



Targeting Specialized Candidates: Making the Most of Dice and Other Niche Job Boards

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Targeting Specialized Candidates: Making the Most of Dice and Other Niche Job Boards

16% of recruiters said niche sites were “great for bringing in qualified applicants” – The highest of any recruiting method. Only 3% felt general job sites delivered “great” candidates.¹



“When I’m looking for someone who isn’t entry level – an IT candidate who’s professional and has really honed their skills – I know they’re probably on Dice.”

*Beth DiPalma
Computer Technology Solutions, Inc.*

The days of using classified newspaper ads to fill a job opening are long gone. So are the days of steady hiring cycles and plentiful job requisitions. Today’s dynamic hiring landscape and tight budgets demand that you use targeted, cost-effective sourcing tools to pinpoint the highly specialized, highly qualified candidates you need.

That’s why recruiting professionals turn to niche sites geared to their industry whether it’s technology, finance, healthcare or security clearance. These targeted job boards let you promote employment opportunities to a targeted audience and give you access to a steady stream of top talent. Savvy recruiters and HR managers around the nation agree – niche job boards are effective tools for sourcing specialized, qualified candidates.

Here are strategies, trends, and tips to help you get the most out of a niche job board.

Understand Your Target

Before you can wield the power of a job board, you need to understand who you’re looking for and how they’re looking for a job.

Active vs. Passive Seekers

There are two types of job seekers, each with different communication needs.

- **Active job seekers** are looking for jobs right now. A WEDDLE’s survey of job seekers showed that 47.7% were actively seeking employment.³ To connect with this group, you need to find the “sweet spot” by posting jobs and searching the resume database on the right job board. What’s the “right” job board? It’s the one the candidates you want are flocking to.
- **Passive job seekers** are content with their current employment but would entertain the idea of switching jobs if the right opportunity came along. Since they aren’t actively job hunting, passive seekers will not have a resume online for you to search and view, so posting a job is the only way to get their attention. In your posting, emphasize work/life balance, opportunity for advancement, and the company’s values.





“Dice is the niche site with the technical candidates we need. Certain professionals with highly specialized skill sets may prefer to gravitate to niche sites.”

Sharon Maffei
Spherion

Niche sites rated highest in visibility with quality candidates who have solid industry-specific experience.¹

Where Job Seekers Look for Jobs

Savvy professionals use a mix of resources including:

- General job boards
- Industry-focused job boards and career sites
- Networking with friends and colleagues to obtain referrals
- Recruiters
- Career fairs
- Online business and social networks

For job seekers, niche job boards are more than places to find a job. They're active communities that provide industry specific news, blogs, forums, career advice and resume tips. That enhanced content adds value to the sites and builds loyalty, drawing more frequent visits by candidates – both active and passive – interested in career advancement.

Communicate Your Employment Brand

Prospective employees don't just want to know about your job, they wonder what it will be like to work at your company. That's why your employment brand is important.

An employment brand is a long-term strategy that creates an accurate perception of the unique employment experience at a company. It's reflected in a company's web site, job postings, and the way recruiters interact with candidates. A strong employment brand attracts quality talent and shapes a candidate's decision about whether to accept a job.

If you have an employment brand: Make sure you reflect it in all communications.

If you don't have an employment brand: Have stakeholders develop a cohesive understanding of the company's organizational culture, values, and work experience. Use that input to create a compelling statement about working at your company that you express in all of your recruiting efforts.

Choose the Right Job Board

There are thousands of online job boards. The question every recruiter asks is: *How do I choose the right job board?* Start by determining where your ideal candidates are most likely to look for their next career opportunities. Ask several of them for their favorite career sites. Then learn the difference between the job boards that specialize in what you need.

When comparing job boards, evaluate the:

- Size, quality and uniqueness of the resume database
- Posting options
- Site traffic
- Ability to match talent to your job openings
- Candidate screening tools
- Ease of use
- Return on investment



“Dice’s focus on IT matches our focus. I’m always looking for IT people, so why not use a board that has IT people only?”

Patrick Kaiser
SWAT Solutions, Inc.

