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Managed IT

You're Hired! IT in the Recruitment Sector

Channelling the power of technology to overcome challenges and enhance opportunities

The Impact of COVID-19 On Recruitment

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a colossal and long-lasting impact on a wide range of industries and verticals, from healthcare to hospitality and everything in between. With jobs becoming more uncertain and the economy struggling to stay above water, it is no surprise that the recruitment sector has also felt the effects of COVID-19.

The economy slumped by 10% in 2020, resulting in the worst recession for 300 years. However, recruiters remained resilient. The recruitment industry contributed £35.9 billion Gross value added (GVA) to the UK economy in 2020. While this was down by 11.5% from 2019, given the adversity faced by the sector the statistic remains impressive. Additionally, the recruitment industry placed an average of 980,000 people into temporary jobs each day and 450,000 people into permanent jobs over the course of the year.

If in 2020, the recruitment industry merely stayed afloat; in 2021, it began to swim once again.
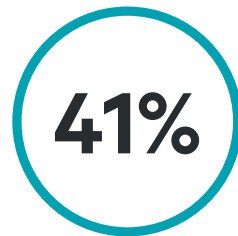
41% of businesses increased recruitment in Q2 2021, up from 26% in Q1.

14% of businesses paused recruitment in Q1 of 2021.

Source: TotalJobs

This impressive bounce back is reflective of the industry's willingness to embrace change, adopt new processes and adapt to a new recruitment model. While several prominent sector trends have emerged in the past few years, an increased and continuing reliance on technology to support the hiring and onboarding process is perhaps the most notable.

What's on the Recruitment Horizon?

2022 brings with it a significant shift in the hiring dynamic. Job seekers now have increased agency and power in the recruitment process. The tumultuousness of 2021 resulted in employees leaving their jobs in major drifts. Job moves hit a high of 988,000 in the last three months of 2021 alone, in a shift that has been dubbed The Great Resignation. Younger team members are particularly likely to consider leaving their positions, with over half of 16-34 year olds reported to have considered leaving their jobs in the last three months.

However, the surge in job vacancies and the increased openness of jobseekers has created an exciting opportunity for recruiters. The pool of talent to choose from is increasingly flexible and mobile. Thanks to the increase in remote working, recruiters are now able to look further afield to find the right candidate for the role. Unsurprisingly, as a result, technology will become essential not only to candidates, but also to recruiters.

So, what are the upcoming hiring trends of 2022?

· Remote and virtual hiring is here to stay.

· Technology will play a more prominent role in the recruitment process.

· The on-demand workforce will surge, with increased opportunities for freelancers.

· Recruiters will embrace passive hiring, seeking out candidates with the relevant skillsets.

As the industry continues to adapt to a new working environment, there will of course be upcoming challenges and teething issues. Fortunately, in this guide, we will explore ways recruiters can harness the power of IT to overcome issues and embrace new opportunities.

Challenge #1
Identifying Candidates

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The Challenge

52% of recruiters state that identifying the right candidates from their pool of applications is the most difficult part of their job. As the job market is currently in a state of flux, there is an increase in the number of candidates seeking out new roles. While of course this number will vary from sector to sector and salary to salary, for any given job listed there are an average of 118 applications. This can make it very challenging for recruiters to read and evaluate every CV thoughtfully and carefully, within the required timeframe.

Recruiters are being forced to balance efficiency against effectiveness, making the hiring process frustrating for all involved.

The Solution

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation are becoming major facilitators in the recruitment industry, helping to increase the efficiency of the hiring process. For example, you can use an AI-based Applicant Tracking System to scan through CVs and identify relevant candidates based on a selection of key terms or qualifications. This can help to eliminate recruiter bias at this initial stage of the application process.

AI can also be used to find and communicate with candidates, speeding up recruitment. AI software can be used to analyse profiles on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, to identify relevant candidates and target specific job applications towards them. An AI-driven chat function can also be used to make communication more efficient, providing automated answers to common questions regarding job descriptions or scheduling.

Challenge #2
Interviewing and Hiring

The Challenge

After identifying a suitable candidate from an application, the next key stage of the recruitment process is inviting that person to interview. While this might sound simple, unfortunately this can be a challenging process. Traditionally, candidates would have to come a company's office space for an in-person interview, creating difficulties with scheduling on both sides of the hiring process. Conflicting responsibilities and availabilities can severely delay the interviewing process, with a knock-on effect of slowing down the selection of a candidate.

The Solution

Fortunately, collaboration and video conferencing platforms, like Microsoft Teams, make it possible for candidates to interview remotely from anywhere. Teams integrates seamlessly with your Outlook calendar, so it is easy for recruiters to assess availability and efficiently schedule a meeting. This helps to prevent cancellations or no-shows and allows a wider pool of applicants to interview for a job. Additionally, it has been reported that employers can interview more candidates virtually in a shorter space of time, allowing them to view and assess more talent.

There has been a 57% increase in the use of video interviews from 2019 to 2022, with 80% of companies now stating that their interviewing and hiring process is fully remote. While this trend might have emerged out of the pandemic, the many benefits mean that remote hiring is here to stay. More than half of employers now say that they will continue to use video interviews after COVID restrictions are entirely eliminated.

