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Online Job Sites' Competition Gets Stiffer

By: **Xieli Lee, Singapore**
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Singapore - With new online job portals such as Classifiedpost.com.sg and Breezeto5.com wanting to grab a piece of the recruitment pie in Singapore, the question remains. Do they know what the HR practitioner, the recruiter and most importantly, the jobseeker want?

From the HR perspective, Celeste Ng, senior human resources manager for Intevac Asia, feels that most job portals are similar in terms of their user-friendly website interfaces. Hence, a good filtering feature, which would save time and effort in looking for the right candidates, would be one differentiator for her. Yet quality remains the overriding criteria. Ng says, "I would place the most desired attribute to be the quality of the candidates that I can get from the online job portal."

For Josh Goh, senior manager of corporate services for The GMP Group, it is not the size, but the relevancy of candidates in the database that matters. "Job portals are more effective if they have a niche area where they are strong in certain demographics."

Therefore, it is important for new online job portals to know their positioning in the market to engage the right users, Goh adds.

Compared to interfaces that are more sophisticated, an easy-to-use interface is definitely more attractive for

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recruiters as it allows them to post job ads online effortlessly and jobseekers to navigate easily around the website. Ter, a current Gen Y jobseeker, says, "I want to be able to key the jobs categories I'm keen and get good results. The key here is a relative detailed search fields that can match up to my request very closely."

However, Goh warns, "Recruiters also look for the awareness level of the job portals. A low awareness level can affect the quality of the database."

This is where the more established online job portals gain the upper hand over the newcomers. Both HR and recruiter agree that the larger pool of candidates established online job portals have is an overwhelming decisive factor. Until the newcomers gain a respectable market share, Goh says, "It is natural for recruiters and candidates to turn to them as they have a wealth of experience and are considered more trustworthy."

Furthermore, these old-timers can afford to conduct seminars, workshops and even installing RSS feeds in their websites. Nonetheless, both Ng and Goh predict that online recruiting is certainly the new way to go with the influx of internet savvy generation Ys coming into the job market. Ng says, "It is a click away, shorter lead-time and less hassle."

However, Goh cautions on the over reliance on one channel of recruitment. "Recruiters can look to other avenues such as social networking sites, print, career fairs at various institutions or events to recruit Gen Y workers."

To that end, Ter agrees as he relies on networking, word of mouth and sometimes, cold calling to get the job he desires. "There are only that few places that you would want to go so just call them and ask for appointment. The key is to get to see the hiring manager then you go from there."

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