ability to customize software processes to meet individual client requirements.

2014, “the year that intense recruiting competition returned.” After years of slack hiring, the competition for top performers and technical talent will increase over the next year in many industries to the point where current recruiting resources and tools will be stretched to the limit. Aggressiveness, the need for counteroffers, higher rejection rates, and a renewed focus on recruiting the currently employed will all return to prominence. As a result of this increased competition, executives will begin to put pressure on recruiting to produce new recruiting approaches that provide them with a competitive talent advantage.

HR professionals will begin to see some marked improvements from software providers. Anything is possible through the advent of new technologies – technologies that are smarter, faster and more robust than their predecessors. These new advances are going to change recruitment processes.

The technical makeup for creation and management of software and the tools it provides has experienced major advances in the previous ten years. We now have the internet that allows us to connect just about every aspect of our lives. We can connect using a bevy of devices – smart phones, tablets, notebooks, desktops and laptops.

Inherently this means that some of the ways we manage and complete tasks will or must change in order to keep abreast of what is being adopted by the community at large. The purpose of this paper is to outline what has changed in technologies that will impact the way we recruit new applicants and how we specifically get the right person with the right information that we need.

What are these technological innovations? We have identified nine key drivers that will impact corporations’ processes for recruiting electronically. These innovations are motivated by a basic need:

