



RECRUITMENT

CV'S NOT DEAD, IT'S ONLINE

LinkedIn's database offers employers more than a recruiter's wildest dream.
Report: Samantha Hutchinson

● Earlier this year, the national leader for Deloitte's online consulting practice, Frank Farrall, was having trouble narrowing down the list of contenders for a role in his division.

The decision was made easier when he found that one candidate had an inactive LinkedIn account. "I wouldn't trust a professional these days who didn't have a good LinkedIn profile," he says. "I'd think, 'Have you been living under a rock?'"

Admittedly, Farrall's division expects a higher level of digital competency than most, yet he maintains that his is a common attitude. "The reality is that a LinkedIn profile is now a baseline expectation for a professional," he says.

A standard profile on LinkedIn, or on one of its emerging competitors such as Viadeo (which claims to have 35 million members, predominantly in Europe), is basically a dynamic version of the traditional curriculum vitae (CV). Alongside education history, qualifications and work experience, a LinkedIn profile contains links to past employer websites, opportunities to post digital examples of past work and a record of your professional network.

The printed and paper-clipped CV of days past is not dead but corporations, employees and job seekers need to be aware that the traditional CV is no longer enough if they want the best professional opportunities.

Every US company in the Fortune 500 list is represented on the site, as are most of the S&P/ASX 200 companies. It now has more than 2 million Australian members, a figure that is believed to constitute just under half of the professional population.

Farrall explains how the site has influenced his own hiring strategy.

"I'll use a LinkedIn profile to validate and pre-qualify applicants," he says. "I'll look at their professional connections and ask my team if there's any overlap

(with their connections) to give us a better idea of the candidate."

Deloitte runs a digital mentoring program through its organisation to coach employees on how to capitalise on engagement with social media.

"Being connected is incredibly important in a professional services firm," Farrall says. "It shows that you have confidence and the [personal] network to be effective. The strength of an employee lies very much in their connections. The market needs to know about you to engage you."

Perhaps the biggest impact of the site's emergence is that it has unlocked access to the "passive candidate", the employed but aspirational professional.

The managing director of LinkedIn's Australia and New Zealand division, Clifford Rosenberg, says an online professional profile enables this passive candidate to keep an eye out for new job opportunities without having to look actively.

Much in the same way that a professional seeks to promote themselves by attending industry events and functions, Rosenberg believes individuals can apply the same principles of search engine optimisation to raise their industry profile online.

This particularly relates to the results returned by a Google search of an individual's name.

"One has to ask themselves, 'How do I want to be represented on the web?'" he says.

The benefits of making this passive candidate visible are twofold. The challenges of sourcing good quality staff are plain to see in a country where unemployment hovers around 5 per cent. Chances are that top professionals are already employed and are not regularly trawling job sites. LinkedIn, however, gives employers access to a database that most recruiters could only have dreamed of 10 years ago.

"A passive candidate doesn't have an updated CV on hand but they do have an updated LinkedIn profile," Rosenberg says.

And it helps candidates to get to know more about their potential managers.

"I'll come into the reception area and they'll make eye contact with me," Farrall says.

"That's because they've taken the time to look at my profile and they've seen my image online. It's a way to tell who's really interested in the job." **BRW**