

The voice for the global staffing industry

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THE GLOBAL RECRUITER

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THE GENERATION GAME

**Employees take Charge
Legal Challenge**

GENERATION Z



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WELCOME



SIMON KENT
EDITOR



In this issue of The Global Recruiter we feature three write-ups direct from our Recruitment Live series of industry round tables. These events are always interesting, inspiring and informative for everyone involved. They bring together some of the leading lights in the recruitment world in order to discuss issues and topics of the day. Not only does this mean The Global Recruiter can cover precisely the challenges and ideas currently coursing through the industry but for those around the table it's a chance to find out from fellow recruiters if there's anything they're missing – any ideas, techniques or approaches that can help their business.

It a great reminder that recruiters are in this together; that while there may be aspects of the business which are regarded as market sensitive there's more here that can be discussed and shared for everyone's benefit. That at the end of the day success for the industry is in the interests of everyone.

Do get in touch if you'd like to get involved with one of our Recruitment Lives in the future. They're a great way to reality check your business, make new acquaintances and push your business into the future.

12

14

GENERATION Z

26

CONTENTS

05 NEWS

08 VIEW FROM WEC: HR SERVICES DELIVERED

10 UP CLOSE: CHALLENGES OF A NEW GENERATION

12 RECRUITMENT LIVE: TECHNOLOGY DELIVERED

14 TALENT POOL: THE GENERATION GAME

16 RECRUITMENT LIVE: TECHNOLOGY WORKING

18 SECTOR WATCH: LEGAL CHALLENGE

20 RECRUITMENT LIVE: TALENT REACHING TECHNOLOGY

23 DIGITAL RECRUITER NEWS

26 DIGITAL RECRUITER: SMART TECH TO WEATHER THE RECRUITMENT STORM

28 DIGITAL RECRUITER: IMPLICIT BIAS ISSUE

30 WORKPLACE: EMPLOYEES TAKE CHARGE

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EXPANSION FOR PETROPLAN

Newfoundland energy market offers new ground for recruiter

Specialist energy talent acquisition group Petroplan has expanded into Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, as the business strengthens its presence in North America. The move is an important strategic decision for the company, with Newfoundland being a large, mineral-rich province with a sparse population. With the abundance of resources across Eastern Canada, there are multiple opportunities for growth in mining and energy, particularly hydroelectric, hydrogen and wind power.

Leading the company's expansion

into Newfoundland is David Jerrett, a newly appointed business consultant in Canada. David's role is to address immediate business requirements and provide talent expertise to support the fast-growing energy market.

"Our main aim, regardless of location, is always to provide high-quality services for our clients," said David. "The mining sector in Newfoundland is currently booming. With a global reach and over 17 years' experience in the Canadian energy market, we are confident that Petroplan is in

the best position to support both existing and potential clients to make the most of the resource and project-rich provinces in Eastern Canada."

This strategic business expansion aligns with Petroplan's recent developments in the United States, with a series of new appointments and promotions in Houston, Texas. The growth in Canada is supported by global expertise from Petroplan's technology team in the US.

Christopher Honeyman Brown, CEO of Petroplan, added:

"At Petroplan, we invest and expand where we see the best opportunities to deliver exceptional client solutions. Our recent investment into the Eastern Canadian energy market presents an exciting opportunity to work with new and existing clients and provide them with the calibre and quality of talent they need to deliver their projects, and that sets Petroplan apart from other energy recruiters."

STORM6 MOVE ON EDUCATION

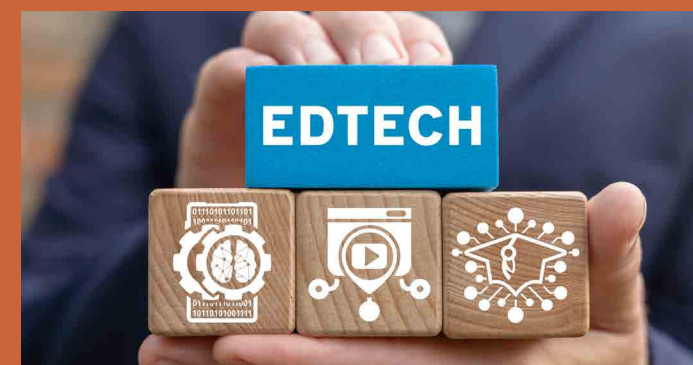
Levin announces new brand in
recruitment group

Following the global success of flagship brand Storm2 (FinTech), 18 months after Storm3 (HealthTech) and Storm4 (GreenTech), and less than a year after Storm5 (RetailTech) hit the market, Storm6 will be focusing on an industry that has skyrocketed in the recent years: EdTech. From language learning, K12 and Higher Education through to smart devices and apps focused on providing universal access to digital classrooms; investment into EdTech continues to soar globally. Storm6's mission is to be integral to the digital education revolution

and provide highly specialised teams across engineering, product management and sales & marketing. Leading the brand launch is Bethan Williams: "We're thrilled to be launching Levin's latest brand into one of the most exciting sectors today. EdTech funding exploded in 2020 when \$14.6 billion was invested in VC-backed education companies globally. While the need for virtual learning post-pandemic declined, the sector still saw a spike in funding last year as classrooms, teachers and consumers continue to see

the value of digital tools fostering collaboration. Behind all this tech are highly specialist engineering, product and commercial teams that are making these products a success. We find those people and connect them to EdTech companies doing amazing things." Co-leading the launch is Max Knight, who found success as an engineering recruitment leader in Storm2, and who will now be leading a team of 25: "We're going to take everything we've learnt from the other disruptive tech sectors we've worked in and do it ten times better in EdTech."

Following the boom in 2020, 2021 went on to raise 1.3x the global total of funding the year prior. I'm thrilled to be co-launching Storm6 with Bethan and we are excited to be making our mark on the sector." Storm6 and the wider Levin group, which includes award-winning FinTech recruiter Storm2, specialise in connecting the best Tech talent with businesses in Europe, APAC and North America. They are the leading provider for compensation and best practice in diversity, equity & inclusion, hiring and retention in their markets.



FOUR DAYS NOT FOR ALL

4-day work week threatens to leave millions of workers behind



Interest in the 4-day work week is rising yet millions of UK workers are set to miss out on the benefits, according to research from productivity platform, ClickUp. It found that certain careers are more likely to miss out on the promise of working a day less each week for no reduction in pay, while other employment sectors may reap the rewards. Businesses must take action to close these gaps to create equity for workers in the UK. Those working in education reported the highest levels of pessimism, with 44 per cent of workers believing it is unrealistic to move to a 4-day work week with no reduction in pay. Three other sectors stood out above the national average of 32 per cent, including those in manufacturing (41 per cent), human resources (38 per cent),

and travel (37 per cent). In contrast, only 17 per cent of those working in IT & telecoms believe a 4-day work week is unrealistic, followed closely by those working in the legal (18 per cent) and creative (21 per cent) industries. Natasha Wallace, International People Operations Partner at ClickUp, commented: "There are two key questions businesses need to ask to make sure a 4-day work week is realistic for them: can all roles be performed with flexibility that isn't detrimental to business performance, and how much further can productivity be improved to support the required flexibility. Certain sectors and careers are better suited than others, but many of the reasons holding businesses back can be addressed with adjustments to how they work

and which tools they use." ClickUp's research unearthed many reasons that workers believe are holding them back from adopting a 4-day work week. The top two reasons, each cited by 22 per cent of UK workers, are that people are simply too busy to do their best work, and that there are too many meetings. Other reasons adding to the negativity toward a 4-day work week include technology and tools not being effective enough in helping to get the job done (17 per cent), businesses not getting their remote or hybrid working models right (16 per cent), and employers not effectively prioritising and focusing on results (15 per cent). Natasha Wallace continues, "There is no one-size fits all; a 4-day work week isn't right for every business or every

individual. However, there is hope for those who do want to adopt a 4-day work week but are resigned to the fact it may not work for them. Make incremental changes, start with pushing for async working to cut down unnecessary meetings, create a culture that focuses on results and outputs rather than presenteeism, or invest in the right tools to improve efficiency and communication. There is a lot that businesses and individuals can do to improve their flexibility and, perhaps more importantly, their productivity too."

