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MOBILISE NOW

Career Site Mobile-Optimisation
in Hong Kong



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Executive Summary

Mobile devices and social media are reshaping talent acquisition. Hong Kong has the highest rate of mobile phone penetration in the world at 237%,¹ eclipsing the global average of 98%.² Across Asia, smartphone use is most widespread in Hong Kong where the majority of smartphone users browse the Internet daily via a mobile device,³ a large proportion of which is dedicated to social networking.^{4,5} Job seekers are using their mobile devices, not only to search for positions, but also apply for them. Despite this growing momentum toward mobile, many companies are lagging in their execution of a mobile strategy. As a result, job seeker expectations are considerably misaligned with the reality of the mobile recruitment experience they receive.

How big is the gulf and what is the impact? We reviewed 50 of the largest companies in Hong Kong:

What we found

Why it matters

First impressions matter

- Over 80% of career sites provide a positive search experience.
- Candidates cannot submit an application on nearly two-thirds of the career sites surveyed.

If job seekers cannot find relevant information about job opportunities and why they should work for you, or if they cannot apply online for jobs, you don't exist.

Mobile is a competitive advantage

- 70% of Hong Kong's largest 50 companies do not have mobile-optimised career sites.
- Nearly two-thirds of career sites do not have basic functionality of redirecting candidates to relevant content.

It is no longer enough to have a career site; the site needs to be mobile-optimised and engaging. 25% of job seekers will not apply for a job if the career site is not mobile-optimised.⁶

Missed opportunities

- Only 6% of companies are using social referrals to reach untapped talent.
- Only 6% of sites provide job seekers with the ability to receive job alerts.

Job alerts, referrals and sharing jobs via social media increase exposure to passive candidates. Companies that embrace social sourcing increase the likelihood of attracting qualified candidates.^{7,8}

Engage candidates on their terms

- 96% of career sites lack the ability to pre-populate application forms from social media profiles or resumes.
- Applications can be submitted without a resume for only 26% of sites, with minimal data entry required.

Effective recruiting means connecting with candidates on their terms. Over one-third of job seekers do not complete online applications because the process is a hassle.⁷

Embrace all platforms

- 6% of companies inadvertently halve their candidate pool by not being compatible with iOS devices (iPads and iPhones).
- 12% of career sites had an online apply process that was incompatible with a mobile device.

Although Android is the undisputed global leader Apple is regaining market share.⁹ Losing iPhone users because they are using an iOS device is unwise in a tight talent market.

Overall our research found that the initial career site experience and basic job search functions are mobile-optimised for the majority of Hong Kong companies. However for many companies this is where the mobile-enabled recruitment experience ended. Uptake of social media as a recruitment tool lags other regions of the world. Likewise the online application process relies heavily on email (48%) and there remains limited ability to submit an application from a mobile device compared with global peers.^{10,11}

These results are surprising given the high smartphone usage rates in Hong Kong, market maturity, and the influence of Western multinational recruitment practices. This disconnect provides an opportunity for companies willing to embrace mobile recruitment technology to build a strong employer brand, reach passive candidates and engage active job seekers. Globally 58% of companies find it difficult to source high quality candidates.¹² Being mobile-ready provides a competitive advantage when faced with scarcity of talent and hard-to-fill positions.



Why is Mobile-Optimisation Important?

The war for talent continues to rage. The battlefield includes building a strong talent pool, filling critical technical and managerial roles and improving the employer brand. This is especially true for Hong Kong where the employment market remains strong with 51% of companies planning to raise headcount in the upcoming year.¹³ The advent of social media and mobile devices is influencing talent acquisition strategies, but many recruiters feel they either don't have the adequate technology or it is not being used effectively.



Globally, two-thirds of job seekers search for jobs on their mobile devices and 84% believe this will become the most common method of job search over the next five years.¹⁴ At the same time, 46% of recruiters are dissatisfied with their current recruiting tools¹² and only 20% of talent acquisition leaders believe their career sites are optimised for mobile.⁶

Does the misalignment matter? Surely candidates will still apply even if the experience is not as good as it could be? Apparently not, as 58% of companies are finding it difficult to source high-quality candidates and 42% have problems competing for highly skilled workers.¹² Organisations simply cannot afford to make this assumption. Research has shown 25% of job seekers will not apply for a job if a company's career site is not mobile-optimised,⁶ while 34% of candidates do not complete online applications because the process is too cumbersome.⁷

"25% of job seekers will not apply for a job if a company career site is not mobile-optimised?"



First impressions matter

Employers often make their first impression via their website and corresponding social media and mobile-enabled career offerings.⁷ Therefore, the career site is important from an employer branding perspective – it informs candidates about a company’s purpose, culture and priorities. Are they tech savvy and forward thinking? Do they understand how to engage today’s candidates? More than 40% of recruiters say that their employer brand is currently an obstacle to attracting talent and only 14% are confident their online application process aligns to their employer brand.¹² Aberdeen research shows mobile strategies play a pivotal role in improving employer branding and recruitment marketing efforts.¹⁵ You have to be in it to win it. If job seekers can’t find relevant information about why they should work for you, or apply for positions, you don’t exist.

Mobile is a competitive advantage

Hong Kong has the highest mobile Internet usage in Asia with 96% of smartphone users online every day. People spend more time browsing the Internet from their smartphone than from any other Internet-enabled device.³ This high dependence on mobile devices ensures technology expectations in the workplace are high. Hong Kong leads the world in average searches per person⁴ with job search the third most popular search.³ Searching for job opportunities is carried out by 40% of smartphone users, with 96% searching at least once a week.³ This means it is no longer enough just to have a career site; the site needs to be mobile-enabled and engaging. Complacency increases the risk of losing quality candidates to competitors. Being seen as a market innovator could be one of the most compelling arguments for gaining executive support for a mobile strategy. There are no prizes for second place in the race to attract talent.⁶