Challenge #3
Communication

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The Challenge

Clear, transparent communication is a crucial part of the recruitment process. After all, it's what you expect to see from candidates. If you can keep communication unambiguous and efficient, even if the candidate dœs not receive a job offer, they are more likely to retain a positive impression of the company they applied to. As around 72% of candidates who have a negative experience of a business or brand will share it with others, maintaining integrity is vital.

53% of applicants state that they don't receive a response from employers until three months after they submit their application. This inefficiency is not only disrespectful, but also potentially brand tarnishing. If you are interested in a candidate, it is especially crucial that you can maintain a strong channel of communication with them and facilitate their seamless contact with the employer too.

The Solution

Technology is absolutely essential to efficient, effective communication. Studies have shown that email and phone communication remain most popular in the recruitment industry, with 74% of candidates connecting with companies via phone calls, and 73% contacting them via email. However, other forms of communication are beginning to catch up. 24% of job seekers communicate with recruiters via text message, while 1 in 5 connect with businesses via social media.

As a recruiter, VoIP technology is a powerful enabler. Flexibility is key to your job: you never know when a desired applicant might reach out or an employer might advertise a vacancy. VoIP solutions integrate the features of your on-premises telephony equipment into your mobile device, freeing you from your desk and offering increased mobility. Adopting a VoIP solution, like Microsoft Teams Phone, will allow you to integrate conferencing and instant messaging capabilities, making it easier and more efficient to not only contact candidates yourself, but connect them with employers too.

Working with a Managed Service Provider with expertise and specialisms in telephony and connectivity will ensure a seamless recruitment process. Blue Saffron has a range of tailorable communication services, ranging from voice services to mobile device management. With our assistance, your candidate calls will benefit from lightning-fast connections and perfect clarity, wherever you are.

Challenge #4
Onboarding

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The Challenge

The onboarding process is essential to the successful transition of candidates to employees. You need to ensure that contracts are sent out on time and signed correctly, candidates know how to access essential information and resources, and new employees are set up on company systems correctly. This process can be lengthy and complex on both sides. It has been reported that it can take up to eight months for new employees to become as proficient and productive as experienced hires, partially due to the inefficiency or inadequacy of onboarding procedures. Recruiters need to liaise with HR teams to ensure a smooth handover.

The Solution

While the onboarding process used to be extremely time-consuming and admin heavy, technology is enabling greater efficiency and organisation. According to Glassdoor, 82% of all employees believe that a more structured onboarding process will improve company productivity and staff satisfaction. Making the onboarding process virtual facilitates the use of templates to automate workflows and repetitive processes, helping to streamline the onboarding process.

As remote working becomes increasingly normalised, virtualisation technology can help to facilitate the same user experience at home as in the office. This helps to make onboarding more efficient, as new hires can access the corporate environment even if they are working from home. For instance, Azure Virtual Desktop allows users to connect to their corporate desktop and connected applications from anywhere with an internet connection. If a company is using specific applications for onboarding, HR or employee training, new hires can easily access these using AVD.

Challenge #5
Security

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The Challenge

From personal applicant details to salary information, recruiters have access to reams of confidential data. If a recruiter has a wide contact list, then their bank of sensitive information is particularly extensive, and therefore extremely valuable to cyber criminals. There is a myriad of ways to make money out of stolen data, including holding it to ransom, using it for identity fraud or selling it on to a third party. For recruiters, a data breach could have severe consequences, financially, legally and reputationally. Candidates place their trust in recruiters and so it is imperative to implement robust and comprehensive cyber security procedures to uphold this well-intentioned faith.

The Solution

There are a range of best practices you can implement to secure your recruiting data, including multi-factor authentication, data encryption, endpoint protection, and anti-virus software. Due to the prominence of email communication within the recruitment sector, learning to detect and avoid phishing scams is also key. While phishing is responsible for around 90% of all data breaches, it is also highly avoidable. By undergoing phishing simulation training and improving the hygiene of your email security, you can prevent phishing from causing a data breach.

Blue Saffron can help to guide you through the process of strengthening your cyber security, offering fully managed security services and testing. With Blue Saffron by your side, you can have complete peace of mind, knowing that your IT systems are being proactively monitored for threats 24/7. With more than ten years of experience providing intelligent security services, we truly understand the evolving nature of the landscape and have the expertise to anticipate issues and protect against attacks.

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Embrace change with Blue Saffron

As the recruitment industry continues to grow and change, technology has the power to tackle pervasive issues and facilitate innovative sector solutions. Embracing this upcoming modernisation will result in more efficient processes, better practices and a wider global pool of available talent to explore.

Formed in 2004, Blue Saffron is the Managed Service Provider for the recruitment industry. With deep sector knowledge and a wealth of experience, we can implement bespoke IT solutions that will help your recruitment business become more efficient, productive and collaborative. Get in touch with one our specialist technicians today to discuss how we can transform your operations with revolutionary IT.

Get in touch

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