HYBRID HEALTH CONCERNS

Health and wellbeing support needs to adapt for the 45 per cent now hybrid working

Research revealed today by Towergate Health & Protection shows that on average 45 per cent of employees are now working on a hybrid basis, splitting their time between working from home and their usual place of work. The survey of 500 HR decision makers from businesses of all sizes across the UK highlights Towergate Health & Protection's concerns for employee health and wellbeing. Debra Clark, head of specialist consulting, Towergate Health & Protection, says: "Without the traditional workplace there is no hub for the delivery and communication of health and wellbeing benefits. Ensuring that employees are well looked after and feel equally valued is a major issue." Hybrid working now reaches far and wide. Only 12 per cent of companies said they have no hybrid workers and

another 12 per cent said that ALL their employees are now work-ing on a hybrid basis. Perhaps surprisingly, the phenomenon is not limited to office-based industries. Respondents from the construction industry said an average 26 per cent of their staff are hybrid workers. In the hospitality and leisure industry, 32 per cent of employees are hybrid workers, and in manufacturing it is 28 per cent. The changing nature of the workplace means that health and wellbeing requirements are changing too. This covers the whole supply chain, from what support is provided, to how employers communicate it, and how employees access it. With the reported decrease in cancer diagnoses, increase in waiting times for treatment on the NHS, and difficulty get-ting GP appointments, the need for support has never been greater, and employers need to adapt

in how they offer it. Without the office as a hub, communication of health and wellbeing support needs to adapt. Noticeboards in kitchen areas are unlikely to reach the number of employees they previously did. Digital communications are often the best way to ensure that all employees are kept up to date and it is good for these to include a mix – from emails and intranet content to video calls and apps – to resonate with the different ways that employees like to digest information. Accessing and delivering health and wellbeing support needs to meet the specific chal-lenges of a hybrid workforce. In today's work environments, digital interaction is often the best solution as it reaches the widest of employee audiences in almost any setting. Being able to see their options online and

manage their requirements in one place helps em-employees to engage with health and wellbeing support. Virtual consultations with GPs, physiotherapists, counsellors, and other experts mean that employees can access sup-port quickly and easily whether in the office, at home, or travelling. Debra Clark concludes: "One of the biggest issues with hybrid working is in ensuring employees still feel valued. This is the case for those who are working mostly from home and missing the social interaction of the office, and also for those who are mostly back to their original workplace and feel that they may be missing out by not working so much from home. Health and wellbeing support can actually be enhanced by hybrid working, but only if it is delivered effectively and communicated regularly."

Remote → Hybrid

BEST FOR WOMEN

Harvey Nash UK recognised as one of the top 50 organisations for women to work in 2022



Harvey Nash UK has been recognised as one of the top 50 organisations for women to work in 2022 by Great Place to Work® UK. The global technology recruiter was ranked 46th amongst the 263 organisations featured in the 2022 UK's Best Workplaces™ for Women list.

The list is based on what women themselves have anonymously reported about their workplace to Great Place to Work® UK including details about how well represented they are in the workforce and management.

Harvey Nash, which is a Nash Squared company, are committed to hiring, developing, promoting and retaining female talent. Alongside increasing the number of senior female leaders in the business and closing the gap on gender pay, the introduction of female friendly policies such as policies on

menopause in the workplace, paid child loss leave, flexible working patterns further demonstrates the company's commitment to creating an environment where women are supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

This recognition confirms the following:

- Harvey Nash UK is a great workplace FOR ALL, including women.
- Harvey Nash UK is an organisation where people trust each other and employees are able to reach their full human potential, no matter who they are or what they do.
- Harvey Nash supports the different identities women hold and ensure their daily experiences are positively and consistently experienced.

Harvey Nash recognises that women are a valuable talent pool and strive for fair representation of women in the workforce and throughout management. "I'm delighted to see Harvey Nash recognised as a Great Place to work for Women," commented Rhona Carmichael, regional managing director UK North & Ireland at Harvey Nash. "We work hard to foster equity in the workplace, and I love our culture which continues to attract a growing number of women to the business. I'm delighted to see so many talented women thriving at Harvey Nash and contributing to our success, and I am looking forward to more women joining me on the Global Leadership Team. The fact that our women here have scored us highly makes me really proud that our efforts are driving positive results." Andy Heyes, regional managing

director UK South at Harvey Nash added: "It is fantastic that Harvey Nash has been recognised as a Great Place to work for Women. We have worked tirelessly to ensure that we create an environment that has equity in the workplace. We now have superb female role models within the senior team, but we must continue to strive to ensure we have more." "Creating an environment where everyone can thrive is an absolute priority for us, and I am thrilled that our Harvey Nash UK business has achieved this prestigious recognition," commented Bev White, CEO of Nash Squared. "As a female CEO, throughout my career I have seen the challenges, the thousand tiny walls, that can get in the way of progression. This recognition is an endorsement that we are on the right track, and we are absolutely committed to striving to do more."

BRIDGING THE GAP

Denis Pennel, managing director, World Employment Confederation discusses how HR services are delivering in labour markets.

As global labour markets reboot post pandemic, the HR services sector has stepped up to the plate with a range of new approaches to better serve – and match – the expectations of workers and employers and address emerging challenges. We call this ‘bridging the gap’ and our sector has been busy across a range of areas. Let me explain.

Firstly, we are bridging the expectations gap. Looking to understand what people really want and expect from work. We need to get to the bottom of how the pandemic has impacted people’s priorities and the implications that this will have for employers and HR services professionals. It is essential that employers and their recruiting partners around the world understand this if they are to respond to the staffing and skills shortages faced by many markets.

Secondly, our services are bridging the talent gap. The acute shortage of staff and skills is the number one priority in most countries today, but we rather see this as a ‘mismatch’ problem. We are working with clients to help them to re-imagine their brand and find new ways to attract talent. Effective reskilling, combined with career management, requires an innovative approach and in some respects we are looking at a ‘recruitment revolution’ where employers and HR services are having to work together to rethink hiring channels, procedures and criteria.

Next, we are bridging the perceptions gap by showcasing the positive role of the global HR services industry in supporting smooth functioning labour markets. By challenging misconceptions we want to suffocate some of the disproportionate regulation of our sector in certain markets around the world. A strong and positive image is also vital in attracting people to work in our industry and build their careers in the sector.

At the same time, our industry is also bridging the public policy gap. We need to be at the forefront of influencing post-pandemic labour market policies to ensure that they reflect the reality of our fast-moving world of work. A key element here is to ensure that 21st century labour markets have social protection systems that support all workers, irrespective of how they choose to work. We must also prioritise the fair and effective enforcement of regulation so that we stamp out informal work and the black economy and root out rogue providers.

And finally, we are bridging the future of work gap. While there is broad consensus around the kind of future of work we want to create – one based on inclusivity, choice, opportunity, fulfilment, fairness and agility – the challenge lies in building the bridge between where we are now and where we want to be. Our industry can support policymakers, employers and workers to make sense of the fast-

changing world of work and to take the right decisions on the road to a better tomorrow.

The employment ecosystem

As countries around the world reboot their labour markets and create a clear vision for a dynamic and inclusive employment ecosystem, the HR Services sector stands ready to guide them. We have a deep expertise and our role is recognised on the global stage as we work alongside respected international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation, the OECD and the United Nations High Council for Refugees.

National recruitment federations and global HR services providers have taken a lead in responding to refugee crises around the world, and most immediately to the war in Ukraine. Their experience has enabled the industry to build partnerships – such as the sectoral agreement created in Italy to support refugees fleeing Ukraine to secure work.

Private companies have risen to the occasion too, demonstrating our sector’s social impact by creating specific task forces to support displaced workers and help them to create new ties by matching skills and identifying work opportunities. We are convinced that with our

commitment to the principles of flexibility and agility, we are uniquely placed to respond swiftly to volatility and unexpected situations and to support both employers and individuals by providing flexible working options.

As the number of people forcibly displaced around the world is set to reach 100 million, it is crucial that our national federations and corporate members work with policymakers to create policy and regulatory frameworks that allow us to fulfil this role in supporting high labour market participation and smoothing transitions between sectors and roles.

It is a matter of huge pride to our profession that we work at the coalface taking an active role in tackling some of the major social issues of our day. It makes us a go-to industry for people looking to make a difference.

Today, workforce issues are a top priority for everyone – from CEOs and governments to displaced persons. The HR services industry is first and foremost a people industry and our 3.7 million strong workforce around the world is working to bridge the gap from a difficult present to a better future. It’s not a one-off event, it’s an ongoing process and it lies at the very heart of who we are. ■

TANDEM'S TALENT

Doug Shields talks to Tandem Talent's Sam Jenkinson about the challenges of a new generation of workers.



Perception of recruitment is notoriously short-sighted, looking for the quick wins at any cost. But Gen Z defies this kind of thinking – and our job is to create fit-for-purpose hiring strategies for the next generation of workers, not just today. So how do you keep an eye on the prize to make it pay off in the long term?

'Can't be made to work if they don't want to', 'resistant to authority', 'more aware of their rights than their responsibilities'. Not exactly glowing terms, but these are comments regularly attributed to the workforce coming through. This reputational 'rot' may have started with Millennials but now with Gen Z, it's common parlance for the newest rung of the workforce ladder.