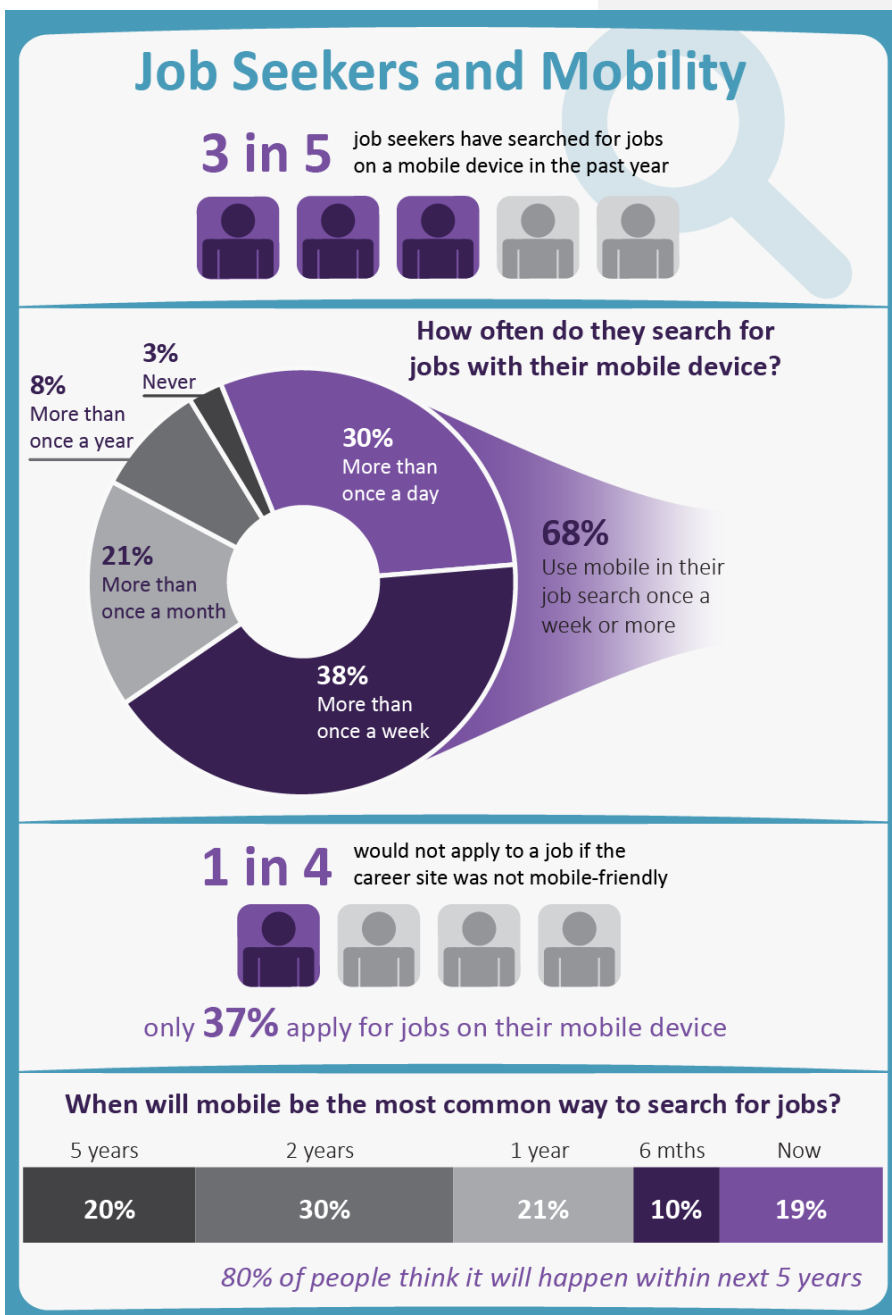
## 1 MOBILITY

Applicants and Human Resources have been challenged by concerns related to getting the best information from an applicant quickly and efficiently. Along come mobile applications to help with this. Now candidates seeking employment can find the job opening using any smart device – phone, tablet, or their laptop or desktop.

The Global Recruiting Round Table ([www.globalrecruitingroundtable.com](http://www.globalrecruitingroundtable.com)) supported adoption of use of mobile platforms with a survey completed by glassdoor in 2013. Highlights from the survey are captured in an infographic that explores mobile job seeker behavior today:

The advent of mobility now means that applicants can apply from anywhere anytime. Human resources or hiring leads are now able to view applicants coming from their mobile devices and act on a decision regarding that applicant immediately.

With new technologies, careers pages now are capable of being totally mobile friendly meaning that candidates are able to view job openings inclusive of all information about the position, apply to that opening and receive confirmation of the application.



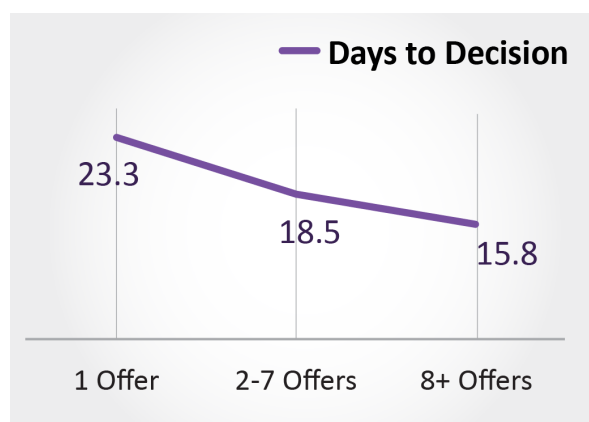
## 2 ELIMINATION OF ACCOUNT CREATION (SPEED OF HIRE)

As with concerns of accessing any organization's job opening easily and quickly, comes a second concern – getting the right data from the job seeker without making the application process arduous and time consuming. We have all faced creating an online account whether for booking an airline ticket, purchasing a book, or reviewing our banking information. Remembering the multitude of user names and passwords for all of these applications is a big job especially when those passwords need to include a variety of characters that are not related to our personal memory norms.

**Let's start with why this is important: Speed** once again becomes essential to remain competitive. Over the last few years, with high unemployment and little competition for talent, in many cases recruiters could take their time and still land top candidates. As the pace of change in business and the competition for talent increases, firms will have no choice but to revisit "speed of hire" approaches and tools in order to land candidates that are in high demand.

Newer technologies related to recruitment have determined ways to eliminate this account creation therefore eliminating a block when applying for jobs. All data collected is still safely tucked behind firewalls viewable by only those that need to know. Job seekers are able to now quickly apply without this initial hurdle to overcome.

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## 3 ACCURATE DATA INTAKE

Any of us in the recruitment field have seen application processes that cause the job seeker to simply quit part way through. Often this is due to the one form information request – collect everything that you potentially need from all applicants regardless of the requirement for the job. The problem: the application simply asks for too much information that is not needed, causing the job seeker to stop part way through or at best complete the application but submit with a bad feeling about the company.

New capabilities allow for a variety of intake of applicant information that is definable by what human resources need to know to make a sound decision regarding that applicant. Recruitment systems now collect as little as the answer to three or four basic questions or the upload of a resume, or the request to answer some questions as well as the upload of a resume.

For the applicant and the human resources review team this now means that you only see the information that is required to make a decision on that candidate for each job. The collection of unnecessary information is time consuming for both the applicant and the HR review team. More applicants are likely to complete the application process and the review team can review the requested information much more quickly.

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## 4 CLASSIC RESUME vs DATA

There is huge debate occurring regarding the paper resume and its future in today's society. We are not here to project that paper is dead, but rather to offer an alternative.

Kevin Wheeler discussed a trend in his article written for ERE in March of 1999 entitled *Replace the Resume with a Resume-less Recruiting System*.

