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the online home of purchasing & supply chain recruitment

## **Effective Internet Job Ads**

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Getting the best results from internet job ads is something of an art. Whilst we can not deny that the underlying attractiveness of a job will be a factor in a job ads success online, it is not the dominant factor.

The internet is unparalleled in its ability to communicate with specific focussed groups, and whilst internet job advertising is not in principle a volume game, like many marketing activities, advertising jobs on the internet is all about maximising target audience exposure and (relevant) conversions. However, because of the nature of the internet as a medium there is unfortunately a certain amount of “noise” that must be tolerated in order to secure the higher value results.

Preparing job ads that deliver results on the internet is not as straightforward as cutting and pasting a job description, even though many recruiters seem to think that is how it is done. We at SupplyChainRecruit.com have been in the online recruitment advertising sector since 2001, and that’s a long time in the online recruitment world. During that time we have witnessed hundreds of thousands of client job postings, and developed a clear perspective about what works, and what doesn’t.

The principle of internet advertising is very similar to that of any other advertising medium. The starting point is to recognise that advertising jobs on the internet is a marketing activity. It is all about identifying your target audience, communicating with the target audience, and convincing the target audience to take action in the form of applications. So it should be approached with a marketing thought and planning process.

There are of course some jobs that are in higher demand and will always attract greater viewing and applications levels than the “average” jobs. But let us think about the average, or even the harder to fill jobs. There is a candidate audience out there for every job, if it attracts their interest.

If your job ad is not seen then it can not be successful. You can only receive applications if your job can be found. Incorrectly or poorly posted job ads will not be seen by relevant candidates, either because they will not be present when jobs are searched on the internet, or because they will not be sent to relevant candidates as part of a Jobs By Email process. SupplyChainRecruit.com emails job alerts to many tens of thousands of candidates every day of the week.

If your job ad is seen by relevant candidates, but is badly prepared, it will achieve only a fraction of the potential applications. As a job site providing services to many clients we see dramatic variations in response levels achieved by clients. We believe that the quality of job posting probably accounts for 95% of the variation between recruiters receiving the most to least application levels.

## Get Your Jobs Seen

Experience shows us that many recruiters prepare job ads with too much of a focus on the job specification, rather than the potential candidates. For example, let's say that we were looking for an IT Buyer for a Retail business. The quickest way to post this job would simply be to place it as a purchasing job in the retail sector, and whilst this is theoretically correct, it is not the most productive strategy from a marketing point of view. IT purchasing skills are very transferable and therefore, whilst this specific position is in the retail sector, there is no reason why the candidates would need to come from the retail sector. Even if the client specified that they want somebody from a retail sector, experience shows that a high performing candidate from another industry sector is likely to be chosen by the client if presented alongside lesser performing candidates from the retail sector.

When posting a job to the internet we therefore need to start with three questions:

- (1) How is my target audience defined?
- (2) How will my target audience be searching for jobs?
- (3) How can I get my job in front of my target audience?

### 1. How is my target audience defined?

Let's stay with the IT Buyer example. The target audience might be purchasing professionals with 2 years or more experience purchasing software and hardware. Candidates with experience in a retail background may be of obvious interest, but this is not a prerequisite given the skill set of the role. It is probably more important to think about where would I find the skill set required for this role. Which industry sectors and which sizes of companies are likely to be relevant.

### 2. How will my target audience be searching for jobs?

To continue with our example, most IT purchasing professionals would be searching on keywords including "IT" and "purchasing". Their main focus when

searching jobs will be the location, job content (is it progression), level / remuneration (is it career advancement). Only after this are the candidates likely to consider industry sectors and employer information. So to get as many relevant candidates viewing your job as possible it is important to put your job in their search path.

### 3. How can I get my job in front of my target audience?

In order to get your job in front of the target audience you need to ensure that your job will be picked up on the job searches being conducted by your target audience. This means ensuring that it is posted under categories and keywords that your target candidates will be searching on. For example:

#### Industry Sectors

SupplyChainRecruit.com allows every job to be posted under three industry sectors. For maximum exposure industry sectors should be selected based on where the target audience could come from, rather than only the industry sector applicable to the job.

Many recruiters assign their jobs to just one completely unrelated industry sector in their rush to get on to the next posting, without appreciated the very serious effects that this will have upon response levels. We also see many cases of incorrect industry sectors resulting from erroneous links from the job feeder service providers.

#### Keywords

The keywords section should be populated with all of the word that may be used by your target candidate audience, when searching for a job. Begin by thinking about what your target candidates will be typing into the internet to search for new job opportunities. For example, a junior purchasing person could be searching on the terms purchasing, procurement, buying, or buyer. Failing to include one of these key words could be excluding part of the candidate audience from ever uncovering your job opportunity. Make sure you enter a range of key words that will capture all possible variations for the sector that you are recruiting in.

A typical problem that we see is jobs posted under non-standard titles that do not contain the accepted keywords used to describe that type of role. For example, an ad for a Sourcing Manager. This is of course a purchasing role and the vast majority of candidates will search for jobs using the term "purchasing". If the word purchasing does not appear in the job title, or the job description, and has not been entered as a key word, then the job ad simply cannot be found by candidates.