Increasingly, however, hiring strategies are failing to deliver the goods for both young people and business alike. In a post-pandemic UK where the impact of Brexit and the war in Ukraine are combining to exacerbate the skills shortage across a variety of sectors, how can recruiters make a difference?

As early Gen Z were growing up, the service-based industry: hotels, hospitality, and retail, were serviced by people from mainland Europe, who were working incredibly hard and doing a great job.

Sam Jenkinson, managing partner of specialist recruitment firm Tandem Talent, says: "There was almost a reluctance at that point from young British people to apply and take on those jobs, so in my mind the negative shift in attitude probably happened at that point.

Finding fortunes

"The people from the UK were perhaps a little more entitled and were wanting to earn money by doing something digital with dreams of earning a fortune without actually putting in the hard graft," he says. "Gen Z grew up seeing people making money on YouTube channels and vlogging and were believing that was actually a viable career option. "Now I think there's a realisation making millions from TikTok, Instagram or commenting on someone playing a computer game, isn't as easy as they once thought."

Sam feels this realisation is the same as when growing up and everyone wants to be a footballer. But of course, there aren't many people who actually make the full journey to becoming a highly paid professional. Sam likens the 'pipedream mentality' to his university days, and the launch of Camelot's National Lottery. Sitting in a dorm playing cards, Sam and his peers were buoyed by a genuine belief they would soon scoop the multi-million-pound jackpot.

"It's like anything that's new, isn't it? We were all sitting around saying 'I think we're going to win it'. We actually believed that," he says.

"Then after a few years you realise that in fact not very many people win the lottery."

A global study carried out in 2019 showed a large percentage of Gen Z believe they are the 'hardest working generation ever' and 'have it the hardest'. The same report, by The Workforce Institute at Kronos and Future Workplace, which examined attitudes of Gen Z across the world, found many preferred not to have a manager, with 21 per cent of those who took part not wanting to be managed at all.

It has even been suggested that if Gen Z is not allowed to use annual leave days as they please, or are made to work back-to-back shifts, they will probably start looking for a new job. This doesn't come as shock to Sam who says he recently heard a story of a lad who went for an interview and was told working weekends was voluntary and paid at the rate of double time. The candidate then demanded two days off in the week as well as double-time for working Saturday and Sunday. Needless to say, the interview abruptly ended.

But Sam believes the tide is turning as the younger generation start to come to terms with the reality of the working world and he explains what employers can do to harness the perceived shift in attitude.

"Times are changing," he says. "I think young British people who are currently 16 or 17 will start picking up the type of roles that we did when we were their age. I don't think the current bunch of working-age teens will be the same as Millennials and early Generation Z'ers. I think their attitudes will change – and the change will have a positive effect on many sectors and industries.

"I think they have realised they won't become social media superstars," he adds. "But companies need to adapt to maximise the potential of the up-and-coming workforce. And the way to do that is to pay more attention to making themselves a more attractive proposition."

The downside of Gen Z has been well documented, but it has also been proven they will work hard for the 'right' employer. While salary remains a key factor people born between 1997 and 2012 aren't happy just turning up at work, picking up a wage packet and heading home. That's just not fulfilling enough. They want more.

Doing good

This generation is environmentally aware, understands the importance of diversity, inclusion and equality and is more likely to choose employer whose ethics and values mirror theirs. They want to make a difference. They want to do something good.

Sam added: "We can't not have anyone doing those jobs can we? We can't have a thriving hospitality industry with no-one washing dishes in the kitchen or with anyone serving the food.

"So those jobs will need to become more attractive to younger people coming up as they're jobs that absolutely need to be done. The employer's messaging needs to be right, and it helps if they have a mission statement."

At a time when there is still no sign of the alarming staff shortages easing, recruiting, and retaining the best of Gen Z now involves employers selling themselves to the employee as much as the other way round. Having a rock-solid CSR policy, a low or neutral carbon footprint, flexibility, and offering a workplace environment where the health and welfare of staff comes first, is merely a starting point. They will want to know exactly what good their potential employer is doing in the world and the fact they're having a positive effect on the planet.

The issue of authority, and the fact Gen Z would prefer to do what they want to do, rather than what they're asked to do, is also a hurdle businesses can overcome, if they are transparent when communicating with the team member or offering feedback, adds Sam. He also says if companies in sectors which are struggling to hire in from school and college leavers don't embrace the requirements of the next generation, there may be trouble ahead.

"If this doesn't happen, service industries will have to raise salary levels to entice the next generation of workers," he says. "You can see this in the retail sector already, that hourly rates have gone up because there is competition, so companies in that arena need to compete to get the best candidates into the roles where there are gaps.

"That's a positive for the employees as it's not now completely about the minimum wage because firms are paying the national living wage now rather than the minimum wage," he adds. "But paying more and competing to entice the best staff isn't good business practice. If companies make the effort to showcase the good, they are doing, thereby making themselves a really attractive proposition, they will have their pick of the crème de la crème of applicants." ■

GOING BEYOND

Simon Kent reports back from a Recruitment Live discussion on how recruitment technology could deliver more.

Supported by:



A Recruitment Live industry discussion, held at this year's Global Recruiter UK Summit, took as its subject the improvement and linking together of technology within the recruitment industry. Held in association with Sonovate, the idea was to examine where recruitment technology solutions could be made smoother and perhaps share data in order to make the recruiter's life easier and the business of recruitment more efficient in general. The resulting conversation certainly examined this, but also covered other areas of good – and sometimes challenging – technology use. Around the table were:

Oliver Jansen, Commercial Director, Remedium Partners

Ben Batten, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Volt International

Seim Munif, Group Chief Financial Officer, Gravitas

Milly Morris, Partner Manager, Bullhorn

Ben Steele, Business Development Executive, Enterprise, Sonovate

Matt Coburn, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Sonovate

Simon Kent, Editor, The Global Recruiter

The conversation began with a general review of the type of technology currently begin used by the recruiters around the table. The pandemic and the need to work from home had certainly impacted on system choice, but as this pressure had become less it had become clear how other factors and influences were now playing a greater role in considering how technology could work for recruitment businesses. Ben Batten gave the view that there was no 'one size fits all' possible for the recruitment industry because there were so many diverse factors for businesses to deal with. The needs of a global business such as Volt, are very different across geographies and business lines, and very different

to a boutique or smaller business.

Oliver Jansen gave explained that his business had been operating using a system which he compared to a 'glorified phone book'. The CRM system was simply not being used to its full extent and since the business was trying to offer an effective and efficient service to the NHS change was needed. One of the turning points for the business was the requirement from the NHS to employ more UK based doctors as Covid had made it near impossible to bring people in from overseas. With a fifty thousand strong database Remedium Partners knew there had to be candidates there which the business could contact and place. By stripping back the technology and addressing the data first, Oliver says the business became far more process driven and was able to make far better use of its candidates. Rather than placing them once and only catching up with them years later, as was previously the case, they can now enjoy a range of touch points with their candidates, enabling them to be placed by the company each time they become available, a step which provides a better service to clients and candidates alike. Having managed to create this system Jansen says his business is now effectively on a data journey whereby they can capture information which will better inform the business and its recruiters on what it should be doing to create success.

Seem Munif at Gravitas explained his business had also gone through a tech transformation, adding that he felt it was unlikely that there was a single solution that would do everything a recruitment company needed it to do. The requirement to bring candidate, client and time sheet data in one place and for that data to work effectively together is quite a challenge. On paper, argued Munif, it looks possible, in reality the task is more challenging.

Sonovate's Matt Coburn explained that they were trying to link

recruitment processes together in order to ensure funding for recruitment businesses is efficient and doesn't hold the business back. However, getting this linkage, as far as Sonovate's approach goes, requires a business to have a funding need, and not every business needs that. This showed clearly how because recruitment companies have such a variety of approaches to what they do it is pretty much impossible to create a single technology solution that will work for everyone. Milly Morris agreed saying that recruitment company size and sector will always have an impact on what technology works best for that business. Not only that, but she explained one of the reasons why the Bullhorn marketplace now has a range of solutions, some of which essentially do the same thing, is because some of these solutions work better than others for individual companies. They may be similar tools but the way they work and interrelate with other recruitment systems can be crucial to a company getting maximum value from them.

At the end of the day the ability to link up systems and share data in order to maximise the value achieved from there is less compromised by technology than it is through the internal policies of the recruitment companies themselves. The discussion highlighted that while some compliance issues do exist – particularly with the management of personal data on a international basis – it was more a case of what recruitment companies would accept in term of technology and data use. For international businesses there can also be a clear cultural difference in technology use between locations with recruiters in one part of the world are not so keen on using technology enthusiastically adopted elsewhere. Both Seim Munif and Ben Batten noted examples where systems used in Europe for finance and for communications were seen as inappropriate or not practical to use in China or the US.

