

Job Download

BY COLLEEN RUSH

ASSISTANT EDITOR

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARK KRAMER,
ARIZONA STATE U.

Is the
mouse
mightier
than the
pen?

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH HAS COME. You've got every shred of your life — résumé, portfolio, clips and a rec from Mom — clutched in one sweaty palm. The final approach: You extend your hand in that familiar manner to greet the individual that could hold your future — and you flip its switch.

Hub?

Online job searching isn't just for tech heads anymore. With a growing number of résumé databases, job listings and career services available at the click of a mouse, the Internet offers more than cyberflirting skills and entertainment updates.

"This has become a major part of the job searching process," says Eileen Kohan, executive director of career services at Columbia U. "[The Internet] goes beyond the techies now."

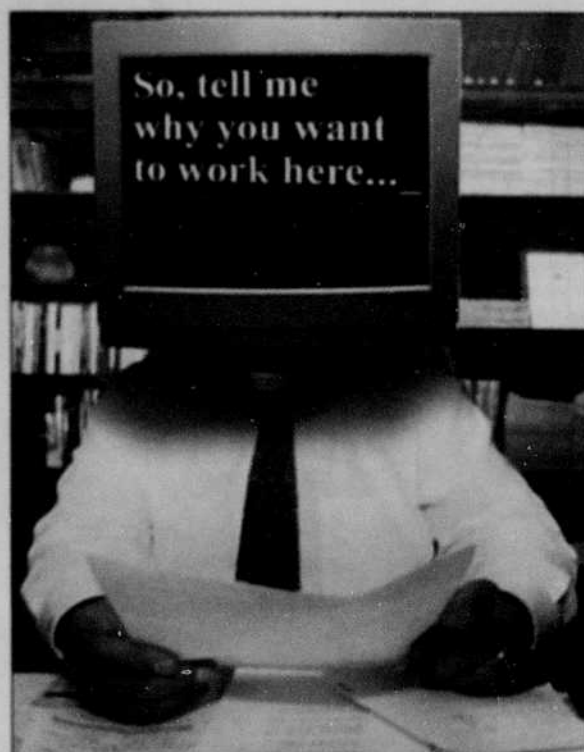
Résumés? Interviews? Buh-bye.

The days of sending pizzas with your résumé and stalking potential employers are over. If you really want to impress the hiring ranks, it's time to set up a home page, post your résumé and e-mail those love letters and desperate pleas to recruiters.

"[Web listing] allows for more focused recruiting. It narrows the search process and is fast becoming the premier tool in job placement," says Kathy Sims, director of UCLA's career center. "[Employers] can recruit all types of students — not just the techie ones — through the Web."

The online job search appeals to the student breed as well.

"Eight hundred copies of your résumé, plus



postage, is a lot of money," says Rob Harshbarger, a senior at Bowling Green State U., Ohio. "It's where job searching is going in the future. It's free — at least for college students."

For hire:

The online playground is still in its adolescent stage — only on this field, the bullies are packing modems and memory. Although job listings and résumé boards are expanding to include a variety of fields, most positions are still for techies.

Frank LLoa, a senior at the U. of Virginia, had at least 100 responses and more than 2,000 "hits" on his own résumé home page in just one month. LLoa is courting several job leads and has an internship with a Web publishing company this semester.

"Online job searching is great, but half the challenge is getting exposure for your site using Internet publicity," he says.

Jason Jenkins, a '95 Boston U. grad, also scored a job using his online savvy.

"I could have easily found a job without ever doing a mass résumé mailing or looking at a newspaper," Jenkins says. "On the Internet, you're not limited to geographic regions, and it eliminates so many steps. It's much faster, and the response time is quicker."

Bucknell U., Pa., grad Nicole Cobban found a graphic design job with a New York trade magazine.

"I only got four or five good job listings after six hours of searching, but it was definitely easier than a traditional search," Cobban says.

"I sent out five résumés in the time that it would take me to address one envelope."

But some students aren't so lucky with online capers. Anton Lavrentyev, a grad student at Ohio State U., thought job searching on the Internet was the answer to his occupational prayers. So far, it hasn't been.

"Internet job listings are still mostly for computer people," Lavrentyev says. "At this point, I think there's almost no chance for other majors to find a job. But it's easy to post a résumé — so why not?"

Ground control to Major ROM

One of the main problems students find is the volume of resources available.

"The 'net is inherently disorganized," says Jeff Parsons, a grad student at the U. of Oregon. "I feel like I could spend 10 hours spreading my résumé around the 'net, and someone else could spend 10 hours looking for a résumé like mine without ever seeing it."

So, where does the jobless student start?

At your school's career center, says Sims. Staff there will help you narrow the search to sites and listings that target college students or your specific field.

But if you plan to abandon the traditional job hunt for high-tech searching, posting your résumé is not enough.

"If you don't want to get lost in cyber-résumé space, scan employment opportunities posted by specific companies and e-mail your résumé to that employer," says Joe Stimac, a columnist with Career Talk, a weekly Internet column answering users' career questions.

Targeting the companies you want to work for increases your chance of landing a job, Stiniac says. If you just post your résumé, you have no idea who will see it or if you want to work for them.

LLoa learned that the hard way when he responded to a job lead.

"I thought I had a potential offer, but it ended up being a 16-year-old girl playing on her mom's computer," LLoa says. "It looks like I was closer to getting a date than a job."

When Colleen Rush's fellowship at U. Magazine ends in May, she'll be looking for a stable job with full benefits and flexible hours. Nap time, storytelling hour and milk and cookie breaks would be nice, too.

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"The Internet's first and most frequently accessed career center" — need they say more?

The Monster Board
http://www.monster.com/
Be afraid. Be very afraid. This site lists more than 45,000 jobs worldwide.

JobTrak
http://www.jobtrak.com/
A search service for students and alumni only. Schools that subscribe get job listings specific to the school and students — you just need the password!

Career Path
http://www.careerpath.com/
If you like the challenge of classifieds but hate newsprint, look here for want ads from five major newspapers.

Job Network
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More résumé and job postings. It's fast, it's form-style, it's free!

College Grad Job Hunter
http://www.execpc.com/~insider
The same old stuff, plus links to company Web sites for general information, job listings and research.

Career Talk
http://www.careertalk.com/
The Dear Abby of the Internet for anyone in search of a job. Features a weekly column that answers users' career questions.



Guest Expert:
Jerry of Ben & Jerry's

On Internet Job Searching:

"If you're trying to communicate personal, real things in a virtual way, Cherry Garcia is the way to go."