Missed opportunities

Globally, both active and passive candidates use their mobile devices to find out more about companies. Over 70% of active candidates^{6,16,17} and 62% of passive candidates have used a mobile device to visit a company site to learn about career opportunities and search for roles.⁶ Options such as signing up for job alerts, referrals and the ability to share jobs via social media increase exposure to passive candidates. Hong Kong residents are avid users of social media with 83% of Internet users visiting social networking sites, higher than the worldwide average.⁴ The majority access social media via their mobile device with 78% of smartphone users visiting social networking sites.⁵ Facebook is the most used social network in Hong Kong with 63% penetration,⁴ and LinkedIn usage is growing rapidly. Hong Kong based LinkedIn subscribers surpassed one million (50% of the professional labour force)¹⁸ earlier this year. Social media usage continues to rise and research has shown that companies embracing social sourcing achieve a reduction in time-to-hire, an increased likelihood of finding qualified candidates and improved quantity of hires.^{7,8} Notwithstanding, candidate referral campaigns remain amongst the most frequently overlooked sourcing methods.¹⁹

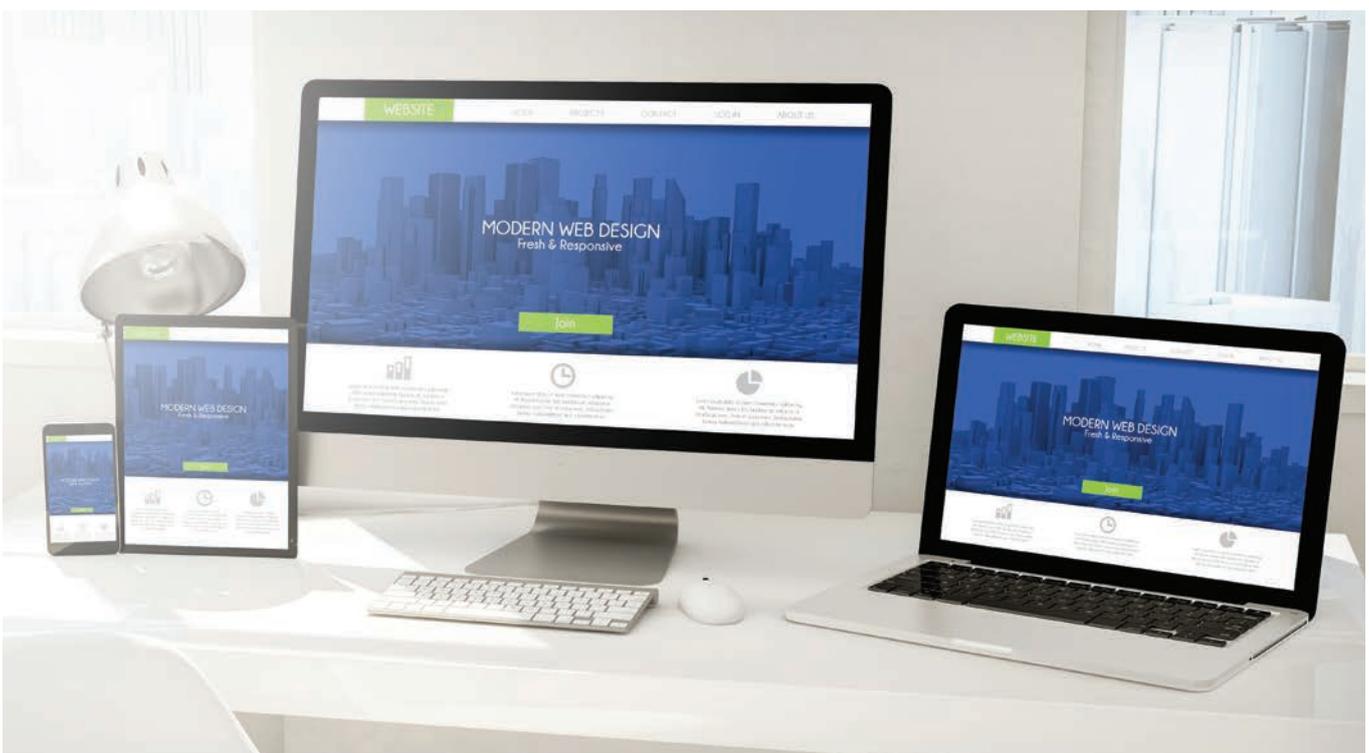


Embrace all platforms

Mobile devices have catalysed our approach to the Internet with the paradigm shift from desk-based to on-the-go Internet access. Over the last year the share of web pages accessed via mobile phones has risen by 55% in Hong Kong.² In 2014, mobile devices and connections reached 7.4 billion globally,²⁰ more than one for every human on planet Earth. By 2019, more than half of all devices connected to the mobile network will be smart devices (compared to 26% in 2014) and 97% of mobile data traffic will originate from these devices.²⁰ By 2019, the amount of mobile data traffic generated by tablets will be nearly double the traffic generated by the entire global mobile network in 2014.²⁰ Many have by-passed the desktop for the laptop and some have bypassed the laptop for the tablet. Where a job seeker can only access the Internet via a mobile device, it becomes difficult to find and apply for jobs if career sites are not mobile-enabled. Companies run the risk of missing talent by not adopting a mobile-optimised recruitment strategy.

Engage candidates on their terms

The Hong Kong labour market is influenced by its unique mix of domestic, mainland and multinational companies. Many Chinese workers in their mid-20s have studied overseas and seek elements that a Western company would offer even if they're applying to local enterprises.¹³ Effective recruiting means connecting with candidates on their terms. If the experience of applying on a mobile device is time consuming, inconvenient or frustrating, candidates will not apply. Although mobile capabilities are gaining enterprise adoption as candidates expect to search and apply for jobs, receive communications and manage schedules via mobile devices,²¹ only 13% of organisations have adequately invested in making recruitment a mobile-friendly⁶ process. A mobile-friendly application experience is about more than providing a seamless recruitment process, 34% of job seekers do not complete online applications because the process is too much of a hassle⁷ and completion rates are 50% higher for jobs with a simple and mobile-friendly application process.⁶



How Mobile-Optimised are Career Sites?

There is no question that technology is revolutionising how people work and play, and nowhere is this more evident than Asia where a young workforce is ready, willing and able to harness new technology. Although the importance and inevitability of a mobile-enabled workforce is recognised, there is a gulf between candidate expectations and the reality of mobile talent acquisition practices. Many companies are lagging and despite abundant evidence that candidates have embraced social applications and mobile devices, 70% of Fortune 100 companies, nearly three-quarters of Australia’s largest 100 companies and 90% of Southeast Asia’s 50 largest companies, do not have mobile-optimised career pages.^{7,10,11} Does a similar gap exist in Hong Kong?