That said, it seems that greater linkage and interplay between

technologies is possible but there needs to be a strong commercial drive to make it happen. The finance sector was given as an example of somewhere where a commercial impetus for making systems talk to each other had trumped the blocks and challenges which stood in the way of sharing data and creating a proper 'eco-system' where the various parties would speak to each other.

Finally the discussion identified a few areas where recruiters would like to see progress or change from a tech point of view. This included more emphasis on the client side of the equation and systems which would help to connect the recruiter directly to the hiring manager so that the flow of talent and information could be made smoother all round. "It is fascinating to hear the importance of how technology is the bedrock of many successful businesses, but there are still challenges around how industry systems talk to each other," noted Ben Steele of the conversation. "Implementing the correct technology stack appears to be more challenging than expected, as it seems unlikely that you will find a single solution to fulfil all the requirements of a growing recruitment agency.

"The future of work will be defined by how we can integrate with technology commonly used within the industry," he added. "The ultimate aim should be to link businesses' recruitment processes and provide seamless data in one place to create value for the user.

"The importance of having the correct tech stack appears to be higher on the agenda following the pandemic, which identified issues when working remotely. Access to data, reporting and information is critical, and having this all in one place without the need for duplication is vital," he concluded. ■

GENERATION WORK

Adam Hawkins, Head of Search and Staffing EMEA & LATAM, LinkedIn gives a view into Generation Z.

GENERATION Z

Often described as the generation that 'want it all' at work, the number of Gen Zs entering the workforce is expected to triple by 2030, and will make up nearly a third (30 per cent) of the global workforce in under a decade.

As with every generation that's come before them, it's clear that this demographic will bring their own expectations into the workplace. However, a large question mark currently lies over exactly what this generational shift at work will look like – and to what extent it will change the fabric of many workplaces.

It's a question that companies will need to grapple with sooner rather than later, as LinkedIn data shows that those early in their careers are moving between jobs nearly 40 per cent more than last year – more than any other generational group. Seventy per cent of these career starters attribute this to a pandemic induced career awakening, with many reporting that they want a job that better aligns with their values, or one that offers a better work/life balance. Given that Gen Z have made it clear they're not willing to stick around in roles that don't fit their needs, business leaders and recruiters face a new challenge: what can they do to attract, motivate and inspire this segment of talent in an already competitive labour market?

Flexible work is here to stay

Huge strides have been made when it comes to normalising flexible working, and flexibility is now often an expectation for many when considering a new role. According to our data, Gen Z is the generation most likely to have left – or considered leaving – a job because their employer didn't offer a feasible flexible work policy (72 per cent), compared to 69 per cent of millennials, 53 per cent of Gen X, and 59 per cent of boomers. But this doesn't necessarily mean that career starters wish to be remote all of the time, with many craving a balance. Our research of 4,000 Gen Z (18–25 year-olds) career starters in the UK, US, France and Germany suggests that the vast majority (70 per cent) want access to an office, preferring either a mix of office and remote working, or being in the office full-time, compared to just being fully remote. Offering flexibility isn't just essential in attracting and retaining Gen Z talent, but it also represents a huge opportunity to make workplaces fairer, more inclusive, and more equitable. For example, our recent report found greater workplace flexibility could help open up new employment opportunities for 1.8 million people in the UK with disabilities, caring responsibilities, and those based in rural locations.

Lead with learning

Perhaps unsurprisingly for those starting out in their careers, they're looking for opportunities to learn, grow and develop their skills. In fact, our recent Workplace Learning Report found that 76 per cent of Gen Z employees cite learning as key to a successful career – and our data also suggests that two fifths would be willing to accept a salary cut of up to 5 per cent for a role that offers better career growth.

Promoting a culture of continuous learning will be vital for attracting Gen Z talent. It will also be important for companies to highlight the opportunities they'll provide for career growth through their employer branding. Whether you're facilitating mentorship opportunities, or providing access to learning courses, make sure you're letting career starters know how you'll support their development.

When does entry level mean entry level?

Nearly a third (29 per cent) of Gen Z job seekers say that the biggest hindrance they face is not knowing where to start. This is because more often than not, organisations list entry level positions, but state that they require three plus years of experience.

This experience inflation could prevent top talent from applying for roles, as they'll perceive themselves to be underqualified for the roles. For example, based on our analysis of LinkedIn data from nearly 4 million jobs posted between December 2017 and August 2021, we found that employers required a minimum of three years relevant work experience on more than a third (35 per cent) of their entry-level postings.

Recruiters can play a crucial advisory role to their clients here, helping them to advertise entry level job postings appropriately. By ensuring that job postings are reflective of the level of experience career starters will have, businesses can ensure that they will attract – and not demoralise – top talent early in their career.

We're in a candidate-driven market at the moment, and we're seeing that people are becoming increasingly selective about the roles they apply for – particularly among the Gen Z demographic. There's a huge opportunity for recruiters to support companies as they navigate this generational shift. By highlighting company culture, flexibility, and opportunities for career growth, as well as ensuring that job postings reflect entry level skills, companies can ensure they're setting themselves up for success in a tight labour market. ■

GETTING IT RIGHT

A Recruitment Live discussion held in association with Bullhorn explores what technology works for recruiters. Simon Kent reports.

Supported by:



At The Global Recruiter's UK Summit in June, a number of round table discussions brought to light not only the successes and challenges brought by technology in the recruitment industry but also the precise status of technology used by recruitment companies. The fact is that not all recruiters are eyeing the leading edge – AI, machine learning etc. – as the next port of call on their technology journey. Of far more use is ensuring that the basics – the data a business uses and the fundamental systems which tap into that data – are up to scratch before embarking on anything more sophisticated. In a discussion held in association with Bullhorn the aim was to share the technology that worked in order to help recruitment business identify the best way ahead for their particular needs. At this discussion were:

Margaret George, Managing Director, Morgan Spencer
Julie Jones, Director, Permanent Division, Morgan Spencer
Carlos Diaz, Lead Consultant, Engineering, Futureheads
Daniel Taylor, Managing Director, Morgan Hunt
Gary Cordery, Regional Sales Director UK&I, Bullhorn
Simon Kent, Editor, The Global Recruiter

What became apparent was that despite the proliferation of online platforms promising to connect recruiters with candidates or to promote vacancies to a waiting audience, these recruiters were all convinced of the power that exists within their own database. Margaret George from Morgan Spencer said that after twenty years of operating in London, they felt their database easily outclassed the online options in terms of the number of suitable candidates. However, the system still held a lot of potential that could be unleashed with a little more consideration from a technology perspective. Interestingly, prior to the pandemic the company had been able to operate purely through its office base. Recruiters came to the office in order to carry out their work and when they left they were not expected to continue to work at home or elsewhere. The pandemic therefore had a significant impact on the business, requiring that central system to be made accessible remotely. While their solution is not strictly a 'cloud configuration' by usual standards it has done the job of making required information available to recruiters wherever they may be. Daniel Taylor explained that they had recently changed their CRM and are still working through the impact of that migration. With two people dedicated to taking care of data and the adoption of the new system respectively, it was agreed that this was an effective way to ensure a new system stood a chance to have a positive impact. There is nothing worse than implementing a new system and discovering that for all the investment and work carried out

the business remains in the same position as it was, or that the recruiters who are meant to be using it just do not see the point and so ignore or circumnavigate the system.

Bullhorn's Gary Cordery noted that very often the key to getting recruitment consultant's buy in to new technology was to help them identify problems with processes as it stands and then demonstrate how the new solution in is going to address that irritating an inefficient requirement. If they can see first hand how the technology answers their problems and makes their lives easier there is a greater chance that they will use the system everyday. With that everyday use the data will be maintained bringing increased value to the company every step of the way.

Carlos also echoed the importance of 'cleaning' the data within a database in order to ensure it would bring value to the recruiter using it. In one instance Carlos had managed to find a candidate previously placed by the business some three years ago. By following up the contact details held by the CRM he was then able to make another placement with the same candidate. Just this simple follow up had earned Carlos – and therefore his business – another fee, so imagine what that could look like if the experience were repeated as a matter of good practice in the business.

Building on this, Gary Cordery noted that some recruiters refer to their CRM as a 'graveyard' i.e. it's full of spent candidates that no one ever calls. However, with a little thought and automation that central system can become a clear source of business and income for the recruitment company.

A simple piece of automation, for example, could ensure every candidate placed is contacted later to find out how they are doing and how the job is working out. This can be repeated further in the future in order to do precisely what Carlos did and place good candidates again whenever they are ready.

