

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

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Table of contents

Table of contents	2
Foreword: Thoughts on Mobile Recruiting by Kevin Wheeler	3
Section A: Strategic Thinking	6
The times, they are moving.....	6
Online recruiting is mainstream	8
The Rise of Dual Screening	10
Candidates consume email and social media from mobile.....	10
The Mobile application process.....	12
Mobile First.....	14
Section B: The How to Guide	16
Why do you need to optimize for mobile?	16
Designing for Mobile	16
<i>Design to be finger friendly</i>	16
<i>What is Responsive Web Design (RWD)?</i>	17
Getting Mobile Traffic	19
Section C: Checklist	20
In Conclusion	23
Mobile Recruiting Guide 2013	24
Terminology	25
Section D: Sponsor Information	26
Pocket Recruit	26
MetaShift.....	26

Foreword:

Thoughts on Mobile Recruiting by Kevin Wheeler

Why should I care about mobile recruiting? Isn't it true that only a small number of people even think of using their phones or iPads to look for a job? After all, who could fill out an application or even read the job description on a phone?

I hear this a lot from recruiters and even more often from recruiting leaders. It underlines how fast technology changes and how slowly recruiters change.

Recruitment websites, job descriptions, the process of learning about a company, and the process of applying for a job are all mired in the paradigm of a desktop computer.

Yet, mobile has become the world's most common method of communicating. In Africa, South America, India, China, and most of the developing world; smart phones are the only method people have to communicate, receive news, or watch videos. From Egypt to Libya to China, mobile is becoming the way people protest, express their feelings, set up appointments, and look for jobs.

Yes, job seeking is one of the most frequently cited uses for a smart phone. But, most job sites and almost all application processes are woefully behind in being able to satisfy this demand.

Even in Europe and the U.S., job seekers are getting more comfortable with mobile phones and buying them in record numbers. Now that Apple is about to release the iPhone 5 the number of users will multiply. Most of us expect that there is an App for everything, including help in finding and getting a job.

When I tried recently to see what the experience of mobile job seeking was like, I soon discovered that websites required me to scroll everywhere and that the buttons they wanted me to click on were way too tiny for my big fingers. Videos were too large to stream without taking lots of time – when there were any videos at all. There was no way to apply for the job without logging into a desktop computer, setting up an account, and filling out a long form.

For certain, younger candidates will shy away from doing this. In fact, many do not have access to a computer at all! Older candidates may, for a while, be comfortable with the computer, but even their tolerance for unnecessary bureaucracy and long forms is waning. Candidates are delighted with sites that make it easy to apply, that are fun to use, and that provide really useful information – not marketing boilerplate.

So, just as we struggled to move from paper to recruiting websites, we now have to move from computer-based websites and traditional ways of thinking about recruiting to much more flexible and mobile-based ways. This requires the use of different media – fewer words and more video and pictures. It will require new thinking about how we

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

present job descriptions and how we qualify candidates. It will force us to evaluate what we really need to make a decision about a candidate, not just what we would like. It will result in better candidates and happier recruiters.

Dave and Matt have years of experience in developing and implementing mobile solutions. And in this paper they share what you need to do to take your recruitment efforts into the 21st century. There are examples and best practice stories to help you learn how to get started or how to get to the next level.

I urge you to move forward quickly and embrace the excitement and possibilities of this new mobile era.

Kevin Wheeler

San Francisco

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Section A: Strategic Thinking

It has been one year since the first *Guide to Mobile Recruiting*. Adoption of mobile over the last 12 months has been fast paced and widespread. We considered updating last year's guide, but it felt more appropriate and valuable to address a wider range of topics. As such the *Guide to Mobile Recruiting 2012* feels closer to volume 2 than an update. We hope you are able to gain value from combining both papers.

The times, they are moving.

The "information" era is over. The PC is at tipping point and will start its inevitable decline. While the PC will not die out completely, the time spent in front of it is reducing dramatically. We are witnessing the convergence of PC / TV and the rise of true handheld computing reality. The early adopters and leaders are already mobile, now they want mobility and seamless cross device integration. Mobility is the next big technology focus, but the recruiting industry is not keeping up with what has happened already and must now consider the implications of going mobile first.

Insiders are reporting that Google global mobile web search volumes have overtaken desktop web searches. Facebook now has over 500m mobile active users, who are twice as active than the desktop users. In various markets Twitter mobile usage vs Twitter desktop usage is as high as 80% on mobile. The total annual revenue from mobile web and apps is in excess of \$25bn. Amazon is poised to pounce on Apple's

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

tablet domination. Mobile is mass consumption, the remainder of this decade will see the technology giants battle for mobility.