1. Mobile experience – does the career site look and feel like it has been built for mobile content?
2. Recruitment experience – does the career site allow candidates to search and apply for jobs in a mobile-optimised manner?

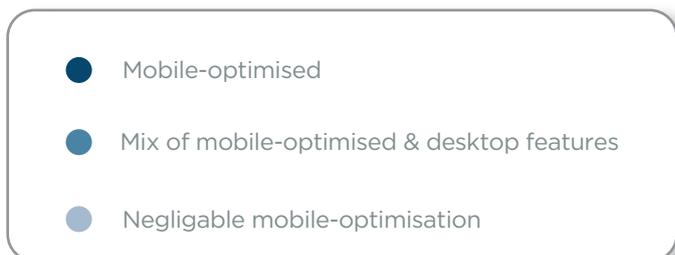
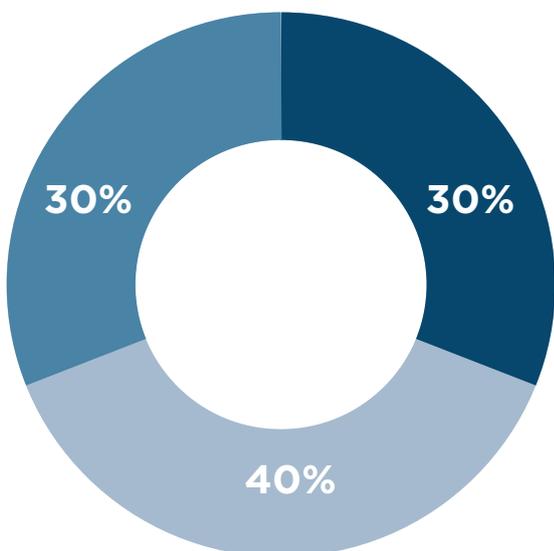
Mobile experience – functional capabilities

It’s needless to say, when a desktop version of a website is forced to fit onto a mobile screen, it is not a pleasant viewing experience. Instead, a simplified version with content arranged to fit the screen of the mobile device is required. Specific elements of a mobile-friendly site include responsive design, clean design, rendering, cross-linking and redirection (see methodology for definitions). For a career site to be considered mobile-optimised, this should occur throughout the entire experience.

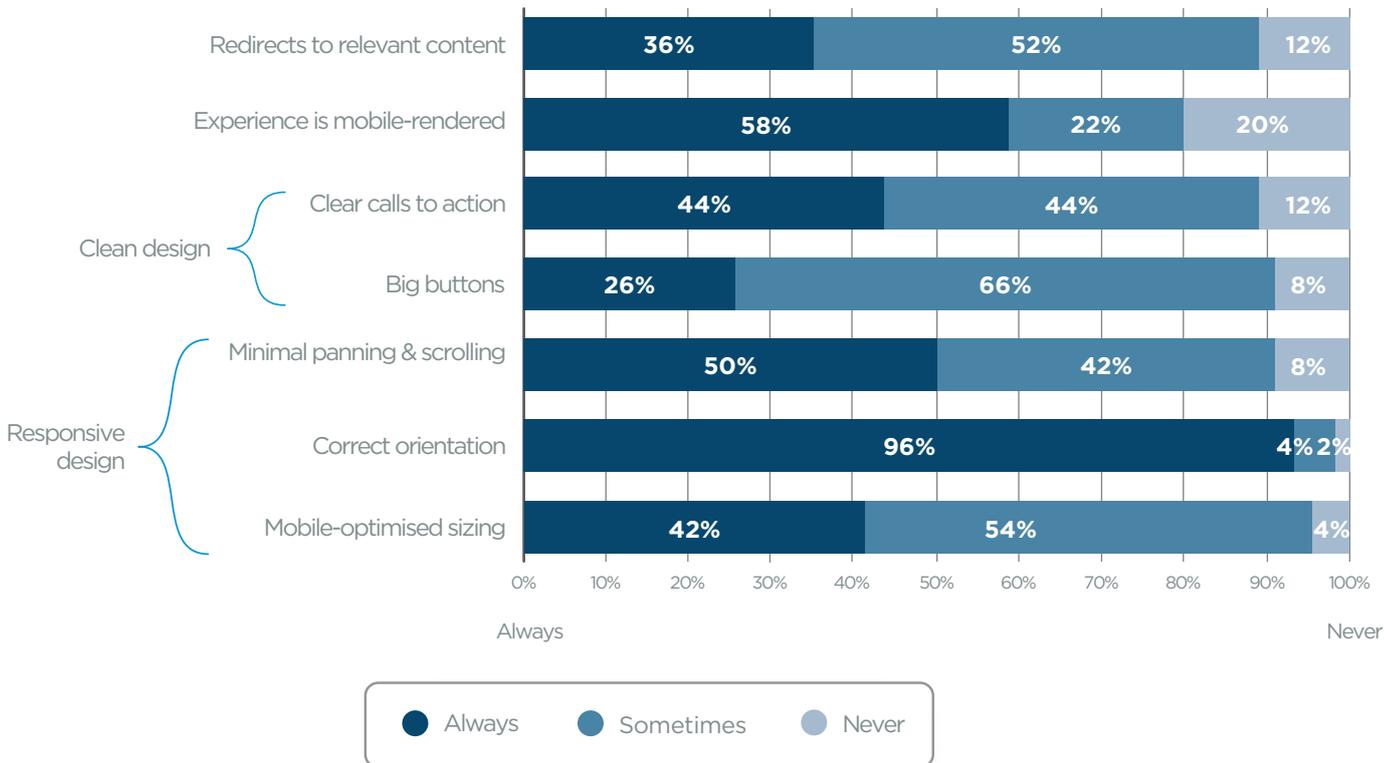
We found that 30% of Hong Kong’s 50 largest companies have career sites that are mobile-optimised compared to 10% of Southeast Asia’s 50 largest companies and 29% of Australia’s largest 100 companies.^{7,10,11} A further 40% have a compilation of mobile-optimised features and desktop features. A mobile-optimised career site is no longer optional. It is essential to avoid missing an opportunity to build a strong employer brand, but more importantly, without it, talent will look elsewhere.

