Title: A METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR INFORMING JOB SEEKERS OF RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Abstract: A method for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities is provided. The method includes hosting a website which provides access to information about potential job positions of at least one employer. The potential job positions are job positions which are not currently available but have the potential of becoming job vacancies at a later date. Job seekers are allowed to access the website, view the information about potential job positions and selectively flag an interest in one or more potential job positions. Contact details of each job seeker who has flagged an interest in at least one potential job position are obtained. If a potential job position becomes a job vacancy, then each job seeker who has flagged an interest in the potential job position is contacted in order to inform them that the potential job position has become a job vacancy. A system which implements the method is also provided.
A METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR INFORMING JOB SEEKERS OF
RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an internet-based method and system for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

The issue of job recruitment can be viewed from two perspectives. Firstly, there is the perspective of an employer having a job vacancy which they require to fill with a suitable candidate. Secondly, there is the job seeker who is seeking a job position to which they are suited and ideally satisfies their needs, for example, in terms of career plan, location or lifestyle.

In respect of an employer, job recruitment has traditionally been a reactionary process. The employer will have a job vacancy required to be filled and will then seek to attract appropriate candidates to apply for and to fill the vacancy. The most common methods of seeking to attract candidates include publishing advertisements via print and internet media, exhibiting at trade shows, or using the services of recruitment agents. All these methods of attraction can be relatively hit and miss. There is no guarantees that an appropriate candidate is actually job seeking at the time the job vacancy is available to be filled. Furthermore, ensuring that any appropriate candidates who are job seeking are exposed to the fact that there is a job vacancy and attracted to applying for the job vacancy can be an involved and time consuming task. Lastly, there is an inevitable and inefficient time lag between the job becoming a vacancy and actually filling the job vacancy with an appropriate candidate.

In respect of a job seeker, the process of job seeking can similarly be hit and miss. A job seeker may have an ideal job position in mind, but is limited to applying for job vacancies currently available and, in fact, job vacancies that can be found. Finding a suitable job vacancy can be a case of being in the right place or looking in the right place at the right time. The uncertainty of whether a suitable job position is available as a job vacancy, or can even be found, results in job seekers applying for job vacancies they are unsuited for or do not desire. This can cause inefficiency in the recruitment process for both employers and job
seekers. Furthermore, the uncertainty can make it difficult for a job seeker to plan a developing career path.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a method of informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities which provides an alternative to or complementary part of the traditional job seeking processes.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a method for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities, said method including:

- hosting a website, said website providing access to information about potential job positions of at least one employer, wherein said potential job positions are job positions which are not currently available but have the potential of becoming job vacancies at a later date;
- allowing job seekers to access the website, view the information about potential job positions and selectively flag an interest in one or more potential job positions;
- obtaining contact details of each job seeker who has flagged an interest in at least one potential job position; and
- if a potential job position becomes a job vacancy, then contacting each job seeker who has flagged an interest in said potential job position to inform them that said potential job position has become a job vacancy.

According to a second aspect of the present invention there is provided an internet-based system for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities, said system including:

- a website, said website providing access information about potential job positions of at least one employer, wherein said potential job positions are job positions which are not currently available but have the potential of becoming job vacancies at a later date, and wherein a job seeker can access the website and view the information about potential job positions;
- means for allowing a job seeker to selectively flag an interest in at least one potential job position;
- means for obtaining contact details of each job seeker who has flagged an interest in at least one potential job position; and
means for contacting each job seeker who has flagged an interest in a given potential job position, if that potential job position becomes a job vacancy, to inform them that said potential job position has become a job vacancy.

Preferably, job seekers are contacted by way of email or SMS message and are informed of how to apply for the job vacancy.

Preferably, the potential job positions include all the job positions within an employer's current employee structure and/or job positions which an employer is considering creating. Furthermore, an employer can be informed of the number of job seekers that have flagged an interest in a potential job position.

The present invention provides a number of potential advantages as an alternative to or as a complement to traditional job seeking and recruitment processes. Job seekers can find ideal job positions and be informed of their availability as job vacancies more efficiently. Employers can potentially attract candidates to apply for job vacancies more quickly. Furthermore, given that a potential job position is not guaranteed to become a job vacancy, any job seekers who do flag an interest in a potential position and then subsequently apply when the potential position becomes a vacancy are more likely to be a dedicated and better quality candidate.

Further features and aspects of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of a preferred embodiment.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING**

One implementation of the present invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

figure 1 is a conceptual drawing illustrating the overall operation of the logical aspects of an embodiment of the present invention

**DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT**

The present invention may be implemented in a variety of ways. The following description discusses an internet-based system which allows an employer to subscribe to a web server to provide a searchable database of current and potential job positions within the employer's company structure, as illustrated in figure 1. A job seeker 1 is able to access the web server on which the web site 4 is hosted, via the Internet 3, and search the database 5. If the job seeker 1 finds a potential job position that they would be interested in applying for
if, or when, the potential job position were to become a job vacancy, then the job seeker 1 is able to flag an interest in the potential job position. If, or when, the potential job position becomes a job vacancy, this fact is then communicated to the job seeker 1.

The database 5 is structured with a number of relational tables 6. The tables 6 are used to store the various data necessary for the system and the relationship between tables 6 establishes the necessary functionality of the system.

A first set of tables include potential job position entries. These include details of the potential job position, for example, job title, employer, location etc. Importantly, each potential job position entry will include a current status, showing that the position is not currently available, but which can be changed to show when the position does become available.

Ideally, control of the creation of potential job position entries and the ability to change the current status is provided to the relevant employer 2 or an authorised agent of the employer 2, for example, a recruitment agent.