Mobile adoption is shaped differently in different markets. In wealthier nations mobile web used to be a luxury item, over the last 5 years it has grown into a must have item for the mass market. In emerging markets such as Chile, Brazil and China mobile Internet has provided a cheaper alternative to Internet connectivity than installing wires in the ground. Regardless of the journey and motivations, the common trend is the same...

All online activities are migrating to mobile platforms. Mobile commerce is rapidly growing and, coupled with the increase in mobile advertising, will only accelerate its growth. Industry analysts are speculating that in 3 to 5 years mobile advertising will be worth \$25bn. If we assume such growth takes marketing dollars out of desktop web advertising, we shall experience a swing in market value from desktop web to mobile web. Mobile migration is the next evolutionary step along the digital journey and it is already underway.

For the last four years we have been talking to organizations about using mobile Internet in their recruitment strategy. In 2008 it was not a popular topic and we got some very strange looks when we suggested that mobile web will be as important in recruitment than desktop web. For many, this statement may still seem outrageous, however mobile migration is poised to snowball in recruitment and latecomers to the

party will miss out on the best talent for their company and market share for their recruiting products or services.

“So what does mobile mean to the recruiters, talent acquisition professionals and employer brand practitioners of the world's leading companies?”

Online recruiting is mainstream

Over the last 4 years of economic turbulence recruiting trends have shown an increase in social recruiting adoption and an increase in the concentration of internal direct recruiting.. Online recruitment marketing is the key medium for attracting candidates. Today the majority of recruiters will engage in some, if not all, of the following online recruitment tactics:

- Career website, showcasing employer brand and showing vacancies.
- Twitter channel, with more forward thinking companies operating through multiple targeted channels.
- Facebook career page.
- LinkedIn company page.
- PPC Search Advertising
- Search Engine Optimization.
- Email campaigns, both external and to a registered talent pool.

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

Mass market Internet consumption is rapidly migrating to smartphone and tablet devices. The online candidate attraction tactics described above are being consumed by many candidates who have already migrated to mobile. With the majority of companies not yet factoring this in, today's candidate experience on mobile is a long way from ideal and in many cases is causing severe brand damage for employers.

Obviously you want the candidate to enjoy your content and engage with your company from the device of their choice. You want that first impression and continuing experience of your employer brand to be a positive one, leaving a positive authentic impression. You do not want that ideal candidate to find your content difficult to consume, or application workflows impossible to navigate and complete. This negative experience can damage your core brand and send hot talent to your competitors.

Take a moment to consider your company's current mobile candidate experience. Do you offer a good candidate experience via mobile? Is your candidate application process usable from an smartphone?

With year on year growth in recruitment mobile support up 25%, the recruitment industry is starting to migrate to mobile and a recent survey revealed mobile is a planned project over the next 12 months for many recruiters. While this is an undoubtedly positive trend, only 10% of the US and UK's largest companies are currently providing their candidates with a mobile optimized experience. To sustain

today's returns from online recruitment, mobile migration should be on everyone's 12-month radar.

The Rise of Dual Screening

Mobile and tablet devices may not provide the user with a keyboard or high powered computing capabilities but they do deliver unparalleled convenience. These highly portable devices switch on at a touch of button with no waiting and are always connected to the web.

"Arms reach" and "use anywhere" convenience has driven a dramatic rise of dual screen consumption. The mass market is now interacting with mobile web from the sofa or the bed, often while watching the TV at the same time. A UK national TV broadcaster recently carried out research which found that 60% of their audience was browsing the web from a mobile / tablet while watching TV.

The implications of mass mobile web consumption in the home over WiFi, instead of on the move via cellular networks has revolutionized traditional assumptions of mobile web and driven huge levels of mobile video content consumption.

Candidates consume email and social media from mobile.

Social networking has matured into a world wide mass market technology used everyday by over 1bn people. At its heart the recruiting industry is about people and fundamentally this is driving the concept of "social recruiting". An often missed factor though is the fact that the mass adoption of social media has been very much

dependent on mobile web. At the time of writing 60% of all Twitter traffic is via mobile, in some markets such as the UK it is estimated to be closer to 80%. Facebook currently attracts 545m mobile active users cementing an unbreakable relationship between mobile and social. The latest iPhone 5 has built in operating system integration with both Facebook and Twitter.

The returns recruiters are enjoying from social media today are going to be impossible to develop and sustain without improved support for mobile web. Considering that 60% of potential candidates reached are consuming social recruiting messages from their mobile, it is a significant opportunity for companies to optimize their career sites and in so doing increase conversions. Over the next 18 months those companies that fail to migrate to mobile will see the success of their social recruiting endeavors significantly decline. On the upside, those who tailor their application workflow to be mobile friendly will instantly see an increased return from their current level of social recruiting investment.