70% of Hong Kong’s 50 largest companies do not have mobile-optimised career sites

Mobile-optimisation of functionality



Mobile functionality of career sites



Our research found that 94% of career sites automatically re-orientate content. Other aspects of **responsive design** also scored highly, with content resizing to fit the screen 42% of the time and panning and scrolling or pinching occurring for half the career sites.

Clean design had the weakest elements; just over a quarter of sites had large buttons and only 44% had clear calls to action. **Mobile rendering** scored well with graphical images displayed properly 58% of the time.

Redirection scored poorly, with just over one-third of sites redirecting candidates to pages involved in the recruitment experience. This result is much lower than other regions and marks the start of the divergence between the Hong Kong experience and our findings in other regions.^{10,11} Hong Kong career sites have a very good initial impact but the experience trails off dramatically as the candidate progresses from searching to applying for a job. If the experience feels clumsy or difficult, jobseekers will not persist. Candidates need to be engaged on their terms and expect sites to be mobile-optimised.

36% of companies have only the basic functionality of redirecting to relevant content



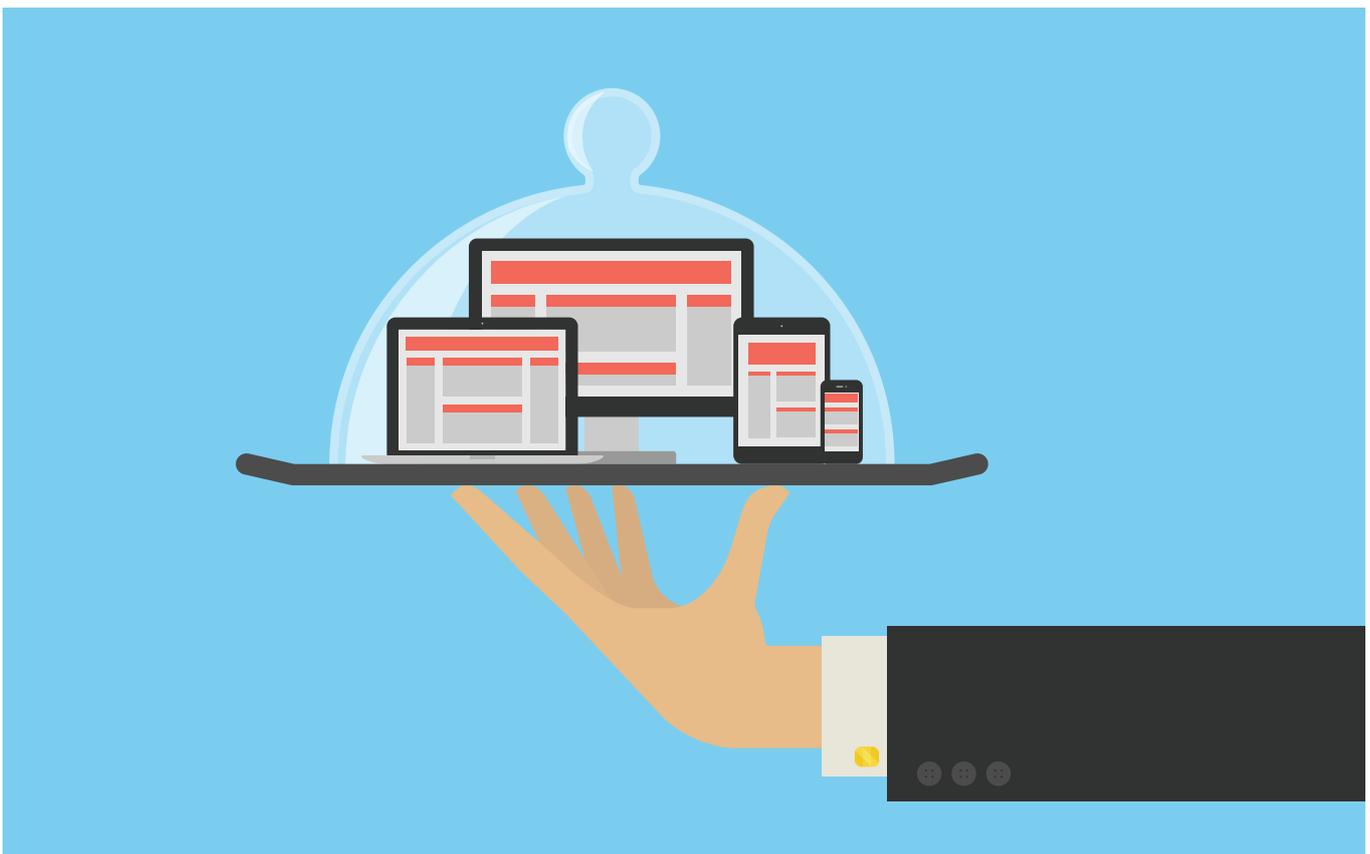
Recruitment Experience

Mobile-optimisation is not an end in itself: sites can be mobile-optimised and still provide a poor recruitment experience. Big buttons, resizing, correct orientation, scrolling and cross-linking are important to enable a simple, easy and quick process. If the recruitment process is not relevant or streamlined, companies will fail to create an experience that engages job seekers. A poor recruiting experience can not only frustrate candidates, but also alienate them and their peers.

At a minimum, most career sites of large organisations will list open positions. However, applying online requires more effort and commitment and is of greater importance to the job seeker than simply viewing open positions. Many companies rationalise their emphasis on search functionality over application functionality with the assumption that candidates will readily take the application step via a more traditional channel such as a desktop, or in Hong Kong, email, mail or walk-in. On the contrary, evidence suggests that many job seekers prefer to apply for roles via mobile devices and become frustrated if this is not possible. A LinkedIn study found nearly half of active job seekers have used a mobile device to apply for a job. This is true even of passive candidates, nearly a quarter of whom have applied on a mobile device.⁶

We looked at two aspects of the talent acquisition process – the search experience and the application experience.

1. The search experience includes the ability to search for jobs, filter jobs, subscribe to email alerts, save jobs, refer jobs and share a job on social media.
2. The application experience includes the ability to start the application process, the application form, requirements for attachments (e.g. resume, cover letter), and the ability to complete and submit the application.



