

Looking for great new talent? Just Google it

 By [Matthew Gray](#)

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Google has become the definitive source for web search, handling 65.2% of all searches worldwide - more than four times the number of pages indexed by runners-up Yahoo! and Bing combined. In 2006, the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary even included the word "Google," as a new transitive verb as in, let's "google it."

In South Africa, Google similarly dominates the web as the first place for search when people start their journey online.

Central to everyone's online world, Google is a very important place to be when it comes to social recruitment. As Google's mobile operating system, Android, proliferates with smartphone growth, Google search will continue to become the defacto for search on any connected device.

HR recruiters can use Google's paid and organic search capabilities very effectively to distribute jobs and corner top talent:

1. Paid search

Google allows you to choose specific keywords to describe your jobs and then displays an advert above or alongside the search results when people's search terms match your keywords. For example, "mechanical engineer jobs" or "actuary".

The cost of the keywords you've chosen increases based on their popularity. But, the benefit is that you only pay for relevant views - advert displays or when someone clicks on your ad link. You can also really go to town in your targeting, pursuing candidates per geography, language, network and device.

The prominence of the advert depends on a Google quality score which is based on the amount of budget you have assigned to flight the advert, the quality of your website landing page and how relevant the landing page is to your job ad.

The first step in looking to use Google as a social recruitment tool is to brainstorm good search terms based on what candidates are likely to search for on Google. Google's own keyword generator tool can help with this process.

2. Organic search

Google uses a sophisticated algorithm to analyse and rank websites based on their popularity and relevance. Some of the things measured include the number of links coming in to the website and the authority of those links. The score Google gives a website determines how high up it will appear on the page of people's search results. For example, a search for "actuary career opportunities" on the first page is ideal.

As the quality of content is king in organic search, make sure your career website has relevant content that has proper search engine optimisation (SEO) with strong keywords to improve the relevance of your site to searches.

Google will also rate your website higher if you use other Google products. A great option is establishing a profile on Google+ for free, which will boost your organic search traffic, let you push out content to other Google networks and give you creative licence to build a compelling employer brand presence online. Another great platform is Google Maps, but Google has many more free and paid-for products and who knows what Google glasses will bring?

Despite the power of Google, 95% of South African companies still rely on job boards and are missing out on a huge opportunity online.

If you want to be discovered, Google search will find you. To give your company the best chance of candidates quickly finding your company, make sure your organic search engine ranking is as strong as possible. Support this with an e-recruitment site that has relevant, well-structured content that is also important from an employer brand perspective. Also, consider paid-for search approaches. In fact, every company should assign a Google Adwords budget to their social recruitment strategy to attract specialist skills to their websites.

As companies have tried to improve their search engine rankings, a lot of black hat tactics have developed with Google penalising websites for duplicated content, keyword stuffing, cloaked pages and more. Using Google for recruitment requires initial input from a search engine optimisation (SEO) specialist to formulate the strategy and implement it, as well as for ongoing improvements. Contract a professional for this task, rather than taking a DIY approach.

One thing is clear: As technology becomes more pervasive Google is only going to get bigger and its time you take action and look to include it as part of your recruitment marketing mix.

ABOUT MATTHEW GRAY

Matthew Gray is client service director at cloud based e-recruitment company, Graylink. Passionate about the growth of digital and its role in rapidly changing business processes, Matthew has been at the forefront of solutions delivery, driving recruiting process change to Graylink's customer base, since the inception of the business in 2003.

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