*Organizations that try to use resumes to screen candidates quickly discover that they do not adequately represent a person's career or ability. How can a list of positions held and degrees earned equate to ability to accomplish the goals of your organization? ...We spend all kinds of money and time entering, retrieving, coding and distributing almost worthless information. Why? Because convention and habit say that is what an organization should look at. Managers expect it. Candidates expect it. But what if you could develop a system that would help an applicant assemble a portfolio representative of his or her achievements, accomplishments and abilities? Or even better, perhaps, from the organization's point of view, why not create a system that would ask questions which would reveal the skills and abilities of a candidate?*

As discussed in our previous point, there is a growing trend of collecting only pertinent information from an applicant applying to any one opening for an organization. In this regard, it may not be necessary to collect that applicant's complete life history – or possibly their resume now resides in an electronic format that is the base of the information collection, but only one small factor in the overall decision to hire or not.

The requirement for a resume (paper or not) is changing. LinkedIn has set the tone for an online electronic catalogue of resumes (primarily professionals). Some workers may still have a paper copy that they want to fax or simply drop off to the local corporate office for consideration. The resume is undergoing a crisis of its own leaving job seekers hanging on how to best portray their skills and experience.

The trends certainly indicate that there is yet more to come in the way of collecting what is needed from a job seeker to make a decision, and there will be more unique ways to collect that information soon offered by recruitment software providers. Gradually, it is anticipated that resumes will become more electronic, more broadly searchable via search engines (excluding privacy legislation that may cap some of this open search) and easier to input into various systems.

## 5 SMART SEARCHES

The review of large quantities of text data can be very time consuming. The average job opening sees approximately 250 applicant resumes, plus a cover letter for each. If human resources can review 40 resumes in an hour (ambitious), this means scanning through applicant data 6 hours per day or 1625 hours per year.



HR software systems are getting smarter and smarter. The advent of newer search tools such as semantic means that key requirements can be identified from any blob of textual data. This data can be analysed, and reanalysed if needed.

For Human Resources, these key requirements can now be pulled from the information submitted, eliminating many hours reading through data to determine best fit for a position.

This can be done in several ways:

- Answers to questions can be auto scored for correct answers or weighted dependent on the answer. For example, multiple answers may have differing values dependent on the weighting placed by human resources. Questions can be Yes/No, ranked multiple choice, multiple answer, select dropdown, long answer or short answer.
- The upload of a resume can be auto matched to the requirements as described in the job posting. Human resources will no longer need to search a resume database – searches will be completed as simply as posting a job.
- Human resources can potentially add further requirements to the job posting information that screens for specific keywords, competencies or certifications. Those applicants without the correct criteria are moved to the rejected process step automatically.
- Semantic capabilities are going to improve vastly in the months to come. Tools that parse in the data from those text blobs are getting better at bringing in that data into identified fields. The requirements from this data are being analysed faster and more accurately.

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All of this means better computer analysis of data so that those people evaluating data spend less time doing so. Human resources will not have to complete time consuming searches of exiting applicants or review endless resumes to determine potential best fit.

## 6 HIRING MANAGERS

Developing a strong relationship with the hiring manager is crucial to increasing the quality of hire. Over the course of HireGround's experience in Human Resources, one of the biggest hurdles is delivering easy access to all decision makers, such as hiring managers or team leads that are part of the decision making process for any one new hire.

Often a company's process of sharing information to these "others" is time consuming. It could involve printing all applications for any one position or mass emailing those applications to each of the reviewers. In turn, the review team must evaluate each applicant individually either via reading the paper information or clicking and opening the information attachments in an email. Each applicant may have several documents that require review. Generally, this means access via a desktop machine, as opening all these documents is impossible using a mobile device such as a smart phone or tablet.

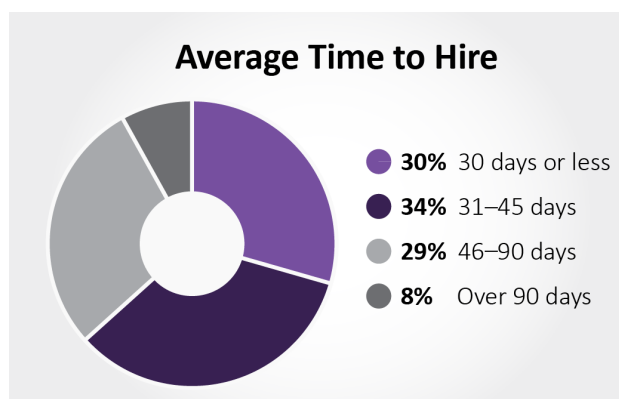
With new technologies such as those implemented by HireGround, the review team can be assigned access to the jobs and applicants of interest and review this information from any smart device. All applicant data is viewed in a format that allows for comparisons of applicants to be made quickly and easily. Hiring managers can be given the option to move applicants to differing statuses as appropriate, for example, the interview stage. They can also make notes on each candidate such that the recruitment team can follow their reasoning and complete other processes based on this.