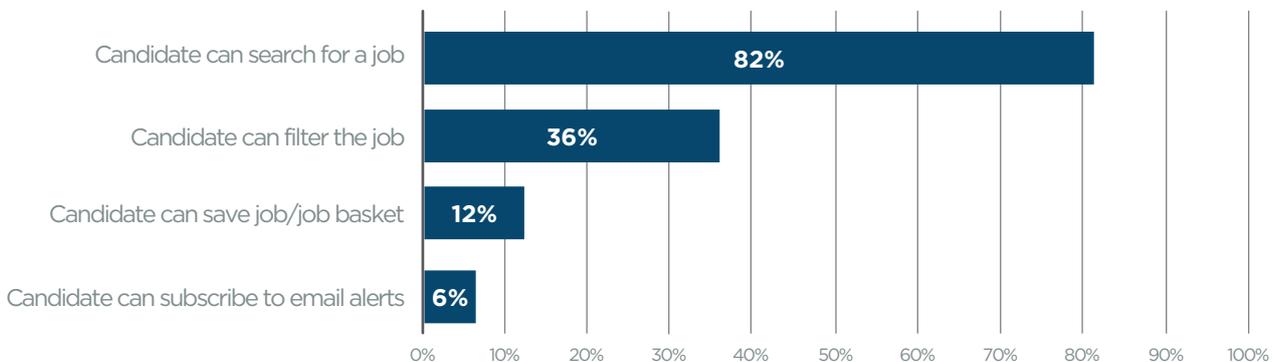
Search experience

Search for a job

We found 82% of Hong Kong’s 50 largest companies provide job search functionality that is mobile-optimised. This is comparable to Southeast Asia where 80% of companies have job search functionality and 78% provide an experience that is mobile-optimised.¹¹ By comparison, 90% of Australia’s top 100 career sites have search functionality but only 61% are mobile-optimised.¹⁰

That said, job search functionality alone is no longer enough to stand out amongst the crowd. Sites that provide a better experience also have functionality for filtering or saving searches. The majority (94%) of companies are missing the opportunity to engage talent and build out their talent pool pipeline by providing candidates with the ability to subscribe to email alerts.

Job search features most likely to be mobile-optimised



82% of Hong Kong’s career sites provide an optimised search experience for candidates



Social referrals

Email referral

Less than 20% of Hong Kong’s top 50 company career sites allow candidates to forward a job to a friend via email. We found Hong Kong companies are lagging behind their global counterparts, where 85% of the Fortune 100, 53% of Australia’s top 100 and 32% of Southeast Asia’s largest 50 companies are allowing candidates to share job opportunities via email.^{7,10,11}

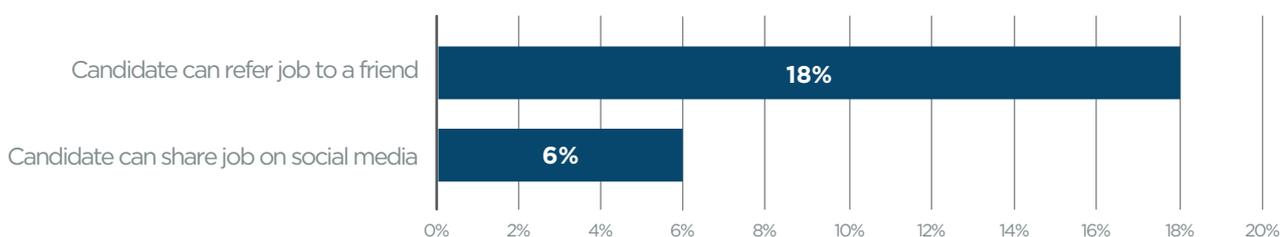
Social media referral

The ability to share jobs via social media was negligible for Hong Kong with only three out of 50 companies permitting social sharing. This is a missed opportunity for both candidates and companies, and well below global practice. Approximately half (49%) of the Fortune 100 and Australia’s top 100 companies allow sharing via social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.^{7,10} In contrast, despite the highest social media penetration in the world, social sharing was only 10% in Southeast Asia¹¹ and a mere 6% in Hong Kong.

Why the divergence between Hong Kong and the rest of the world? Recruiters in Hong Kong appear unconvinced of the benefits of social media, with only 64% using it as an active channel for posting jobs, compared to Singapore (88%) and Australia (100%).²² Only 29% of recruiters review a candidate’s social profile online before making a hiring decision, compared to 93% in the United States.⁸ People in Hong Kong are avid users of social media with 83% of Internet users visiting social networking sites, higher than the worldwide average.⁴ The majority access social media via their mobile device, with 78% of smartphone users visiting social networking sites.⁵ Facebook is the most used social network in Hong Kong with 63% penetration.⁴ LinkedIn dominates the business space²³ and usage is growing rapidly, with Hong Kong users surpassing one million (50% of the professional labour force)¹⁸ early in 2015.

Although often overlooked, social media is an essential recruitment tool, with many recruiters already reaping the benefit of improved time-to-hire and improved quality of candidate.^{8,22} To further increase the likelihood of reaching qualified candidates and tap into the passive audience, companies need to embrace a social-enabled sourcing effort which allows candidates to post to social media sites. Given the rapid uptake of social media, failure to do so may see scarce talent secured by competitors.

Social referral mobile-optimisation



Only 6% of companies are using social media to reach untapped talent



Application experience

Although the majority of companies have a career site, their maturity levels vary. This ranges from simple descriptions of why an individual should consider a career with a company and generic ‘contact us’ details, to sophisticated online search and application functions. Although most companies executed basic search and filter functionality well, the application experience is less consistent. In fact, many companies have no online application process.

The conversion rate from search to application is influenced by the candidate’s initial experience of the career site. The conversion rate from application to submission is further influenced by three elements that impact the application experience – the ability to apply online, the application form and the need for attachments.

