

The Next Generation Talent Acquisition Processes



Applicant tracking software (ATS) is a hugely popular tool used by most of the world's large organizations. Some surveys report over 75% of large organizations and 40-60% of medium sized companies use ATS systems, while less than 25% of small organization use ATS. For some larger and medium sized organizations ATS had become their primary source of talent. But as often happens, times are changing.

Advantages of ATS

The three primary advantages often cited for using ATS systems are **saving time** and **money** by screening out unqualified candidates and **ensuring screening is fair** in that all candidates are initially screened in using the same 'objective' criteria.

For large organizations hiring 100's of positions and receiving multiple thousands of applications the potential savings can be enormous. Even small and medium sized organizations are receiving an overwhelming number of submissions for some jobs and with the cost of ATS systems coming down are embracing ATS.

According to a 2015 Bullhorn survey, [2015 North American Staffing and Recruiting Trends Report](#), 77% of recruiters said they needed ATS or CRM (customer relationship management) to do their job (Bullhorn is 'CRM for Humans' company providing recruiting and other services for companies).

Disadvantages of ATS systems

Some of the common complaints about ATS systems are that they can screen out good candidates. As many as 40% of candidates quit half way through the application process and often, great candidates who don't exactly fit the qualifications check boxes never make it into the organization.

At the 2015 HR Technology conference Talent Acquisition (TA) leaders shared their opinions on the value of ATS systems to help them acquire talent. In a survey, sponsored by SmartRecruiters, many of the TA leaders said it was time to abandon or significantly reduce their reliance on ATS system as they were no longer meeting their needs (it should be noted that SmartRecruiters presents themselves as a next generation talent acquisition platform).

In a report titled 'Abandoned Technology: why TA Leaders have stopped using traditional recruiting software', 70% of these TA leaders reported that they

routinely perform hiring activity outside their traditional ATS systems, 50% reported that the current ATS systems did not provide the tools they needed to be successful, 20% reported that they no longer even login to their TA technology.

Among the challenges they reported was that ATS systems were productivity 'killers' with 77% of the TA leaders indicating they used up to 5 TA technologies at the same time and 48% saying they spent half their time on ATS related administrative activities, not sourcing candidates.

Beyond Traditional ATS – The Candidate Experience

Today organizations need to go beyond the traditional ATS system and CRM systems. Traditional ATS systems may provide savings in administration time but that does not mean they enabled organizations to hire effectively or find and hire the best talent.

Seven trends in recruiting heading out of 2015 were:

1. Social recruiting
2. Employer branding
3. Talent communities (candidate nurturing)
4. Talent alignment assessments
5. Mobile recruiting
6. Continuous recruiting cycles
7. Employee referrals (re-emerging)

The recruiting cycle for many organizations is no longer a cycle but a constant process of connecting with talent in a variety of ways, including hiring contingent talent, connecting with potential talent on LinkedIn or Facebook or bringing back boomerang employees. More organizations are tapping into social recruiting using social networks, emphasizing their employer branding strategies and building talent communities.

While traditional ATS and CRM systems provide effective administration for the recruiting process they do not necessarily help attract the best talent or nurture the relationships long term. To determine strong employee fit more organizations are enabling candidates to self-assess by responding to questions or by engaging in activities with the organization. These candidates can screen themselves 'in' through both self-assessment activities and their active engagement. Candidates may answer a series of questions about who they are, how they work and what they like and this data can be combined with analysis and observation of their engagement with the organization. All of this data can be thrown into an algorithm and used to help understand a candidate's organizational fit. Additionally, data indicates that candidates who complete these alignment assessments and activities become more invested and engaged with the organization over time.

Organizations like Canada's Qwalify (Qwalify.com) are tapping into this new recruiting model to enable organizations to build 'talent communities' in their 'talent dojos'.

Other new candidate recruiting and relationship building tools integrate with social networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter so that the candidate learns about the company and the company about the candidate over time through ongoing interactions.

Changes in modern recruiting now require marketing, recruiting and HR departments to work more closely together and to work with all departments as employees are also invited to get into the conversation, make referrals and draw in and keep future

talent interested.

Regardless of the size of your organization if you want to get a line on talent you need to find ways to create and sustain a conversation with potential candidates so they become interested and invested in wanting to work for you today or tomorrow.