



MySpace and Facebook Apps — The Next Conduit for Recruiting?

The recruiting field is a deeply competitive one, as companies work to secure the best qualified candidates for their own positions, or for their clients. As a result, recruiting tends to be very quick in its adoption of new technologies. Monster.com was (and to some extent still remains) one of the leading sites in database driven applications.

It is perplexing, given how tech savvy the field is in general, that they haven't taken to the latest trends in internet connectivity between people and social sites like Facebook and MySpace. Both allow access to millions of viewers each day, and both let their users make business and casual connections. They've become destination sites for millions of people, with applications and content updated constantly. One would think that the ability to put [a job application](#) there would be an instant win.

In practice, the recruiting field is a bit more cautious about these for a number of reasons. The first, and probably largest, is that net-nanny software is keeping these sites from being accessed at work to an increasing degree. Many companies see MySpace and Facebook as productivity sinks, where employees go to lose hours of productive time at a stretch, and they're not far off on that – surveys of time spent on social networking sites indicate that they're costing millions of hours of productivity in the office.

Even so, there are some advocating the push to social networking sites, particularly the use of apps. The first attempt at this was Facebook, and it was something of a failure. Facebook generated an app that had plenty of customization available for individual job sites; it turned out to be harder to use the customization than had otherwise been thought...and worse yet, the user base regarded job hunting on Facebook to be less appealing than playing games, which are the dominant form of application on Facebook and MySpace.

What's happening now is that job sites, like CareerBuilder.com, are focusing on making their own applications rather than customizing existing ones. This is running into technical hurdles – applications on MySpace and Facebook aren't stable platforms yet, and there are other challenges as well, like getting visibility in a social networking space and keeping that visibility long enough to benefit from the effort of getting it in the first place.

So, if you're looking into recruiting on these spaces, here are some criteria for success:

1) You're catching people in a casual environment. Don't expect them to have a resume or CV ready to send your way. Instead, you're looking to capture information about the kinds of jobs they're looking for, and contact info. Don't look at it as a first phase job interview; look at it as a kiosk at a job fair.

2) Remember that kiosk at a job fair analogy? Imagine the job fair is being set up somewhere in Disneyland; it's visible to [job seekers](#) if they look for it, and they may stumble across it. But they're going to stumble across it en route to their favorite e-Ticket ride. Plan accordingly – how are you going to get people to use your application in the first place? Thinking of making the submission process entertaining is a new set of goal posts for most recruiting agents.

3) Finally, accept that it's a crowded market. You're not going to have undivided attention. Make the process fast.

That said, there is some received wisdom in this to work from. When you make your process more engaging then you make it more game-like. Games are about interesting decisions made under some kind of time pressure, with an immediate reward loop. Instead of having a job listing application, make the job listing the reward for some simple (and easy to play) game, or tier of games – as the user enters more information, they play different games; each game shows them a different job. The higher their score at the game, the more interesting the job should be, given the information they entered earlier on.

For a typical web app game, the game has to be playable inside of ten minutes, and preferably playable three times in twenty minutes. This is based off of MySpace Apps user metrics, and it should be applicable to any kind of job application app you're making for any of the major social networking spaces.



Recruiting Career Feature

Finally, be aware of the demographics of people you're getting on these pages. This is not the proper venue to recruit CEOs and bankers, for instance. It's not bad for graphic designers and web page and print page layout people; many use MySpace as their venue for practicing their skills, and they work as online portfolios. It's also important to keep in mind the informality of these spaces in mind. You are not going to see applicants on their best behavior. This can be good if your recruiting goals are suitably aligned. If

you're aiming for people who are creative, this is a good place to find them. If you're looking for a good worker who fits in well with the office culture at AT&T, it may not be.

In conclusion, right now apps on MySpace and Facebook are a dormant recruiting opportunity. They won't be for long; be sure your recruiting needs are tailored for the aspects that work for and against you in these environments.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.