

The role of data in talent attraction

By [Paul Byrne](#), issued by [Pnet](#)

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The world of data and analytics has permeated so much of our daily lives, from fitness tracking to financial wellness. Companies of all sizes are measuring data to monitor behaviour, performance and results and adjust planning accordingly.

Talent attraction is no different and the role of data has a massive role to play and, arguably, is set to change how recruiters find talent and even keep it. It's fair to say that the use of data in talent attraction planning must be one of the most important recent advancements in the talent space.

Data provides the 'Big Picture'

Data can transform recruiters' approaches to recruiting. Before even advertising an opportunity, recruiters have the ability to tap into market supply and demand data to understand the general availability of talent or even subsets of data such as the location, gender, qualification level and spread of ethnicity of talent.

This is specifically important when recruiting for more difficult to fill roles, and the benefit of these insights is two-fold. On the one hand recruiters can plan for the type of campaigning they need to use to attract the right applicants and, on the other, it provides the insight they can use to manage their internal hiring manager expectations.

Both of these points have become so important in our new world of work. Especially with the global tussle with shortages of skill and what we have seen over the past year in terms of the uplift in hiring activity.

As at 31 October 2022, Pnet reported in its 3rd Quarter that hiring activity was up 19% compared to the same period in 2021. Hiring activity has since slowed in the 4th Quarter with a decrease of 11%. This does, however, not change the need to be tactical and intentional in especially when hiring for scarce skills.

This uplift in hiring activity happened at the same time as the rise in 'digital nomads' (the name given to skill that can work remotely from locations they choose and resulting in foreign companies employing local talent to work for them internationally while staying in South Africa. A loss to our local jobs market); the continued brain drain of South African talent; and the more recent phenomena of 'semigration' and the 'Great Recalibration'. All these factors have had an impact in terms of difficulty to hire.

Embracing a new approach to recruiting

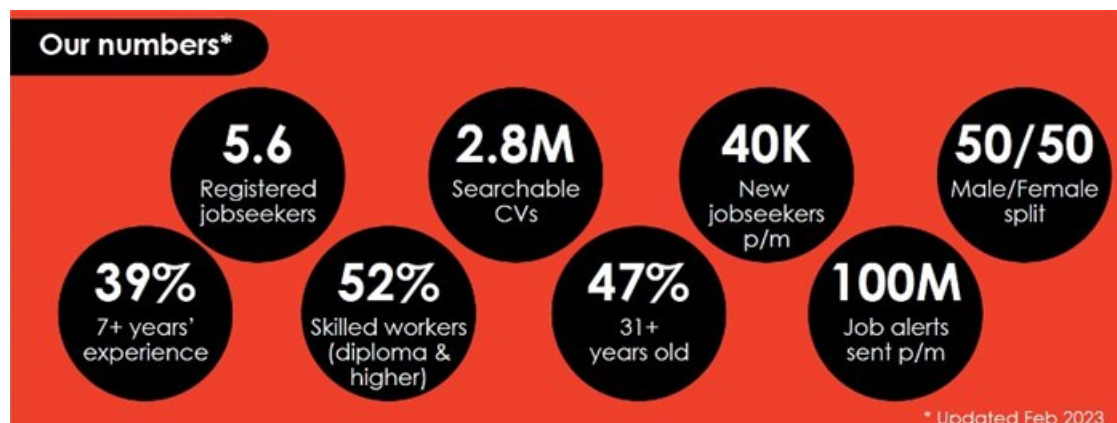
Accelerated hiring and a different demand for future skills in our new world of work is forcing the issue of a different approach to recruiting. Supply and demand is just one aspect of data that helps recruiters plan differently for talent attraction.

Increasingly important is the measurement of job advertisement performance relative to competitors for the same talent. Arguably, this measurement is now critical as companies can see – in near real-time – how their job advertisements are performing relative to their competition for this same talent. Data will show when small adjustments are needed to make sizable differences to a company's ability to attract the right talent.



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This is so important when considering that in any one month of the year, Pnet has upwards of 31,000 live jobs on their platform advertising opportunities across South Africa. Companies have to make sure their job ads are attracting the right talent.



Taking this one step further, Pnet has over 2.8 million job seeker profiles registered in its CV database (and over 5.6 million registered users). Mapping this CV information to understand talent behaviour and the collective skill sets of similar talent can transform how and when to recruit for more difficult-to-find skills. This is going to become ever more important as companies reskill for our new world of work and grapple with what skills are not only needed but that can also be repurposed or transferred to future roles.

Ultimately, the message in this writing is that data has entered the realm of talent attraction. Companies must have plans in place to use talent data to understand talent supply and demand to guide them on where they need to be more tactical in their talent attraction campaigning. They must understand talent behaviour so they can be more intentional on how to approach these campaigns. And finally, companies have to measure the success of their advertising to know if their opportunities are attracting talent at the same rate as their competitors' opportunities. This is now essential in the race for top talent.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Byrne is the head of insights at Pnet.

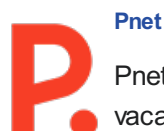
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