Automation was also put forward as a way to get good candidates onto a recruiter's database. The recruiters round the table were keen to ensure that their candidates were cleared for work before being put forward for an opportunity and the point was made that sending out the initial agreement and paperwork – together with a simple 'killer question' such as whether they had the right to work in the country – was an acceptable task which could be automated. A good balance for bringing more sophisticated technology seems to require achieving efficiencies though automating processes while also ensuring the candidate's experience remains personable and human. As Gary Cordery explained, automation doesn't need to be complicated. At an early stage it can simply require a yes/no response from the candidate and that simple level of interaction can then mean the candidate's details are passed forward to a

recruiter who can get in touch and use more interpersonal skills to understand the best position to place them.

Effective technology use often requires a light touch for candidates, but at the same time it needs to be something that will compete effectively against all the other technology led interactions and activities candidates are involved in as part of their lives. The round table acknowledged that many candidates will make numerous and diverse job applications because it is easy to do so using mobile tech. However, recruiters need to be more considered in the way they present themselves and interact with candidates. It's simply a question of understanding what the technology can deliver and ensuring that it is introduced into a recruitment business in a way that makes sense and will be used.

Commenting after the discussion, Gary Cordery noted: "A good question for any agency to ask of itself where data and tech is concerned is what measures are in place to maintain and update records automatically as this is the only way to really ensure the data is trustworthy. If it's trustworthy, recruiters won't feel like external sources are more valuable than the CRM and equally if it's trustworthy, it can lead to more accurate reporting, a more personalised experience for candidates and invariably, quicker time to fill ratios."

He concludes: "It all stems from the integrity of the data!" ■



SCALING UP IN-HOUSE

Richard Mabey, CEO and co-founder of contract automation platform Juro, on the recruitment challenge in the legal sector.

Recruiters today face a litany of challenges. According to PwC's Global Workforce survey 2022, 18 per cent of UK workers are likely to switch to a new employer within the next 12 months. 16 per cent plan to leave the workforce either temporarily or permanently. Alongside this, CIPD's Labour Market Outlook 2022 reports that half of UK employers have hard-to-fill vacancies.

It is not just employees who are facing challenges. Layoffs and hiring freezes are a fact of life for many companies in a harsh economic climate, too. Businesses who have ridden out the turbulence of the last two years and benefited from a brief wave of investment now find themselves without a paddle, pressed to confront unsustainable hiring models.

Fast-forward to 2022 and Europe faces spiralling inflation and a cost-of-living crisis. Recruiters continue to battle against demand for higher pay, slashed budgets and a shallow talent pool. But in a break away from broader movements within recruitment, in-house lawyers stand to benefit as teams future-proof against emerging challenges. Legal professionals - for their vast and varied expertise - are becoming increasingly important to fast-growth companies.

Bucking the trends

In today's febrile job market, in-house legal teams have shown themselves to be remarkably robust: according to Juro's 2022 in-house legal report, 73 per cent of high-growth companies are scaling up their legal teams in the UK.

There are a number of reasons for this quiet success story. Take regulatory change, for example. Reuters' State of the Legal Market 2022 report found that 'complex/changing regulation' accounted for 19 per cent of strategic priorities among legal clients – second only to the impact of Covid-19, at 21 per cent. 42 per cent of UK legal buyers said they plan to increase spending on the demands thrown up by regulatory change.

Regulatory challenges have upped demand for high-value legal services, and recruiters face pressure to continue steadily scaling up legal teams to manage the workload.

The in-house legal report reveals in-house lawyers struggle most with aligning on business priorities and managing low-value administrative work; companies growing rapidly must either learn to automate some of these tasks or continue hiring to scale effectively around the challenges of the modern world.

Survival of the polymath

Another reason is that businesses are starting to understand the value of in-house legal teams. The 14th Blickstein Group Annual Law Department Operations survey revealed in December that, for the first time, a top KPI for legal departments was 'value added to the corporation'.

As lawyers – confronting the problem of alignment with business priorities – increasingly look to demonstrate their value against tangible objectives, recruiters will find it easier to justify new acquisitions. In tandem, company lawyers have broadened the scope of their work in line with company objectives. Increasingly, they advise on business strategy: their contributions are no longer strictly legal but commercial, too.

This tracks the rise of legal operations as a distinct discipline. With businesses facing new priorities – and legal challenges – in environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments, larger legal teams are a proven asset to modern, growing businesses.

Embracing tech

The skills gap remains a constant challenge for recruiters looking to integrate new technological advantages into fast-growth companies. Legal teams, now increasingly trained in high-value tech skills, have benefitted from the digital revolution and prove much easier to recruit to technical roles.

For example, at DBS Bank, lawyers were trained in the principles of Web3, the third iteration of the internet that promises decentralised networks. The resultant grasp of cryptocurrencies, blockchain and the metaverse ensures that legal teams are at the forefront of growth and innovation. In-house legal teams have turned themselves into professional Swiss-army knives. But there's still a way to go.

Fishing for talent

With 73 per cent of fast-growth companies scaling up their legal teams, recruiters must be able to find candidates with the right experience. This remains the biggest obstacle for companies (41 per cent) and will shape the focus of legal recruiters in 2022.

One solution is to cast a wider net: look for candidates who may wish to jump on board from another sector, or else – especially if they're highly qualified – from another practice area. With the growing importance of company culture, mission and purpose for employees, recruiters must work with leaders to match candidates with jobs based on their values and skills.

Where so many are struggling to get the hybrid/remote balance right, digitised teams of lawyers already taking a more active role in company strategy are well-placed to help shape culture around their needs in 2022 and beyond.

Finding talent with the right experience is not enough – employers must also be able to keep them. One in four in legal roles leave within six months. In all sectors, misaligned cultural fit is the main motivation for looking for a role elsewhere. If recruiters hope to create an environment of sustainable recruitment, they must ensure the process supports new hires from beginning to end.

Recruiters working closely with the organisation to align narratives of company culture - sustained through later onboarding processes – will help skilled employees justify sticking with a company long-term as it scales. An effective onboarding process that can reflect the sense of culture and mission first communicated in recruitment messaging may increase employee retention rates by as much as 25 per cent. A successful recruitment process begins – but does not end – with a signed contract. Recruiters today face a litany of challenges; scaling up legal teams will help fast-growth companies manage them. Their services fulfil a need: helping companies respond to the legal challenges thrown up by regulatory change, an uncertain economy, and growing ESG requirements. Recruiters, in turn, have made their companies more attractive by promising to broaden the scope of in-house legal work and giving their legal teams a stake in the company's direction. These are valuable responses from which recruiters in all sectors stand to benefit. ■



CALLING ALL CANDIDATES

A Recruitment Live discussion held at the Global Recruiter's UK summit highlighted talent reaching tech.

Supported by: **CloudCall** 

While the Global Recruiter's UK Summit last month played host to a series of keynote speeches and panel discussions exploring the current state of play for the recruitment industry, it was also a chance for recruitment leaders to come together and take part in a number of Recruitment Live industry discussions. One of these, held in association with event partner CloudCall, explored the use of technology to reach candidates. In a post-Covid recruitment world, the objective was to identify what tech was working for recruiters, how best it could be implemented and managed.

In attendance were:

Alastair Paterson, Director, Marks Sattin

William Geldart, Brand & Labs Lead/Marketing Manager, BPS World

Suzanne Swan, Director of Operations, CPL

Robert Parkinson, Managing Director, Parkside Recruitment

Simon Kent, Editor, The Global Recruiter

Chris French, Principal Sales Executive, CloudCall

Sean Hopkins, Product Marketing Manager, CloudCall

The discussion began with a summary of the type of technology currently in play for the recruiters. Understandably the pandemic has seen some radical changes within technology use for many companies, with some older technology being swiftly replaced or upgraded to cloud-based solutions offering the ability to access information and systems from wherever the recruiter may be as well as providing a strong communications backbone to keep everyone in touch with each other.

In some cases the switch to a technology base adequate to cope with the new scenario of home and hybrid working was radical and swift. At the start of the pandemic, Marks Sattin had a traditional technology set up with terminals. They managed to ship 100 laptops out to employees

within 72 hours to ensure they were able to continue functioning. Not only did this get the business up to speed for the pandemic's extraordinary circumstances, but it gave the business another level of transparency so they could see what was happening, and through data analytics, pursue more efficient work.

Parkside too switched from its more cumbersome legacy system to deploying Office 365. Robert Parkinson emphasised one attractive component of any new technology deployment has to be the speed with which recruiters can get to grips with it. For this reason anything that is intuitive in its use is going to be at an advantage.

Alistair Paterson also noted that one challenge with regard to candidate facing technology is that the amount of communications apps and social media platforms now mean recruiters need to battle through a background 'noise' of general digital distractions in order to get their candidates' attention. An email or LinkedIn message could be one of hundreds a good candidate receives (and mainly ignores) on a daily or weekly basis.

