

Job search websites report



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The three career websites selected for this paper are Monster. com, CareerBuilder. com, and Jobster. com. Each of these websites has advantages and disadvantages for the prospective job seeker. They all appear to be generally quite useful to the average job seeker, as evidenced by the test searching done within them. For purposes of this study, a hypothetical job seeker looking for work as a software engineer in Massachusetts was utilized. On each of the sites, there were some unique features that were helpful and some bells and whistles that were generally not helpful.

Monster. com was the first site to be assessed. This is the site with perhaps the most name recognition of the three, and was a pioneer in the web-based job search engine market. Compared to the other sites, Monster's home page is rather busy and a bit cluttered. This is owed largely to what seems like Monster's attempt to branch out into related services, such as resume writing and a new degree program search engine. Fortunately, the tabbed interface easily cuts through the clutter and allows the user to rather intuitively link to desired tools and features. Although each tab contains some links that are rather nebulous, it is still easy to find the most helpful features the website has to offer.

The most critical feature, the simple job search is front and center on the home page, and easily enabled the test search for this study to be run. Entering " software engineer" in te key words field, and choosing Boston, Massachusetts from the location pull down (there was no way to select all of Massachusetts, only specific locations within the state) resulted in a stop screen prompting the user to enter a student loan payoff sweepstakes. Clicking the " no thank you" link took the user to the search results. There

were 697 hits organized reverse chronologically in 14 pages of 50 hits each. The hit list included the posting date, position title, company name, and location. It was easy to see how to apply for any of the positions listed once selected.

CareerBuilder.com was the second website evaluated for this study. It had a much cleaner interface than Monster, and it was clearly focused on helping the user to run a job search without any diversions to other services or gimmicks. The search engine enabled the user to type in software engineer into the key words field, just like Monster. Even better than Monster, it allowed the user to type in a preferred job location, rather than having to select predefined and overly precise locations from a pull down menu.

Running this search brought the user immediately to a set of results consisting of 835 hits, as compared to Monster's 697 hits. The difference is probably attributable to the wider geographic range covered by the CareerBuilder search. Nevertheless, that is a substantial difference that is due to more flexible functionality offered by this search engine. After all, it is quite conceivable that a prospective job seeker would be willing to consider software engineer positions anywhere in Massachusetts. It was as easy to apply online using CareerBuilder as it was on Monster.

The final job search engine evaluated was Jobster.com. This site is on the quirky side, with photographs of the user's potential "future coworkers" and featuring what members of the site are saying about their workplaces. This information seems rather gratuitous and unhelpful to the person looking for a job. Nevertheless, the search mechanism could not be easier to locate on the home page, and is even cleaner and easier to use than CareerBuilder.

The same search on software engineer in Massachusetts yielded a whopping

3029 hits. Prominently displayed at the top of the results list was a very helpful alert feature that e-mails the user when new jobs appear matching the search. It was also very easy to see how to refine the search based on date, distance and relevance. The only shortcoming to the results was that it was difficult to see how to apply for the job, as the user needed to scroll to the bottom of the screen and then enter login information. Nevertheless, the results speak for themselves, and Jobster beat the other hands down.