58% of career sites across Hong Kong have no mobile-enabled online application process

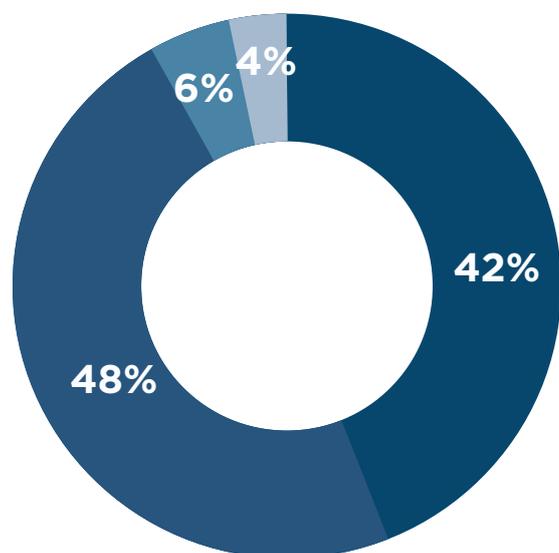


Applying online

The heavy reliance on email (48%) as the primary method of applying for a role is at odds with Hong Kong’s reputation as a developed, tech-savvy Asian economy. In comparison only 16% of Southeast Asian sites and 14% of Australian sites rely on email as the method of fielding candidates.^{10,11}

Overall, the majority of Hong Kong’s top 50 career sites provide no mobile-enabled application process. In addition to email only, reasons include no online application process, websites that are incompatible with mobile devices (some even have pop-ups directing candidates to use a desktop), or a requirement for candidates to submit a hardcopy of the application form. This is much higher than Southeast Asia or Australia (40% and 23% respectively).^{10,11} Requiring candidates to email or post their application ensures that whilst your recruiters are checking their mailbox, the competition is reviewing online submitted applications.

Application experience of the top 50 career sites



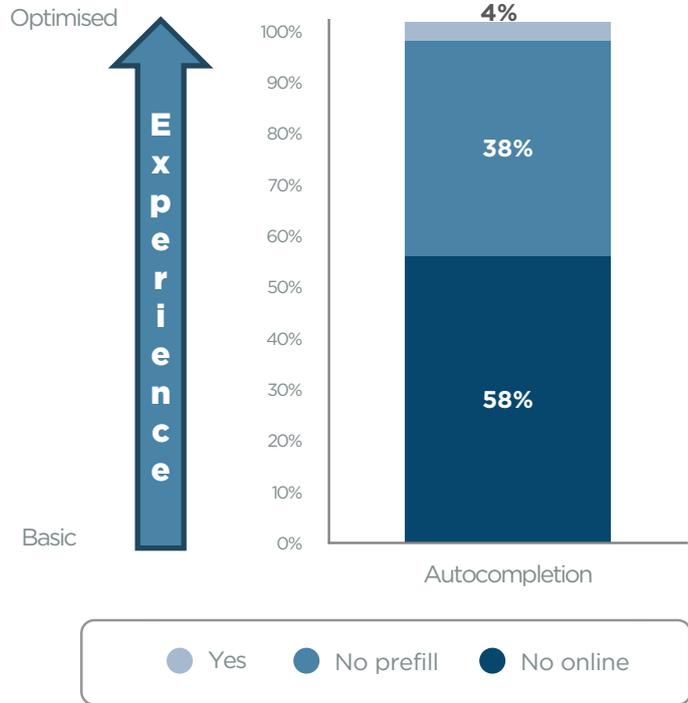
- Can apply online
- Email only
- Desktop required
- Cannot apply online

Filling in an application

Minimising data entry simplifies and speeds up the application process. Yet the vast majority of organisations fail to minimise this labour-intensive process for candidates, despite job boards and social media sites providing functionality that allows career sites to pull information from the profile of the candidate directly into the application form.

Only two of the career sites reviewed enabled candidates to pre-populate the application form with personal information stored in either LinkedIn or Facebook profiles, or from a resume stored on a mobile device or in the cloud. Of the remaining 38% of career sites that have online application none have prefill capability; instead, candidates are required to manually fill in data to begin the application process.

Ability to pre-populate application form



The majority of companies do not effectively utilise data pre-population from online sources



Submitting an application

Candidates can only submit an application on 36% of the career sites of Hong Kong's top 50 companies

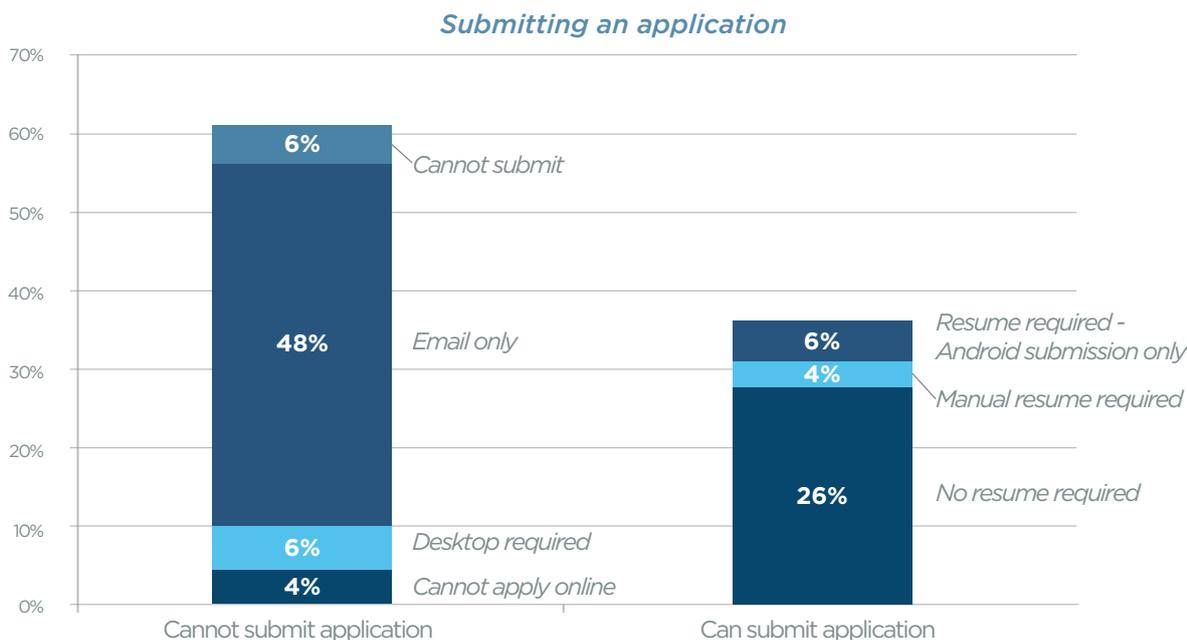


Cannot submit application

For 64% of the companies reviewed, an online application could not be submitted from a mobile device. In addition to no online application functionality (58%) the predominant reasons were either that application forms were too complex and/or too small to fill out on a mobile phone, career sites crashed, froze or were otherwise incompatible with an iOS phone.