The level of social / mobile integration opportunity also extends far beyond optimization as social networks have a built in ability to drive active alerts to candidates. The iPhone and Android platforms provides pop up alerts, similar to text messages, when users receive Twitter or Facebook messages / alerts. A socially integrated mSite is able to maximize this mechanism and drive alerts that users respond to rapidly.

Traditionally job alerts have been delivered to candidates via email. The mass market consumes email via mobile, which marketers are careful to optimize for easy reading and fast loading. Jobs by email shouldn't be any different and optimization should take place to avoid "pinch and zooming" and the call to action hyperlinks should direct the user to a site that has an available mSite.

The Mobile application process

Application on mobile is not easy. It is not yet commonplace to carry your resume or CV on your phone and unfortunately not every candidate has a presence in the cloud. While Dropbox, Evernote or Google Drive integration might serve some candidates this is not the single answer. LinkedIn is big, and growing, but not everyone has an up to date profile, or even a profile at all. Asking a user to type in their CV or resume is unrealistic and for many would feel quite cruel! So how do candidates apply?

There are a few solutions providing a mobile application that copycats your ATS and provides LinkedIn integration. Many companies have had success employing such tactics. We feel it is an excellent next step for mobile recruitment but it is not the end of the journey. This approach treats the mobile application identically to that of the desktop web application, which in the long term is unlikely to be a successful approach. Mobile Internet may share much of the same technology, but it is a new medium, and new mediums have historically has always benefited from a tailored transaction (or application) approach.

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

The level of success would be multiplied if the application processes were tailored to the device. It may be a few years before companies recognize this, but if you can get ahead of the rest you will vastly improve your ability to attract top talent.

While mentioning mobile application processes, it must not be ignored that many candidates will prefer applying from their desktop. Mobile adoption is just part of the journey for the recruiter and the candidate, ultimately the recruitment process will still take place across multiple devices and platforms

To illustrate the difference we should take a look at e-commerce, initially some payment gateways supported payment via mobile - it was exactly the same as the desktop experience. Some customers used this, however it was not hugely successful. Instead of writing off mobile as a device no one wants to purchase from, PayPal and Amazon focused their efforts on changing the experience to fit the device. Through PayPal and Amazon One Click, processed payments in 2011 reached \$10bn via mobile transactions and are forecasting far bigger success in 2012. M-Commerce is a serious slice of online transactions, increased by Apple and Google.

One of many lessons to learn is that PayPal and Amazon did not deny users who were not registered the ability to buy, instead you can buy from mobile with any credit card albeit through a more involved process.

Some firms see mobile as a great way to create an initial connection – maybe via a registration to a talent pool - instead of aiming to convert to application on the first hit.

We have to agree that mobile is a great medium to research jobs and companies, however if you are willing and able to review your application process you will get more talent via the mobile channel than your competitors are likely to if they don't.

Mobile First

What makes those amazing web experiences so great? The user experience (UX) has been thought out very carefully and noise has been removed. Achieving simple designs for complex problems is not easy. It requires strict design constraints to ensure the noise and clutter of the problem is not part of the final design.

The process of designing for mobile web first, before considering the desktop experience automatically delivers the perfect set of design constraints to encourage a fantastic UX. The current state of recruitment online candidate experiences provides significant opportunities to improve and simplify the UX.

Working with the constraints of mobile before considering the desktop experience challenges designers and stakeholders to fully understand the messaging and objective of the product. This delivers an online presence that will deliver increased ROI.

Designing mobile first, not only enhances the product, it provides a development lifecycle with minimal waste. It is highly cost effective to enhance a mobile experience

and port it to the desktop; all the assets and learning are valuable. The alternative direction – desktop to mobile does not provide such efficiencies. The design is probably not portable, the assets are likely to be unsuitable. Desktop to mobile requires a lot of rethinking and reworking resulting in wasted effort, money and few lessons to build upon.

Shouldn't giving your potential candidates the best possible experience be a key priority? Thinking mobile first is a fantastic way to achieve just that!

Section B: The How to Guide

This section provides practitioner advice and support. It aims to educate around the details of “how” for mobile recruiting.

Why do you need to optimize for mobile?

Smartphones and tablets don't have a mouse and or a separate keyboard, this places different user experience demands on the design of websites. Under the hood tablets and smartphones are significantly underpowered when compared to laptops and desktops. Mobile optimized websites need to be conservative of the computing power they consume. Mobile screen sizes are smaller than laptop or desktop but also vary in ratio making it difficult (but by no means impossible) to deliver a consistently high quality polished experience across a range of devices.