Job boards ranked second only to referrals as the source that provides the most placements for fast-growing firms.²

Last, but not least, consider cost. If your budget allows for only one board and you need only the most highly qualified professionals in a targeted area of expertise, your smartest investment is a niche board. Even if you only need to hire one or two specialized candidates, a niche board is still efficient: most boards can create a customized recruiting package for you.

Maximize Your Job Board Usage

Once you’ve chosen your job board, learn to use it strategically. Each job board has tools and services including job postings, database searches, search agents and more. Some recruiters post. Others search. Many do both. If you want to access passive candidates who don’t usually have online resumes, you’ll at least have to post your jobs.

Strategic Job Posting

Job postings are a fundamental part of any job board. The standard posting process used to be: write a job description, post it, then watch the responses roll in. This simple practice has been referred to as “post and pray,” because experienced users know that both posting and searching typically produce the highest number of qualified candidates.

Don’t settle for a job description that reads like a list of ingredients on the side of a cereal box. Be strategic:

- **Get creative** – Write a compelling title and job description. Rather than a bland list of requirements, focus on what the candidate has to gain, company culture, and specific projects the candidate will work on. Be careful not to make your pitch too “salesy.”
- **Use keywords** – Candidates often search by keyword (specific words used to search for information). IT professionals use specific skills such as “C++” or “JAVA” or locations like “Tampa” as keywords to narrow their search parameters. Using keywords in the job title, skills listing, and job description optimizes search engine marketing.
- **Zip code** – Include the job location’s zip code because candidates often search for jobs by location.

For more tips on how to write a great job posting, [visit here](#).

Strategic Searching

Most job boards let you search their resume databases to find candidates with skills that match your job requirements. The process can yield an overwhelming number of candidates, so be sure to “search smart”:

- **Keywords** – Choose your keywords about skills, experience, and location carefully so your search results in only candidates who are qualified for the job.
- **Be specific** – If you want someone with C++ programming experience, use that specific term, not simply “programming,” because candidates enter their exact skills when they search for jobs.





“Choosing a targeted job board and learning how to get the most out of it is critical. The right job board saves you time and money – and delivers real results.”

Tom Silver
SVP and Chief Marketing Officer
Dice

Traffic on Dice shows that niche sites have loyal communities – 86% of Dice job seekers visit the site monthly or more.

Take Advantage of the Experts

Tap into the customer support team’s expertise. They use the site every day and can share their tips and tricks for writing effective job postings, drilling down through the resume database, creating search agents and using the job board more effectively.

Tricks of the Trade from Savvy Users

You know your target, have an employment brand, and know how to use your job board. It’s time to use the tricks of the trade to get even more out of your service. Try these tips to save time and money:

- **Boolean searches** – A Boolean search connects a string of up to 25 keywords with commands and symbols that help sort information and deliver more precise results. [Learn more.](#)
- **Pre-screen candidates using questionnaires** – Some sites, like Dice, let you ask questions of job candidates as part of the online application process in order to better pre-qualify them. [Learn more.](#)
- **Search agents** – Let technology do the work for you with search agents. Unlike general job boards, a quality niche board allows you to search resumes by skill, years of experience, as well as job title. Set your candidate search parameters and the agents will scour the database of new resumes and deliver them to your email box. [Learn more.](#)
- **Job Match** – Some boards offer a proprietary service that automatically connects you with candidates who match your specifications. When you post a job, the feature automatically searches the extensive resume database and sends you candidates who match your keywords and requirements. [Learn more.](#)
- **Use Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools** – CRM tools help you track non-candidates so that you can continue to build your relationship with them for future job opportunities.

Summary

You have many options for filling your sourcing tool box. But when you want to find highly specialized, highly qualified candidates, your best, most cost efficient option is a targeted job board that draws the savvy, skilled professionals searching for the best jobs in their industry. What’s your next step? Search out the top niche job board in your industry, then use the strategies in this white paper to search smart and get great results.



Sources

- ¹ 2009 AIM Group / Classified Intelligence Recruitment Advertising Report.
- ² Bullhorn Survey, Top Six Best Sourcing Practices.
- ³ Weddles 2008 Source of Employment Survey.