The recruiters around the table also described some interesting uses of available technology to access candidates and ensure the recruitment process goes well. Suzanne Swan explained that their business now follows every suitable candidate on LinkedIn and recruiters can monitor when any of them add the 'open to work' option to their profiles. Robert Parkinson described how he coaches recruitment consultants on candidate interview techniques by making suggestions directly to the recruiter via WhatsApp.

This led to a general discussion on the fact that despite all the technology, recruitment still hinges on the ability of the recruiter to be able to build a good strong rapport with their candidate, and to ensure both they and the client are satisfied and happy with the outcome. Suzanne commented that while recruitment could be seen as a simple job the hard art was the relationship building and there was little that could be done in terms of technology input or automation in this area.



RECRUITMENT LIVE 21

The group generally agreed that technology had enabled recruiters to reach a wider talent pool – this was certainly the case geographically. William Geldart noted that their UK team was now able to reach Singapore and the US. This was something which pre-pandemic would have come with a hefty price tag in terms of travel budgets. Robert Parkinson also noted how in the tech sector in particular they were now placing workers in parts of Europe to work with London companies, however these new international relationships also brought with them an added emphasis on needing to manage candidate and client communications fully to ensure expectations on both sides were understood and would be met.

Another important aspect of technology for reaching candidates effectively was highlighted by William Geldart. He noted that the visualisation of data, especially on a recruiter by recruiter basis, was very useful for understanding what effective practice looked like and how recruiters could improve their performance.

While some recruitment function based technology also offers an analytical output from the data it processes, many recruiters have found Microsoft's Power BI to be a good tool for its ease of use and the ability to play around with figures see what's happening beneath the surface of recruitment activity. Again the emphasis is on using the technology that is easy to use and which can have a meaningful impact on the performance of individual recruiters and the wider company.

The importance of data use was supported by the other recruiters in the room, and also developed into a discussion on how the visualisation of recruiter performance data in the form of gamification had had something of a renaissance. The feeling was that 5-10 years ago there was less emphasis on this as that generation of recruiters, and newcomers particularly, seemed to be less keen on this aspect of performance support. Today, however there is greater engagement for the technique among recruits together with an added appetite

and enjoyment for seeing how one is performing against fellow consultants.

Alongside all the technology advances in the recruitment world there is a clear sense of recruitment still requiring the human touch and recruitment businesses needing to uphold a sense of culture and belonging across its consultants. Recruitment is not a 9 - 5 occupation and recruiters are frequently working out of more standard working hours in order to reach the people with whom they work. But by using technology imaginative and without losing sight of the essential value add created by consultants, new avenues through which recruiters can do their work effectively and efficiently will continue to develop. "It was great to have a wide-ranging discussion on this topic," said Sean Hopkins after the event. "The variety of ways technology is being used to help recruiters attract the best talent demonstrates that one size does not fit all. For a RecTech company like CloudCall, hearing how some recruiters evaluate and select their next technology investment was insightful, especially against the proliferation of recruitment focused software startups offering single point solutions. This results in the group here receiving an enormous volume of prospecting emails and calls, almost creating a demo fatigue or weariness."

Hopkins suggested that the adoption of some of Microsoft's more advanced tools that come as part of having Microsoft 365 licenses and implementation of capabilities like Herefish by Bullhorn Automation showed how ideally, any new technology should work seamlessly with the core tech stack already in place to enhance the experience for both recruiters and candidate – something they were also looking to achieve with their partner ecosystem. "One final takeaway was that the potential to leverage technology, whether it's in the office or on the go via a mobile app, to cut through the noise and help those tenacious and persistent recruiters attract the best talent does exist and is only getting smarter," he concluded. ■

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SOURCEBREAKER SOLD TO BULLHORN

finnCap Cavendish advises on latest sale

Search and match technology SourceBreaker has been sold to Bullhorn, with advice from finnCap Cavendish. Founded in 2014 by CEO Steve Beckett, SourceBreaker has grown rapidly to become the leading provider of AI-driven search and match technology to recruitment agencies in the UK. The business' intuitive solutions are designed to increase recruiters' productivity and help identify the best talent across internal and external databases. The SourceBreaker senior leadership team, including Steve Beckett and Adam Dale (CRO), will continue to lead the Company post the transaction. The deal was led by Mark

Kingston, Partner and Head of Human Capital M&A at finnCap Cavendish, supported by Sam Kavanagh (Associate Director) and Tom Holland-Hibbert (Associate). "We created SourceBreaker to change the way recruiters search," notes Steve Beckett, founder-CEO of SourceBreaker. "Now more than ever, our products can help expand the pool of talent and identify better matches between candidates and jobs. We're incredibly excited to expand our reach by joining forces with Bullhorn, and we're all looking forward to joining the team. "The finnCap Cavendish team has achieved a truly

outstanding result for our Shareholders. Their knowledge of our business, the sector and the buyer landscape, as well as their commitment throughout the process, was critical to our success." Matt Fischer, President and COO of Bullhorn, commented: "We're committed to helping solve our customers' most pressing challenges, and at the top of the list right now is finding talent in today's tight labour market. We believe the addition of SourceBreaker's solutions to our portfolio will help staffing firms meet this challenge head-on by increasing recruiters' productivity and ultimately boosting their fill rates. As

a successful Marketplace partner, SourceBreaker already serves hundreds of Bullhorn customers, and we look forward to bringing their solutions to even more of our customers." Mark Kingston, Partner & Head of Human Capital at finnCap Cavendish added: "We are delighted to have advised Steve and his team on this significant transaction in the Human Capital sector. The deal showcases our deep sector knowledge and understanding and also demonstrates our ability to close large cross-border M&A deals against a tightening macroeconomic backdrop."

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BOBCHECK.IO LAUNCHES

Trial identifies nearly £150,000 in missed revenue during trial

Bobcheck, the new platform that can identify missed/lost revenue for a recruitment firm, has officially launched. Following an impressive six-month beta, the platform was able to help six recruitment firms identify almost £150,000 in missed revenue. This has delivered a return of investment of 791 per cent to its customers. A 'direct hire', otherwise known as Behind Our Back (BOB), occurs when a company hires a candidate, following an introduction from a recruitment firm, and for whatever reason does not pay the appropriate fees for sourcing and introducing the candidate.

Bobcheck was created with the simple and clear ambition, to help recruitment firms identify and recover missed/lost revenue from direct hires. The Bobcheck platform is easy to use and integrates through API with Bullhorn or can also be used via simple CSV upload. Once set up, the platform will continue to monitor actual hire activity with minimal maintenance and no further need for recruiters to conduct manual checks, saving time and focus for recruitment staff. "We are seriously impressed with Bobcheck," said Chris Redmond, managing director of RedHolt. "It is incredibly easy to

use and get set up. The team at Bobcheck helped us to upload 6 months of back-dated interview data. It only took a few minutes for bobcheck to do its thing and found a direct hire. We were completely in the dark but blown away by the bobcheck service and technology." David Clark, managing director and co-founder of Bobcheck explains: "Direct hires are not an uncommon practice and can happen for several reasons, contrary to popular belief they are not always intended by the hiring firm. The decision to raise the issue of missed revenue will lie with the recruitment firm/ agency, Bobcheck's customers.

The first step is identifying them and that is what bobcheck does." Direct hires can happen for any number of reasons, not necessarily on purpose. How recruitment firms react to identifying a direct hire can also vary. Many firms immediately begin the process of retrieving debts owed, whereas others can adopt a more subtle approach, potentially forgoing monies owed in the interest of protecting the ongoing relationship with clients.