Designing for Mobile

Design to be finger friendly

One major difference between mobile and desktop web is interactivity. There is no mobile mouse; the days of a stylus are behind us!

So your mobile design must be finger friendly. A mobile interface with links and buttons needs to be big enough so fingers can easily tap. To achieve this you should avoid placing different buttons or links close together, it makes it too hard to tap the right one.

Perhaps the toughest element to tap is a checkbox. So if you are using them make sure there is plenty of space around the boxes, ensure that the text is clickable as well.

Remember that when the user is tapping an element their hand is over the screen so avoid putting prompts for buttons etc that may be hidden by the hand. The overall result of being finger friendly is a simpler and often better looking design.

Being finger friendly is not difficult, but it is easy to forget. Failing to be finger friendly will destroy the usability of your mobile recruiting solutions.

What is Responsive Web Design (RWD)?

In the mobile web world there is a constant battle around the latest way to handle mobile web - responsive web vs dedicated mSites. So what is a responsive website?

Why would you want one and what are some of the pitfalls if you do have one?

Responsive web design at its simplest, is designing a single web page that when resized to tablet dimensions or mobile phone dimensions adjusts it's styling to provide a good user experience. There are some key advantages to responsive web design:

- One web page to build.
- One 'code base' to maintain (saving expensive programming resources).
- No need to redirect users to a separate site mobile.

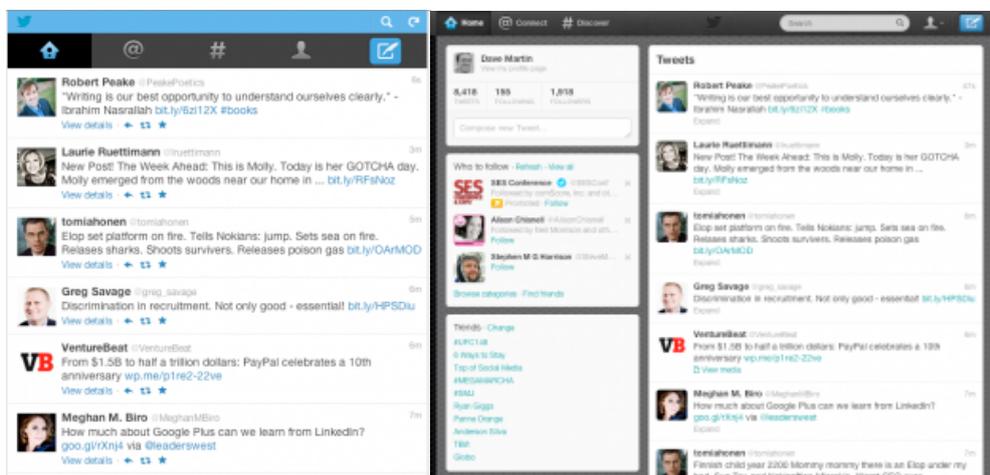
There are however some big drawbacks:

- It is a challenge to achieve quality across a range of devices and operation systems.
- Functionality and technology used across all devices is restricted.

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2012

- It does not deliver the fastest experience for mobile users.
- Device specific changes become technically complicated.
- Often cost and schedule becomes far larger than expected.
- Making the most of the latest technology forces a complex more expensive solution.

If we check out Twitter or Facebook, two of the most visited mobile websites in the world, we see they have opted for two dedicated sites, not RWD (see m.twitter.com and twitter.com). This approach allows for the design and real estate to make the most of each channel dimension. The mSite page size is kept low for a faster experience over 3G. The volume of contents is smaller on the mSite, but still available through a well thought out navigation.



Shows twitter mobile and desktop – not responsive

In summary, be very careful before adopting or being sold RWD for a project, there are number of examples within the recruitment sector of this approach backfiring and wasting significant effort and money.

Getting Mobile Traffic

Candidates using mobile web are most likely find your career site via the following mechanisms:

- Google & other search engines
- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Emails you send them
- Hyperlinks in job board adverts

Your technology needs to automatically direct these users to an optimized mobile experience. Device detection is available which is capable of identifying capabilities of your candidate's mobiles and tablets. This allows optimized mSites to display only features the device is ready for and in so doing give a better tailored user experience.

Google mobile returns different results to Google desktop, this provides a new opportunity for SEO.

Section C: Checklist

To help you better understand mobile optimization we have prepared a simple checklist:

1. Are you building great relationships from your career website when candidates visit on mobile? If you haven't considered the following you could be damaging your employee brand...