The first time an employer 2 subscribes to the system, an employer entry is created and a unique employer identity is established. All potential job position entries created by the employer 2 will be related to the relevant employer entry.

Hence, when an employer 2 subsequently logs onto the system using their unique employer identity they will only have access to change potential job position entries related to their employer entry. Ideally, further security measures would be established to ensure authorised employer use, such as the use of passwords or PINs.

The system also includes tables relating to job seekers 1. The first time a job seeker 1 attempts to use the system, the job seeker 1 is required to provide requested details which are used to create a job seeker entry, an associated job selection entry and establish a unique job seeker identity. The requested details would include contact details. The unique job seeker identity is used by the job seeker 1 to log onto and use the system to search and view potential job positions. Ideally, further security measures would be established to ensure authorised job seeker use, such as the use of passwords or PINs.
Once a job seeker 1 is logged onto the system, they may search for or browse for potential job positions in fairly conventional manners. For example, the job seeker 1 could enter keywords into a search engine to extract a list of matching positions and view the details of each matching position. Optionally, the job seeker 1 could browse potential job positions which are arranged under certain criteria, for example, job type, location, employer, etc. In the case of browsing positions for a particular employer, it is preferred that the positions for a particular employer may be browsed in accordance with the employer’s actual organisational structure, ie positions are listed under department headings, locations, etc.

Upon a job seeker 1 finding a particular potential job position of interest, the job seeker 1 is provided the option of flagging an interest in the position. By flagging an interest, the potential job position is entered into the job seeker’s job selection entry, thereby setting a relationship between the job selection entry and the relevant potential job position entry. It is this relationship which allows the system to determine which job seeker(s) 1 to contact if, or when, the current status of a potential job position is changed to indicate that the position is available.

When an employer 2 or authorised agent changes the current status of a potential job position, the system determines the job selection entries which have been linked by flagging by associated job seeker(s) 1. From the determined job selection entries, the system is able to determine the associated job seeker entries and extract the relevant contact details. The system is then able to contact the relevant job seeker(s) 1 to inform them that the potential job position has become a job vacancy. Ideally, the contact details are email addresses, in which case the system can automatically send an email message 7 to the job seeker 1. Alternatively, the contact details may be a mobile telephone number, in which case the system can automatically send an SMS message 8 to the job seeker’s handset. It would be possible, although less preferred, that a list of relevant contact details could be generated for a human operator to contact the job seekers 1 by way of, for example, a telephone call or posting a letter.

The system can be arranged to allow an employer 2 to determine at any time, how many job seekers 1 have flagged an interest in a particular potential job
position. To protect the privacy of the job seekers 1, the actual details or identity of these interested job seekers 1 would be withheld from the employer 2. This feature would benefit an employer 2 who is contemplating creating a particular job position which does not yet currently exist, to find out if there is actual employment interest in such a position to make the creation of the position viable.

While the present invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments, it will be appreciated that various modifications and changes could be made without departing from the scope of the invention.
CLAIMS:

1. A method for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities, said method including:
   hosting a website, said website providing access to information about
   potential job positions of at least one employer, wherein said potential job
   positions are job positions which are not currently available but have the potential
   of becoming job vacancies at a later date;
   allowing job seekers to access the website, view the information about
   potential job positions and selectively flag an interest in one or more potential job
   positions;
   obtaining contact details of each job seeker who has flagged an interest in
   at least one potential job position; and
   if a potential job position becomes a job vacancy, then contacting each job
   seeker who has flagged an interest in said potential job position to inform them
   that said potential job position has become a job vacancy.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein, in said contacting step, said job seekers
   that flagged an interest in said potential job position are informed of how to apply
   for said job vacancy.

3. The method of claim 1 or 2, wherein, said contacting step is conducted by
   email or SMS messaging.

4. The method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said
   potential job positions include all job positions currently existing within an
   employee structure of said at least one employer.

5. The method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said
   potential job positions include job positions which do not currently exist within an
   employee structure of said at least one employer but are under consideration to
   potentially be created by said at least one employer.
6. The method according to any one of the preceding claims, further including the step of informing an employer of the number of job seekers that have flagged an interest in a potential job position.

7. An internet-based system for informing job seekers of recruitment opportunities, said system including:

   a website, said website providing access information about potential job positions of at least one employer, wherein said potential job positions are job positions which are not currently available but have the potential of becoming job vacancies at a later date, and wherein a job seeker can access the website and view the information about potential job positions;

   means for allowing a job seeker to selectively flag an interest in at least one potential job position;

   means for obtaining contact details of each job seeker who has flagged an interest in at least one potential job position; and

   means for contacting each job seeker who has flagged an interest in a given potential job position, if that potential job position becomes a job vacancy, to inform them that said potential job position has become a job vacancy.

8. The system according to claim 7, wherein said contacting means informs said job seekers how to apply for said job vacancy.

9. The system according to claim 7 or 8, wherein said contacting means is email or SMS messaging.

10. The system according to any one of claims 7 to 9, wherein said potential job positions include all job positions currently existing within an employee structure of said at least one employer.

11. The system according to any one of claims 7 to 10, wherein said potential job positions include job positions which do not currently exist within an employee structure of said at least one employer but are under consideration to potentially be created by said at least one employer.
12. The system according to any one of claims 7 to 11, further including means for informing an employer of the number of job seekers that have flagged an interest in a potential job position.
**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

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Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

**PatentScope, DWPI Keywords: job, opportunity, expected, web and similar terms**

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| X | Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C |
| X | See patent family annex |

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  * "&" document member of the same patent family

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU

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This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

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Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001.

END OF ANNEX