VEREMARK RAISES \$8.5M EQUITY ROUND

Veremark raises \$8.5m equity round

Veremark, the pre-employment screening and verified career credentials firm, has raised a further \$8.5m in equity funding just 9 months after its initial \$2.8m seed round. The round has been led by a new investor, US venture capital firm Stage 2 Capital. Samaipata, a Pan-European venture capital firm also joined the round as a new investor, and several existing investors Triple Point Ventures, ACF Investors, Vulpes, and SOV provided follow-on investments, bringing the company's total funding to \$12.3m. Veremark claims to simplify the process of checking the claims and credentials of prospective employees based around the world through its digital platform. The firm now offers more than 40 kinds of credential checks in 150 countries. Through both direct sales and a wide number of partnerships, the company has grown monthly revenue by 300% since September 2021. Veremark's client base

of hundreds of monthly users includes HR teams at UK fintech success stories Wise and ComplyAdvantage as well as global corporates such as PepsiCo and BCG. Anubhav Maheshwari, Partner at Stage 2 Capital, said: "Effective pre-employment screening and candidate vetting are critical considerations for business operations, compliance, and risk management. Yet, around the world, these processes are highly manual and often delayed, inaccurate, or incomplete. "With extensive global data connections and focus on speed and accuracy, Veremark is transforming a legacy workflow through innovation. We are thrilled to partner with Veremark and support the team on its mission of providing a technology-driven superior candidate experience." The company is also leading the charge in the use of verified career digital credentials which enables candidates to 'own'

their career data – eliminating the need for slow and repetitive checks every time they get a new job. To champion this cause, the firm has partnered with the leading USA recruitment trade association, Techserve Alliance, to offer Verepass, a career passport which holds all of a candidate's credentials, helping the Techserve Alliance members to place pre-verified contractors faster and more cost-effectively. Jose del Barrio, Founding Partner at Samaipata said, "We are very excited to be part of Veremark's round on their mission to become the most global platform for pre-employment checks and first ever career passport. As the way we work is increasingly flexible and remote across the world, we believe that the Veremark team, with their extensive experience in recruitment, tech and design, are well equipped to empower that change and make it happen." Veremark operates as a globally distributed team with

core hubs in the UK, USA, Australia, Singapore, India, and the Philippines, and expects its headcount to double over the next 12 months. Daniel Callaghan, CEO of Veremark, said: "Traditional solutions in the credentials and compliance space are slow and laborious to use. This makes them ineffective. We've turned that logic on its head by creating a platform that's easy to use and works for all parties. "For small companies, Veremark eliminates the complexity of cross-border checks. For big companies, we provide a single platform that helps manage globally distributed workforces. For the candidate, the process is smooth, painless, and lets them own their data. With our expert investors now on board, we're very confident about the future." The pre-employment screening market is estimated at \$16bn annually with strong continued global growth.



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Sanctuary Personnel

Best Medium Recruitment Business
Carrington West
First Point Group
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SMART SEARCHING

Paul Lewis, Adzuna's Chief Customer Officer on how smarter tech can help weather recruitment storms.

Today's employers are being faced with the perfect recruitment storm. Inflation is biting, costs are rising, and skills shortages continue to hold back hiring for many companies. Beyond this, the Great Resignation is rumbling on. Despite headlines around the recent big tech layoffs and the threat of a recession, the talent shortage is still very real.

We've seen millions of workers look for new employers over the last year. Some were furloughed or made redundant during the pandemic and have re-evaluated what they want from work or shifted to different sectors. The travel industry is a great example of this. Many workers employed by airlines and the wider industry simply couldn't afford to stay within a sector physically ground to a halt for years. The result? They left for other more 'pandemic proof' industries. Now travel has reopened and those workers aren't available to fill job openings.

Other workers weren't made redundant but quit their jobs due to concerns around their health or safety, or took early retirement. Despite record job vacancy counts, total employment remains lower than pre-2020, with the employment rate currently sitting at 75.6% according to the ONS, 0.9 percentage points below the December-February 2020 average, reflecting this exodus from the workforce.

At the same time, there's been a huge reshuffle of opportunities. We're seeing growing vacancies in booming sectors like construction, logistics, and emerging areas like climate tech. Meanwhile, digital transformation is altering existing sectors like healthcare, sales and retail, meaning jobseekers need broader skill sets than ever before.

The final part in this labour market shift is the rise of remote working and growing emphasis on work/life balance and culture. With candidates no longer constrained by geography, especially within white collar roles, talent pools have got wider. And candidates are increasingly looking for employers that will offer them flexibility to work the way that suits them best and balance their wider lives.

This high turnover means a constant high number of vacancies needing to be filled. Jobseekers have more power than ever to negotiate their pay, switch between roles, and demand more from their employers. It adds up to a HR headache with high employee churn, squeezed budgets and often ill-qualified applicants.

Job search is evolving

The labour market was already advancing towards smarter matching of candidates to companies before 2020, but the global pandemic has kicked that transformation up a gear.

Recruitment technology is becoming more important, and we're seeing greater adoption of programmatic advertising technology in particular. This was already widely used in North America and is now spreading into Europe as hiring managers look for new ways to meet their goals and budgets.

Programmatic platforms like Appcast, Joveo and PandoLogic are using AI to allow hiring managers more flexibility and control of the recruitment process. Jobs are posted at the optimal time, across multiple sources, and are taken down as soon as enough quality candidates have entered the pipeline – saving on recruitment costs. This goes beyond real-time bidding as the AI is able to optimise the process by predicting the best time for advertising a role.

Programmatic recruitment is also inherently trackable, allowing end-to-end recruitment measurement. This has led to a shift in focus from a 'pay to post' to a 'pay per performance' model. Gone are the days of paying a flat rate no matter how hard a role is to fill; programmatic allows hiring managers to allocate budget to priority or tough to fill roles, while easy to fill jobs can be left unsponsored and served by organic traffic flow.

Job matching engines are also playing their part, by helping to further improve the quality of candidates that apply for positions, ultimately helping to fill openings faster. But companies are still finding conditions challenging. The enterprise market is crying out for strong alternatives to the existing players in the job search engine space.

The Getwork addition

Our recent acquisition of US-based enterprise focused business Getwork is a big step forwards as we start to build a credible alternative to the job search behemoths.

We launched Adzuna in the UK in 2011 and expanded into the US in 2017. Five years on and it's the fastest growing part of our business. The job search market is dominated by the likes of Indeed and LinkedIn and we want to provide a credible alternative to those companies. Bringing Getwork onboard brings us scale. We're gaining 17 new team members, all of whom have deep expertise in this industry and an incredible reputation for excellence, significantly expanding our 'boots on the ground' in North America. We're also gaining a new office in Minneapolis, alongside our existing US office in Indianapolis. We'll be maintaining each brand's own identity and encouraging cross working as we integrate the two businesses, both of which are profitable and growing in their own right. Getwork connects jobseekers with job openings at some of North America's most exciting companies, indexing millions of verified jobs every day directly from tens of thousands of employer career sites, including over 50 Fortune 100 companies. They work directly with end employers and their agencies, which also means a great experience for jobseekers on the site – they get to see openings before anyone else and all those jobs are verified with the companies. Our vision is to provide a better option for jobseekers and employers globally, bringing together our smarter tech and programmatic

capabilities with Getwork's quality reputation and enterprise focus. We recently expanded Adzuna into four new markets, Switzerland, Belgium, Spain and Mexico, meaning we're in 20 countries across six continents globally, and we'll be able to support Getwork's blue chip clients across all those markets.

The future

Beyond the immediate integration, we believe the future of job search is in job matching technology. We're building AI tools and insights to give jobseekers more information about what they're worth and where they can get the best jobs, which ultimately helps drive better quality and more relevant traffic through to openings. Globally, there's a movement towards improving transparency and fairness within job search and tech can help support this. For example, in the US, seventeen states have now introduced laws around pay transparency, such as introducing legal requirements to add a salary range to job postings. At Adzuna, we have tools like ValueMyCV in both the US and UK markets which helps jobseekers see what they're worth based on their skills and experience, and matches them up with openings that suit them. The role of big data and job search engines will be to analyse the market and funnel jobseekers in the relevant direction. If we can empower jobseekers to make smarter decisions about their job search and send them in the direction of openings they are well qualified for, it will be quicker and easier for hiring managers to select the best candidates and jobseekers will have a better experience too. It's all about helping jobseekers make better decisions and find fulfilling jobs that suit them for the long term. ■

THE ART OF THE IMPARTIAL

Sahar Sarreshtehdari, Senior Consultant at The Big Search on why AI doesn't entirely mitigate the issue of implicit bias.

The past few years have been turbulent economically with large disruptions in global labour markets. While this hastened pre-existing trends in remote work and automation, unfortunately, up to 25 per cent of workers needed to switch occupations. For the millions worldwide who were furloughed or lost jobs, the ramifications of the pandemic have no end in sight. The need for quality job recruitment is now higher than ever, as is the need for automation to sift through millions of resumes. One of the biggest questions on both ends of the job hunt remains: How much automation is too much automation? Artificial Intelligence (AI) maintains a prominent place in recruitment, and many benefits come along with it. AI and machine learning can assist recruiters by sifting through a significant data pool to find candidates who meet specific criteria, long before a human even sets their eyes on any resume. AI saves time and energy – up to 40 per cent of a recruiter's time can be spent entering data into a hiring system or sorting through resumes. AI can be beneficial in diminishing time spent on these kinds of repetitive tasks. By having this tool at their disposal, recruiters can focus on human connection and cultural fits.

Most importantly, AI can reduce bias in screening candidates. Many studies have been conducted on implicit bias within the hiring process. While it may be involuntary or unconscious, it is the responsibility of recruiters to mitigate the effects of implicit bias recruitment. There are many ways this can be done, such as company-wide training which in turn should allow us to be aware of biases. Unfortunately, a perfect solution to ensure that a person's implicit bias does not affect the hiring process doesn't exist, but AI could help.