- Do users have to pinch and zoom on their devices in order to view all your content?
- Does the top of page navigation fill the screen so users can't see the content without scrolling?
- Are links very small making them difficult to tap with a finger or thumb?
- Does your site have large images that take up valuable space on the device screen?
- Does your site use hover (or drop down) menus? These won't work on most mobile devices
- Do your sites have lots of pop up boxes? These can massively damage the mobile navigation experience
- Does your site have a large graphic as a header at the top of the site? It will push important content off a small screen
- Is your site copy heavy? The text may be too small to read on a mobile device and most users prefer graphics, images and videos

2. Are you emailing your job seekers or engaging in social media? Considering the following will provide you immediate increased return from your efforts...

- Are your emails easy to read on a mobile? Make sure the candidate is not scrolling horizontally and that call to actions are big enough to tap.
- Do hyperlinks in emails or posted in social media redirect to mobile content? Given the volume of candidates who will follow these links on mobile you could risk brand damage and very high bounce rates away from your campaign efforts.

3. Could your site load faster on mobile? This section is quite technical so don't worry if it is difficult to follow. You should however make sure any mobile partner or supplier you choose to work with has a good understanding of these issues.

- Is content pulled in from many domains? Mobiles do not cache in the same way as desktops so the increased server requests caused will result in slower performance.
- Are images used when CSS3 could be used? CSS3 is typically going to be faster and with very small download data size resulting in a better candidate experience.
- Are there lots of HTTP requests, could sprites be used? Lots of small images results in lots of individual requests to the server for graphics, sprite techniques allow the images to be retrieved in one request.
- Does the site expect the client to cache large files like images or JS? Some desktop sites load large images or scripts on the first page and expect that data to be present for future pages. On mobile it is less likely the data will be available on future pages resulting in repeated downloads and slow performance.

- Does the JS rely on large 3rd party libraries?
- Are Java plugins, Flash or Silverlight technologies used? Many plugins such as Flash are not available across all mobile operating systems.
- Are videos encoded at high quality so they need high bandwidth? Various alternate video encoding methods exist that are designed for mobile performance.
- File size is not just about bandwidth speed but also impacts the rendering (drawing) time of the browser due to the mobile having less computing power.

Delivering a consistent and high performance experience across smartphone operating systems is difficult. You must ensure that your solutions partner is testing across a wide variety of devices. Make sure you see the site on a 24 month old Android and older iPhone, not just the latest shiny hardware.

In Conclusion

The mobile web market penetration has grown to a level where recruiters need to be strategizing and creating effective solutions in the mobile space. Mobile should now be the hot topic for recruiters and most crucially it will impact on all social recruiting initiatives.

Focusing on a separate mobile site and avoiding the complexity of RWD, provides an opportunity to increase return from current social recruiting endeavors and has the potential to vastly improve the candidate experience.

Innovate and rethink your application process with a mobile first strategy and remember to tell your candidates you are mobile.

Finally, always work with partners who properly understand the mobile space, make sure your budget isn't being used to subsidize their learning!

Mobile Recruiting Guide 2013

Please share with us your challenges, ideas and successes so we can reference to them in next years mobile recruiting guide. If there is enough activity, we might release a half yearly report titled "Mobile Recruiting Mentions" - to show off all the progress different companies have made. Please do contact us:

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Terminology

- *'mobile web'* will refer to users accessing the Internet from their smartphone or their tablet and includes those using WiFi or 3G networks.
- *'Desktop web'* will refer to users accessing the Internet from a laptop or a desktop computer with a QWERTY keyboard.
- *'mSite'* a site designed for use on mobile.
- *'RWD'* Responsive web design.
- *'QR Code'* Quick Response Code; a square patterned code replacing the bar code, readable by mobile phones with a camera and a QR code reader such as Red Laser.
- *'3G'* third generation of mobile data networks

Section D: Sponsor Information

Pocket Recruit

Pocket Recruit is a brand new "Platform as a Service" company, which will help make sense of mobile recruiting in a world of multiple handsets with multiple operating systems and multiple screen sizes! Our aim is to provide a sophisticated, user friendly and highly cost effective solution to help companies meet their recruiting objectives in a mobile world. We will be launching very soon and look forward to sharing more details about our services once we do.

Register for Beta at <http://www.pocketrecruit.com>

MetaShift

MetaShift is a strategic consultancy that helps major employers with all aspects of their digital resourcing including social and mobile recruiting. We take a holistic view of these emerging channels and work with our clients to help them contextualize emerging techniques effectively into their overall resourcing strategy. We also provide proven value via a number of other services including digital audits and in house training.

More information at <http://www.metashift.co.uk>