Can submit application

Of the remaining career sites, 26% allowed candidates to submit an application without the need to attach a resume. For the majority of these sites a profile was built along the way in lieu of attaching a resume, with minimal data entry, providing a positive candidate experience. An attached resume is required for 10% of career sites. Of these, 4% were device-agnostic and for 6% it was possible from an Android device, but not from an iOS device (iPad or iPhone).



These results place Hong Kong companies significantly behind their global peers, with 48% of Southeast Asia's top 50 companies and 73% of Australia's top 100 companies allowing candidates to submit an application, compared to only 36% for Hong Kong.^{10,11}

Technology Experience

Apple vs Android

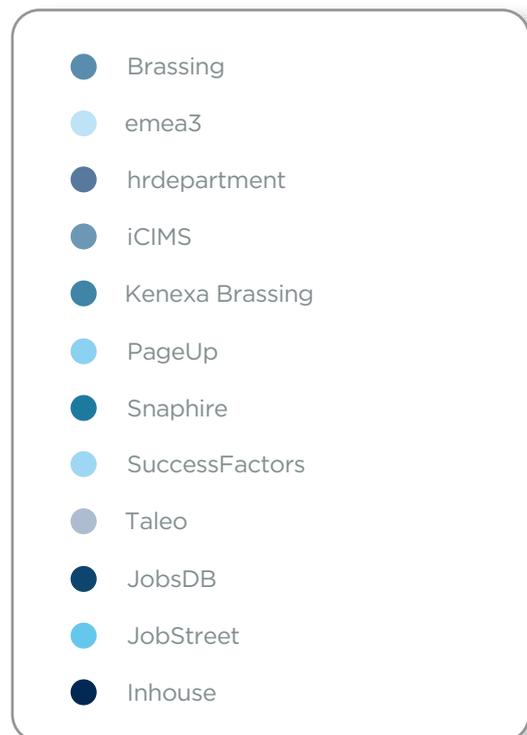
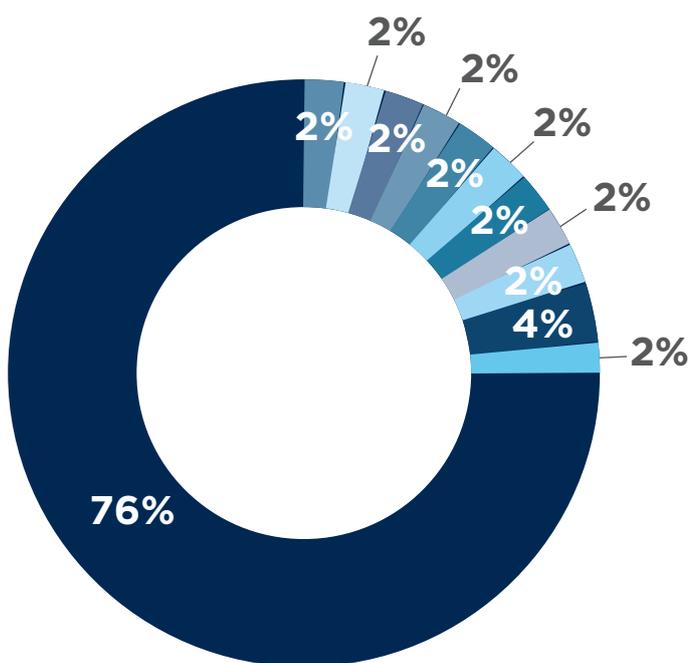
In Mobilise Now Australia we discovered that many career sites are not mobile device-agnostic.¹⁰ If a resume is required to complete a job application, iOS (iPhone or iPad) device users cannot submit because the only “attach” option available is from phone storage, which takes candidates to photos. This is not an issue for Android devices as they contain storage functionality.

Although Android is the undisputed mobile phone leader in Asia, the recent release of the iPhone 6 Plus has seen Apple regain market share globally.⁹ In developed economies data usage is fairly evenly split between iOS and Android mobile devices.⁹ Regardless of the exact split between Android and iOS, blocking iPhone users from applying because they are using an iOS device is unwise in a tight talent market.

Choice of vendor matters

In addition to the phone storage system, resumes can be stored in the cloud using applications such as Google Drive or Dropbox. This enables the application process to be completed and make a site device-agnostic. Leading talent acquisition technology vendors provide this functionality. Vendors which do not provide the functionality to “attach a resume from cloud storage” are potentially halving their customer’s candidate pool. In this study, two of the career sites tested had this functionality. In contrast, one-third of the Australian sites were powered by PageUp which enabled 100 per cent of candidates to successfully and easily apply via mobile devices.¹⁰

Career site hosted by...



So What and What Now?

Mobile-Optimising your career site - tips to consider:

Mobile-optimisation is not whether or not it's possible to apply, but whether or not it's a simple, engaging, frustration-free experience. The best way to determine if your career site has content suitable for mobile devices is to search and apply for a position from your mobile phone.

Does your career site have the following?

- The ability to browse through job postings, filter and save jobs of interest on your mobile device.
- The ability to subscribe to alerts, refer a friend and share jobs via social media.
- A streamlined process which only includes steps essential to the recruitment process.
- No dead-ends or back tracking when searching or applying for jobs.
- Short, clear text with obvious calls to action.
- An application process that takes less than one minute.
- A seamless experience from the company to career vendor site.
- Application forms that can be prefilled from social profiles or resumes and requires minimal editing.
- If a resume or cover letter is required it can be attached from cloud storage.
- The same experience on an Android or iOS (iPhone or iPad) device.
- Auto-acknowledgement of submitted application.
- An end-to-end mobile search and application experience.

If the answer to any of the above is 'no', now is the time to rethink your strategy and build out your long-term vision for mobile recruitment. Once you have set your plan-of-attack, it's also important to track its success.