Most companies around the globe have initiatives that try to build more inclusive work environments. Various organisations support minorities in the workplace. Many workplaces will hire a Diversity & Inclusion Manager who is dedicated to increasing diversity within a company. There are many reasons why companies and organisations may employ AI to aid in these diversity endeavours.

The use of AI to call out implicit bias may sound attractive, however, several high-profile cases illustrate the importance of human oversight. One of the most notorious examples is Amazon's recruiting AI bias against female applicants in its hiring algorithm. But this example is not an outlier – it is now clear that AI learns from and mimics human behaviour. Therefore, AI can too display signs of implicit bias.

Platform bias

This isn't just on the hiring company's side of things – studies have shown that platforms like LinkedIn can also influence recruiters at the expense of female candidates. Algorithms on these kinds of platforms influence which job openings people learn about and how they see themselves within a particular role. Research shows that setting your gender as female on LinkedIn results in fewer instances of ads related to high-paying jobs than if you were to select your gender as male.

"To give women equal opportunity in these areas, we need to look at how to de-bias the systems"

Dr. Marielza Oliveira, Director of communications and information at UNESCO

Utilising AI to sort through resumes also shows a loophole in determining qualified candidates: Since AI depends on certain keywords to scan data, candidates familiar with how an AI algorithm works could trick the system and disguise themselves as being qualified for the organisation. On the other hand, there could be candidates who could be a great addition to the team because of their work ethic and character. AI, which lacks any human attributes, will miss these traits.

Miranda Bogen, a senior policy analyst at Upturn, a nonprofit group that promotes equity and justice, wrote for the Harvard Business Review: "Hiring is rarely a single decision, but rather the culmination of a series of smaller, sequential decisions. Algorithms play different roles throughout this process: Some steer job ads toward certain candidates, while others flag passive candidates for recruitment. Predictive tools parse and score resumes, and help hiring managers assess candidate competencies in new ways, using both traditional and novel data. Many hope that algorithms will help human decision-makers avoid their own prejudices by adding consistency to the hiring process. But algorithms introduce new risks of their own."

The human-to-human connection and conversation is imperative in the hiring process. Ensuring a candidate is the right fit by talking to them can make or break a company's success. Interviews, however, are a two-way street. Candidates looking for a job should use the interview process to glean important information as to whether the company is the right fit for them. AI is not yet ready to replace humans in this important process.

Exploring how predictive technologies work at each step of the hiring process is a crucial step in mitigating implicit bias. The Big Search, a talent consultancy focused on the technology sector, has been studying this issue since our inception in 2015. A crucial challenge we have tackled is reducing bias against female candidates – young mothers in particular – during the final interview stage. While we are a highly data-driven recruitment company, The Big Search distinguishes ourselves in our human-to-human approach. The results speak for themselves: after strengthening the hiring strategy of one of our clients, they succeeded in hiring a record number of female executives.

In conclusion, AI certainly helps to call out implicit bias when it sees it taking place, but all machine learning requires human oversight for it to deliver the best results. Humans must be kept in the hiring loop: Since finding candidates to join a company takes meticulousness and human experience, humans must be kept in the hiring loop. Employers must take on the responsibility to uncover bias and address it. The crucial work of preventing implicit bias can lead to a thriving workplace with more equality. ■

HYBRID OR TAKE A HIKE

Francesca Peters, Chief Talent Officer, IWG on how employees are now in charge.

As we all know, the pandemic fundamentally changed the way we work. We have heard this time and time again, but it bears repeating. Just three years ago, choosing where you work, whether it be from home, an office, or local co-working space, was almost unheard of. Apart from in the case of the most enlightened companies, exceptions were usually only made in extenuating circumstances or often, only for more senior people.

Fast forward two years and a global pandemic later, across the globe businesses have seen the benefits of empowering employees to work wherever is most convenient for them. Hybrid working has improved productivity, created better work-life balance and reduced overheads. At IWG, we have seen memberships soar with more than eight million customers globally and the use of shared workplaces particularly in suburban and rural areas accelerate at pace.

Although this trend was undoubtedly on the rise pre-pandemic, it has become a feature, and indeed a requirement, for many workers globally. According to government statistics the proportion of employees working in the hybrid model almost doubled between February and May this year alone. People have grown accustomed to being able to balance their work commitments with their home and family life, all while saving money by ditching the daily commute and working either at home, or closer to home.

It comes as no surprise that hybrid working has firmly made its way onto the list of benefits sought after by the modern-day worker. IWG's research shows that a massive 88% of office workers consider flexible working to be important in a new role and it is increasingly gaining parity with salary, pension, and holiday as a key consideration when job hunting.

Indeed, the world's largest job site, shows that year-on-year searches for the term 'hybrid' have increased by 6,531% in the twelve months up

to the end of April, making it one of the fastest growing search terms on their UK website. Remote work has also risen (+666 per cent), now accounting for 2.3 per cent of all searches. Workers are not just hoping for hybrid, they're demanding it.

This shift comes as the job market experiences a significant shake up following the pandemic, with government data revealing Brits are resigning at the highest rate since 2009 while the ratio of unemployed people to every vacancy falling to a new record low. This has led to a unique situation – it's now employees who are calling the shots. Employees are demanding a better work/life balance and those that are not having their needs met through the option of working in the hybrid model are making their voices heard and, in many scenarios, moving jobs. No longer are workers remaining loyal to one company, instead they are exercising their right to work how, and where, they see fit. The great resignation means employers need to remain increasingly competitive to retain staff. Gone are the days when purely financial incentives or even luxury perks such as company cars or private memberships could sway budding graduates to join an organisation. Employees are now seeking, indeed demanding, the ability to work in the hybrid model. This shift now means that companies must invest in the resources required to support hybrid working and the flexibility the workforce now seeks or risk exposing themselves to the perils of the great resignation.

Demands of today

Our research shows that 88% of office workers consider flexible working to be important in a new role, putting it alongside health insurance, life insurance and extended parental leave. In fact, when asked to rank their top five considerations when applying for a new

role, office workers rated hybrid working (43 per cent) as being more important than company culture (27 per cent), equity and bonuses (27 per cent), potential for progression (30 per cent) and new colleagues (32 per cent).

Half (49 per cent) of office workers in our research said they would immediately rule out jobs that did not offer hybrid working. This is not surprising news when we consider how the pandemic forced us all to reassess our personal and work lives, and crucially, how we spend our time. Workers have realised the benefits of remote working and are increasingly eager to see it permanently implemented.

Time and time again, surveys show hybrid workers are happier. Across our survey, employees identified several benefits to hybrid working, with a third (67 per cent) saying it improved their work/life balance and 37 per cent stating that it has improved their overall mental health and wellbeing.

And we all know that a happier work force is a more productive workforce. A recent survey by workspace software company Citrix found that 71 per cent of hybrid workers report a strong connection to their peers that makes them want to work harder, compared to 63 per cent of in-office workers and 60% of remote employees. Loyalty is no longer to a company, instead it's the people.

The benefits of hybrid working are seemingly endless. From mitigating disunity by allowing staff the flexibility to navigate the many hurdles life may throw at us – whether it be appointments, last minute childcare duties or traffic – to reducing the burden of the commute and enhancing productivity.

Additional research by Confused.com found that hybrid working can save employees up to £328 a month on train travel and accompanying expenses, and up to £128 per month if they commute by car. For many, in the context of a cost of living crisis, these savings could be crucial.

Good for the company

But the benefits are not restricted to employees. Companies are also seeing multiple gains: when you take the removal of fixed overheads into account, including rent, heating and support staff, hybrid-embracing employers are saving an average of more than £8,000 per employee per year, leading to huge savings whatever the size of company.

In the context of a Great Resignation, listening to workers is key. This may sound obvious, but until far too recently it was not the case. Investing in the resources to provide staff with the option to work from home or a local shared office space will be crucial for staff retention going forward. Our research alone shows that almost half of office workers would quit their job if asked to return to the office five days a week, while three quarters (72%) would prefer the long-term ability to work flexibly over going back to the office five days a week with a 10 per cent pay rise.

As our understanding of 'work' and 'the office' shifts, HR and it's the focus on human relations is brought to the fore. Companies, and their HR departments, must realise that to empower their teams they need to move away from strictly corporate conceptualisations of the working world to look instead at what it is that people value.

People truly believe that the hybrid working model offers employees a better quality of life. It gives us the ability to spend more time with family and friends and be present for all the vital milestones we experience throughout our lifetimes, whether that be a school play or an important medical appointment. Without having to factor in the time spent commuting we are given more autonomy on how to shape our day – we can go for walks, coffees or even for a quick run. We spend more time in our communities, with our families and with ourselves – who would not want that? ■