

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SPECIAL REPORT: TECHNOLOGY

... Find a Job

By LORRAINE FARQUARSON
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Not too long ago, Internet job boards became the preferred tool of many employment seekers. With their millions of listings and detailed indexing, Web sites such as Monster.com (www.monster.com) and HotJobs.com (www.hotjobs.com) made finding a job online appear as effortless as clicking a mouse.

But now people are realizing it isn't that easy. The new thinking is: Use the Internet, but be smarter about how you do it.

The big job boards today are increasingly used as jumping-off points, to be used in combination with other online tools. Thousands of other Web-based resources exist, from the sites of potential employers themselves, to niche job boards, search services, and professional organizations. What follows is a look at some of those tools:

In Good Company

Large corporations are increasingly using their own Web sites to post job openings, which helps them cut recruiting costs. According to a recently completed study, 92% of Fortune 500 companies now use their corporate sites for recruiting, up from 29% in 1998. A sampling over three weeks last spring found more than 97,000 job openings posted on the sites of Fortune 500 companies, according to the group that conducted the study, iLogos Research, the research arm of San Francisco-based recruiting company Recruitsoft Inc.

Fueling this trend, job seekers increasingly see company Web sites as a faster way to get their resumes to decision makers, and as a way to keep their job searches more private than on an Internet job board.

A recent poll taken by consulting firm Transformation Systems Inc., Arlington, Va., found that 70% of job seekers felt they were more likely to obtain an interview if they posted on corporate sites. And 85% reported that they were concerned with the privacy of information posted on an Internet board.

Navigating the site of every employer in your area of interest, however, could be a daunting task. To save time, try using a job-search engine like DirectEmployers.com (www.directemployers.com), which combs through positions offered on about 1,100 corporate sites and links you directly to them. In the search window, enter the job description or title you're looking for; a list of positions pops up that also indicates the employer and the location of the job. If you click on one of the listings, you are taken straight to the company's Web site, where you can apply.

Bill Warren, executive director of DirectEmployers, says that more than half of the quarter-million listings it connects to can't be found anywhere else. They're only posted on the company sites. DirectEmployers is a nonprofit association of employers and is based in Indianapolis.

Surf Boards

Despite what companies themselves are doing, job boards are far from obsolete. Monster.com, a division of Monster Worldwide Inc., says it posts about a million jobs each quarter on its Internet board and maintains a database with more than 28.5 million resumes and 38.5 million registered job seekers.

Nor have Fortune 500 companies completely given up on the boards. An iLogos survey last year showed that CareerBuilder.com (www.careerbuilder.com) had an average of 118 positions per Fortune 500 company, Monster.com had 99 and HotJobs.com 37. Careerbuilder.com is co-owned by media companies Gannett Co., Knight Ridder Inc. and Tribune Co. HotJobs.com is a unit of Yahoo Inc.

Millions use the boards and their tools to turn up jobs by industry, title, company name, location, salary and date posted. Others have found success by using a regular search engine.

Trish Caputo, a former news director for the Web site of a New York area TV station, wanted to make a career change to public relations. She also wanted to stay in Long Island. But rather than just troll the job boards or post her resume, she went to the popular Google search engine (www.google.com) and entered in the search window "public relations" and "large companies in Long Island."

Google.com brought her to the Web site of Arrow Electronics Inc., a distributor of electronic and computer parts based in Melville, N.Y., where an opening was posted for a corporate communications associate. Ms. Caputo applied for the job on the site and got a response within a few days. Soon after that, she got an interview and was hired.

The whole process, from application to job offer, took about two weeks, she says. She adds there was one thing she appreciated about this site that was missing from job boards: The company listed all of the job benefits and gave much more detail about the position.

Narrow Thinking

For those who want to stay within their field but still cast a wide net, niche sites that focus on particular industries or types of jobs are proliferating fast. Executives who want to earn more than \$100,000 a year, for example, can zero in with sites like My.Chief.Monster.com (my.chief.monster.com), a unit of Monster.com, SixFigureJobs.com (www.sixfigurejobs.com), a division of the recruiting company Workstream Inc., and the sites of Recruiters Online Inc. (www.recruitersonline.com), ExecuNet Inc. (www.execunet.com) and Netshare Inc. (www.netshare.com).

Other niche sites offer specialized information for various fields. Health-care workers will find job listings and career advice on such sites as HealthCareerWeb.com (www.healthcareerweb.com) and RRTJobs.com (www.rrtjobs.com). HealthCareerWeb.com, a unit of Trader Publishing Co., offers resources on such subjects as how to write cover letters and negotiate a better salary, plus links to schools that offer advanced degrees in health care, and a resume distribution service. RRTjobs.com is run by Healthcare Recruitment On Line Inc., a recruiting firm for the health-care industry.

Sites that are dedicated to helping women get ahead include CareerWomen.com, part of a network of recruiting sites run (www.careerwomen.com) by Career Exposure Inc., based in Portland, Ore. JillXan Donnelly, president, touts the benefits of using niche sites to find job leads even during economic slowdowns, saying, "Companies are really looking for specific candidates, and so you don't want to get lost in the crowd."

The Professionals

Sites of professional associations are also a good way to home in on your particular field. Though they may carry annual fees, such sites provide lots of information and can offer very good leads.

NASP.com (www.nasp.com), for example, the Web site of the National Association of Sales Professionals, based in Scottsdale, Ariz., allows salespeople to post their resumes -- anonymously, if they choose.

For people in banking and financial services, there's BankJobSearch.com (www.bankjobsearch.com), run by BAI, a Chicago-based organization that seeks to improve the performance of financial-service companies and employees through conferences, seminars and training courses. This site offers to BAI members the usual job- and resume-posting services and career advice.

Another site, SPJ.org (www.spj.org), for the Indianapolis-based Society of Professional Journalists, maintains an extensive membership database, which makes it easier to network with fellow SPJ members at other media companies.

The Internet is great for finding a job, Monster.com founder and Chief Executive Jeff Taylor agrees. But, he says, "people tend to be a little myopic and use one tool. They have to go further."

Many Monster.com users, for instance, aren't using all of the features on the site that they could, he says.

One such tool that Mr. Taylor thinks is underused is My Job Search Agent, a tracking device you can have access to when you register as a member with Monster.com. My Job Search Agent will send you an e-mail -- possibly giving you a head start on less well-connected applicants -- when a job is posted that matches what you've been looking for.

"If you're really hungry for the job, and the job gets posted to the site at 2 p.m., you will be contacted within five minutes," he says. "There are jobs being posted all day, all the time."

One last tip from Mr. Taylor: The best time to start looking for a new job is while you still have your old one. "There is no better networking than when you're gainfully employed," he says. "We try not to rest on our laurels."

-- Ms. Farquarson is a staff reporter in the New York bureau of The Wall Street Journal.