The acceleration of smartphone penetration coupled with the uptake of social recruiting is shaping talent acquisition strategies. Having a clear strategy for leveraging mobile and social media will help overcome the challenges faced by talent acquisition leaders such as creating strong employer branding, sourcing talent in a tight market and the development of a strong talent pool. Continuing to place a low priority on a mobile-friendly recruitment experience will diminish your competitive advantage as talent is lost to the competition.

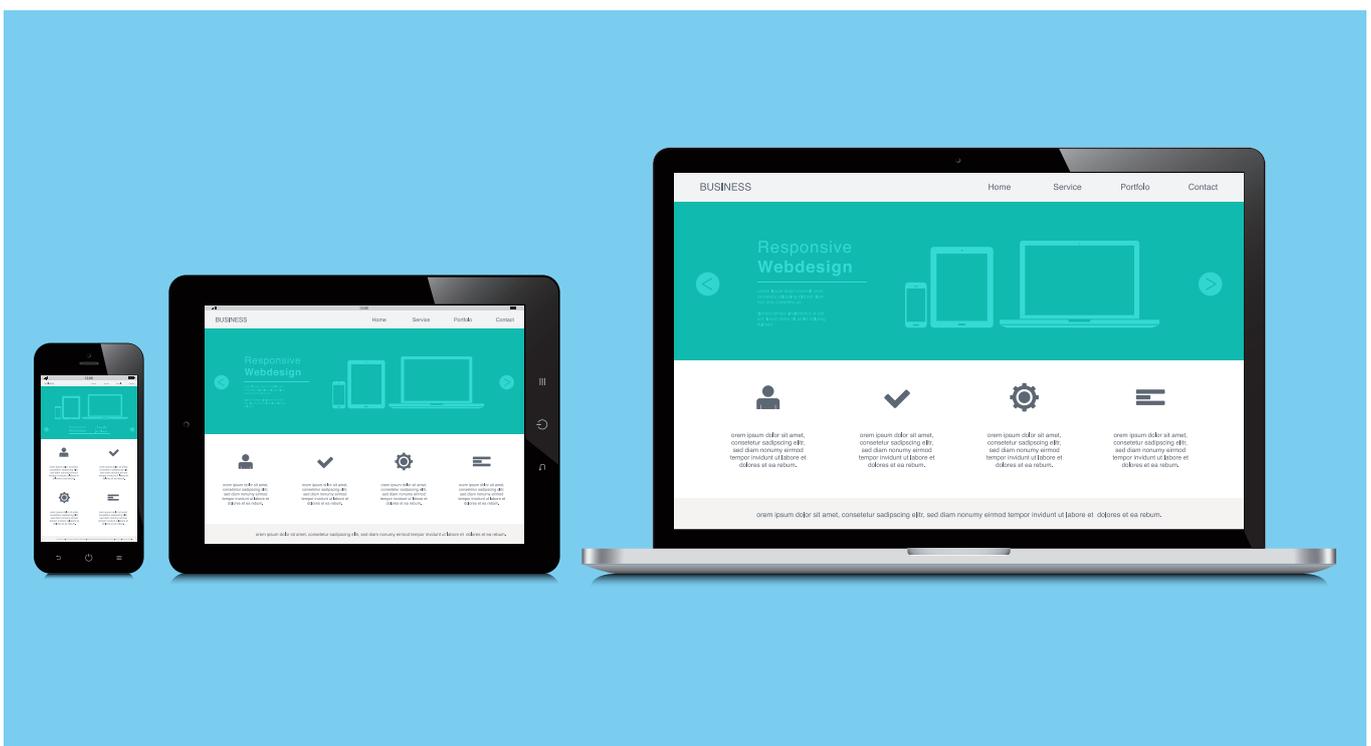
Methodology

Findings in this paper are based on PageUp's analysis of the career site experience of 50 of the largest companies in Hong Kong by market capitalization or prominence. The research was conducted during April 2015. Career sites were viewed on Smartphones, using the iPhone 6. Experience was measured from when a candidate clicks on job opportunities, ending at the point where the candidate clicks submit. iPhone mobile optimisation experience was tested using Safari. Android mobile optimisation experience was tested using Google Chrome.

What does mobile-optimisation look like?

To be mobile-optimised the career site must include responsive design, clean design, rendering, cross-linking and redirection. This should occur throughout the entire experience.

- **Responsive design** refers to the viewing experience and has three main elements – orientation, sizing, and panning and scrolling. In an optimal experience these aspects happen automatically – pages rotate horizontally and vertically without affecting the content, content resizes appropriately, there is minimal panning and job seekers can easily scroll through content.
- **Clean design** is important to the user experience. Correct, big buttons and simple, clear calls to action are important to ensure a clean mobile-optimised experience.
- **Rendering** is the process by which computer graphics generate an image. In the context of mobile-optimisation, rendering is crucial as it implies a website is built specifically in a mobile page format. Sites should stay clear of Flash which is not supported by Apple devices (iPhone and iPads) and have lightweight pictures and videos so they can be downloaded quickly.
- **Redirection and cross-linking** means only pages or links relevant to the recruitment experience are presented. A candidate should not come across any dead-ends as this negates the whole experience. Correct cross-linking and redirection provides the candidate with a seamless recruitment experience whilst minimising the number of clicks.



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About the Author: Rebecca Skilbeck

Rebecca is the Head of Customer Insights & Market Research at PageUp and is responsible for research into customer and market insights. She has nearly 20 years of experience delivering product, thematic and strategic human capital management research and thought leadership. With a diverse background covering academia, strategic consulting and equity investment, she holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours, Master of Science, Master of Commerce (Management) and a financial industry qualification (CFA).



PageUp is a global talent management platform provider that's passionate about helping organisations automate their people processes and strategically align their human resources across borders, business units, cultures and languages, to execute on corporate objectives.

Our award-winning, SaaS solution unifies Recruiting and Onboarding, Learning and Development, Performance Management, Compensation, Career Planning and Succession Management, with Advanced Workforce Analytics running across all modules; assisting employers to overcome talent management challenges that are inherent in operating across both developed and emerging markets.

We were originally founded in 1997 in Australia, and have since expanded globally to support both local and multinational organisations, including several Fortune 500 employers. Our solution is being accessed in over 190 countries by clients across diverse and multiple industries including banking, mining, retail, hospitality, manufacturing, education, governmental and non-profit organisations. We serve our global client base through offices in New York, London, Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, Melbourne and Sydney.

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