

HALF OF RECRUITERS UNCOVER COMPROMISING MATERIAL ONLINE

86% of senior recruiters research candidates online, 55% say candidates should be more cautious of what is posted

London, UK – 16th October 2008 – A survey of top executive headhunters, by leading UK executive careers website Experteer.co.uk, today revealed that over half (55%) believed candidates looking for vacancies in senior jobs should be wary of material posted online. The study underlines the impact technology is having upon job seeking and executive recruitment with 86% of recruiters using the internet to research potential candidates, with often surprising results.

The consequences of negative material being uncovered online were highlighted by the research, with half (49%) of those questioned considering such material when making a decision on whether to progress to an interview. Online investigation (86%) has become a routine matter in recruitment for senior positions coming in narrowly after consulting referees (88%) which was top of the list of research techniques. Half (47%) of recruiters conducting additional research employed a dedicated internal or external team to uncover additional material on candidates for top executive roles.

The top five items uncovered through online research were found to be:

1. Good news coverage concerning the candidate – 63%
2. Bad news coverage concerning the candidate – 51%
3. Professional internet postings on company websites – 47%
4. Impressive social networking contacts – 43%
5. Unprofessional postings/pictures – 31%

Torsten Muth, UK Managing Director at Experteer commented: “The nature of recruitment is evolving rapidly but with the average tenure of a chief executive officer now standing at five years their experience can be dangerously out of date. It is important that senior executives seeking fresh pastures ensure their online persona matches their carefully crafted CV.”

The research identified social networking sites as being the most dangerous in terms of unintentional disclosures. Those recruiting for management positions were also far more likely (43%) to warn their candidates about unprofessional internet postings than those recruiting for finance (17%) or consulting (18%).

Interviews with 50 leading recruiters of senior executives uncovered some classic online blunders. “We found a whole Facebook group dedicated to one of our candidates started by his ex-wife. The “We hate...” group contained a list of alleged dishonest acts.” Drunken images on Facebook were one of the most commonly encountered unprofessional postings, although one candidate was also discovered to have enjoyed a previous vocation as a “teenage shoplifter.”

The views of those interviewed for the research varied heavily depending on the roles they recruited for. Whilst a distinctive CV was felt important by two in five (40%) recruiters overall, those recruiting for management and finance positions advised applicants to play it safe with only 28% and 17% respectively feeling a distinctive CV would be of benefit.

Experteer have developed a short guide to "Internet Introspection" for senior executives keen to avoid online embarrassment it is available at www.experteer.co.uk

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About Experteer

Experteer, the leading online career service for senior professionals across Europe, features more than 45000 job opportunities at salaries above £50,000 and a network of 3,500 approved headhunters. This premium service is aimed at experienced executives who are either planning their next career move, or simply wanting to monitor the job market and their own market value. Job opportunities available to subscribed members have been selected by a team of independent analysts, who constantly research the market, then classify each job and apply a salary benchmark. Experteer's proprietary Career Matching System alerts each of the current 400,000 European members to positions that correspond to their qualifications, experience and career goals, including relevant opportunities in new industries, functions, or at new management levels. The online career service also provides free job advertising and valuable networking opportunities for headhunters.

Experteer was founded in July 2005 by Holtzbrinck Ventures GmbH, a subsidiary of the Georg von Holtzbrinck publishing group, and is headquartered in Munich. The UK office is based in London. Further information can be found at www.experteer.co.uk or at the service's domain name for each country in which it operates: .de/.ch/.fr/.com.

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