### Locations

Ensure that locations are accurate. For example we recently had a job posted to the North West UK, but listed in the Town / City box was Hull. This is clearly a consultant with a dodgy geographical knowledge, but it is also a job that is unlikely to be found by candidates in the target audience.

We need to consider where the candidates may be living now, rather than simply where the job is located. It is not so much a question of will the candidates relocate, but more about have the candidates thought about relocating. Some candidates would move at their own cost for a role that excites them, even though they were not thinking about relocating prior to seeing the job ad.

SupplyChainRecruit.com allows job to be posted under three regional locations.

## **Influencing Candidates To Take Action**

The next area to be considered is how we ensure that candidate click through to read our job ads, and apply, after searching them on the internet.

### Job Titles

Many recruiters do not appreciate the importance of the job title. A job ad is a marketing tool and like other advertisements, the most successful ads will include titles that draw the audience's attention to your ad and encourage them to click through. The title of the job is usually the link on the job search results page to open the full job ad. So it is critical to get potential candidates clicking through. Let us consider the requirement for a junior purchasing person again. A title such as "Buyer" is likely to be lost in the ocean of Buyer opportunities out there. Unless the salary is unusually high compared to the norm is there any reason why anybody should click on your ad over all of the others? What if we changed the title to something like "Career Purchasing Opportunity!". Do you think that would draw attention? Of course it would, because candidates will be curious to understand more.

### Job Description

So now you have candidates clicking through to your job ad, but what happens next. Well ideally they will continue to be enthused by a well written and considered job ad. Again, this is a marketing tool and should be used as much to excite, enthuse, and encourage action as it is to inform the candidate. Far too often job ads are purely a statement of facts, rather like a recipe for the role. If you are hoping to encourage the right candidates to apply then you better think about getting them motivated. They require emotive language and softer adjectives. You need to paint a scene and encourage the candidate to enter.

Let me ask you, which of these opportunities would you be more attracted to consider.

- Retailer requires Buyer to join UK purchasing team.
- Our client is a growing and progressive retailer with ambitious plans for the future. They currently seek an ambitious and motivated purchasing professional to join their UK head office purchasing team.

Of course not every business is growing or progressive, but every organisation has some positive featured that can be used to talk them up.

The ad should be no more than 4 or 5 paragraphs long, and not less than 3, and should provide clear instruction about how to apply.

#### Contact Information

Avoid job sites where the candidate is forced to complete their registration form in order to apply. There remains a significant element of candidates that simply do not wish to load their personal details onto an internet website and would prefer to send their application directly by email. So always include an email and telephone number. Ads that display no contact details will always lose a proportion of potential applicants.

SupplyChainRecruit.com automatically display full contact details for the recruiter on every job ad.

### **The White Elephant**

Over recent years we have seen a steady and continuous increase in the use of online application systems by employers. Often this involves a URL link from the job ad to the employers website where they can apply online or download an application form. There is a lot of evidence to suggest that asking candidates to leave the website on which they found the job is fatal to the application process. It seems that candidates are reluctant and at best cautious to follow such links, and certainly very unwilling to complete application details on a secondary website. To use an analogy. It's a bit like deciding which supermarket you want to shop in, then seeing something on the shelf that you would like to buy, but when you look closely it is just some instructions telling you to go to another shop to get the product. 9 out of 10 people would probably just pick up the competitors product on the next shelf instead.

Happy job posting!

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The Leading Internet Job Site since 2001 for :

- Purchasing / Procurement / Buying
- Logistics
- Demand Management / Planning
- Supply Chain Management
- Warehousing / Distribution / Transport

**SupplyChainRecruit.com** has been the Nr 1 UK job site for purchasing, logistics, and supply chain since 2001. Other sites claim to be number 1, but we encourage you to dig a bit deeper and get behind these claims.

**SupplyChainRecruit.com** is **Nr 1** based on numbers of:

1. website hits
2. website visitors
3. candidate job searches
4. registered candidates
5. jobs posted
6. clients advertising,

In summary **SupplyChainRecruit.com** advertises more purchasing, logistics, and Supply chain jobs, on behalf of more clients, and generates more candidate responses than any of our competitors.

In addition we have been established longer than any of our competitors

We are Supply Chain experts, available to advise your clients on ad copy and candidate attraction strategies.

Finally, we will respect your client relationships. Many niche job sites are linked to recruitment companies and this can result in a conflict of interests.

**SupplyChainRecruit.com** is not linked to any recruitment company. Our only goal is to ensure that our advertisers receive the applications that they need.

[supply chain jobs, purchasing jobs, procurement jobs, buying jobs, buyer jobs, warehouse jobs, distribution jobs, logistics jobssupply chain recruitment, purchasing recruitment, procurement recruitment, buyer recruitment, warehouse recruitment, dustribution recruitment, logistics recruitmentpurchasing, supply chain, supply chain management, logistics, warehouse, warehousing, inventory, distribution, buyer, buying]

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