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## 7 MANAGEMENT OF SYSTEM TASKS

Today's corporations are demanding more from technology in the way it assists departments to make cost-effective decisions. Organizations want better results, backed by reports and processes that substantiate these results. The more that a system can assist in automating the hiring process, the more useful a tool it will be.

In a survey completed by KellyOCG in their most recent Global RPO Report in December of 2013 Recruitment outsourcing to increase in 2014 they found the following time to hire averages:



We mentioned earlier that recruitment systems can auto score applicants for each position based on criteria established for that job. Software can also assist with moving the hiring process along as well.

Knowing factors such as how long an applicant has been sitting in a job list are useful. The objective in reviewing an applicant list is to take action on those applicants. Indicators such as number of days in a list or hiring step are useful in identifying those that need to be reviewed and decisions made.

Jobs can automatically close when the number of openings for a job is filled. This ensures that reports are more accurate, as manually closing a position may be easily overlooked.

When candidates are rejected, rejection reasons can be assigned to each. Rejection reasons are positive (i.e. not currently available), neutral, or negative (i.e. do not have the necessary skills for the position). The system remembers the reasons for rejection as part of the applicant score. Those applying again may be auto rejected if their overall score combined with previous rejection activity warrants.

## 8 EASY TO USE AND INSTALL

The installation of Human Resources software packages can be time consuming, especially with several departments requiring signoff – Human Resources, IT, marketing or other departments.

A typical installation of an applicant tracking system historically has been in the range of three weeks to six months. So what is the problem? Why, in this technical savvy age are we faced with such long implementation roll outs with sometimes poor results at the end?

This simply is not necessary. New technologies allow for the implementation of a system that posts job information, and intakes applicant data as required in less than an hour. If required, configurations can be made on the fly with use of the system. In the view of this, there simply are not enough unique requirements for recruitment that necessitate months or a year in setup time and costs. What's more, trends are showing that implementation fees will not exist for systems any longer.

With current innovations, a system can be implemented at no cost in a day, and does all that you want, plus is easy to use for both the job seeker and the hiring and recruitment team members.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION & SEO

The words SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and social media integration are becoming familiar to HR professionals and have to be considered as part of the recruitment process. Now you are expected to be a technical wizard to understand and battle the Googles of the world and come out with great applicants on top of it all.

Google is accepted as one of the leaders in searching and delivering data to users around the world. Google has made more significant search algorithm changes in 2013 than at any other time in its 15-year history. In September 2013, Google announced that it had not only updated its search algorithm, but also completely revamped it. The official word from Google is that this new algorithm, called Hummingbird, had already affected 90 percent of searches.



Google continually makes changes to its algorithm in an effort to serve up the most relevant and useful webpages based on the query. The new search algorithm is just the next natural step in its evolutionary process — a way of adapting to changing behaviors, as users become more mobile and voice search more often.

Good providers of Applicant Tracking will keep their fingers on the pulse of search engine providers such as Google. ATS vendors will constantly be changing their tools so maximum search engine exposure is delivered. The good news is that simple mobile-friendly pages that offer relevant job information are ranking higher in search. These pages are designed to do so, and many do it well.

Furthermore, social media integration is now built into HR systems in some way. One example of this is allowing a system to broadcast your job by advertising it through your corporate social media accounts.

Accepting social media profiles in lieu of resumes opens the door to many passive candidates. The unabated corporate goal of targeting and recruiting those top prospects simply cannot be met if an up-to-date resume is required. This is because these individuals often resist applying for a job simply because they don't have the time to update their resume. Although there are still legal and administrative hurdles, more and more firms are learning that accepting a social media profile alone (usually a LinkedIn profile) is more than adequate at least initially to begin the hiring process.

## **CONCLUSION**

So, after developing and offering recruitment software for 10+ years we are excited to say that it is getting better – much better. All the promises of better parsing, semantic searches, faster and more responsive pages, and ease of use are now here. We as software developers have been dreaming of these for a decade, and are now able to make them become reality.

We do hope this information is useful and welcome any questions for feedback to be sent to [info@HireGroundSoftware.com](mailto:info@HireGroundSoftware.com). All the best with your hiring for 2014.