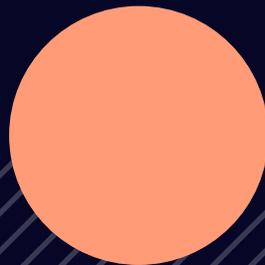
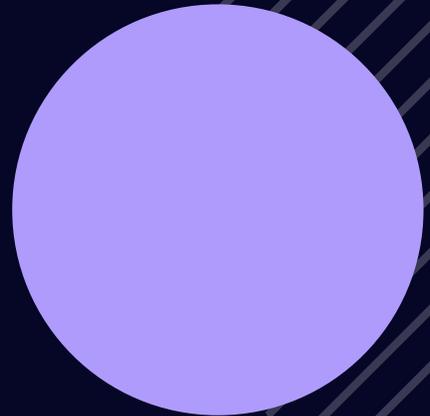




Top Recruiting Trends for 2022



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How long will the employment marketplace reflect the impact of a global pandemic? This is the overarching question as talent acquisition leaders plan for a new year.

Of course, other questions are also top of mind, including where are the candidates and how does my company reach them. Nevertheless, when you drill down to cause and effect, there's no denying the candidate shortage is related to the pandemic and anticipation of its aftermath. When that aftermath finally arrives is anybody's guess.

How do you forecast trends in such an uncertain environment?

Admittedly, this is a tough time for seers, even those with decades of experience; the best crystal balls remain cloudy.

Still, here at Appcast, we have been doing what we always do: analyzing data, following the news closely – zooming in and zooming out, no pun intended – and relying on trusted sources. Not surprisingly, this approach offers insight.

Appcast data shows that you should expect to continue to spend more on job advertising to connect with the talent your organization seeks – both cost per click (CPC) and cost per application (CPA) have increased and are likely to remain high.

Details related to recruitment advertising spend, labor costs, and more, along with actionable advice to help you navigate the employment landscape, are shared in this trends report.

From this vantage point, here's what 2022 looks likely to hold.

Recruiters continue to struggle to find talent.

While this may seem like old news, it's expected to be ongoing news. There may be an uptick in the number of applicants in the coming year, for a variety of reasons, including higher wages, hiring incentives, an increase in the vaccination rate (and therefore a greater level of comfort), but, in general, candidates will remain hard to find.

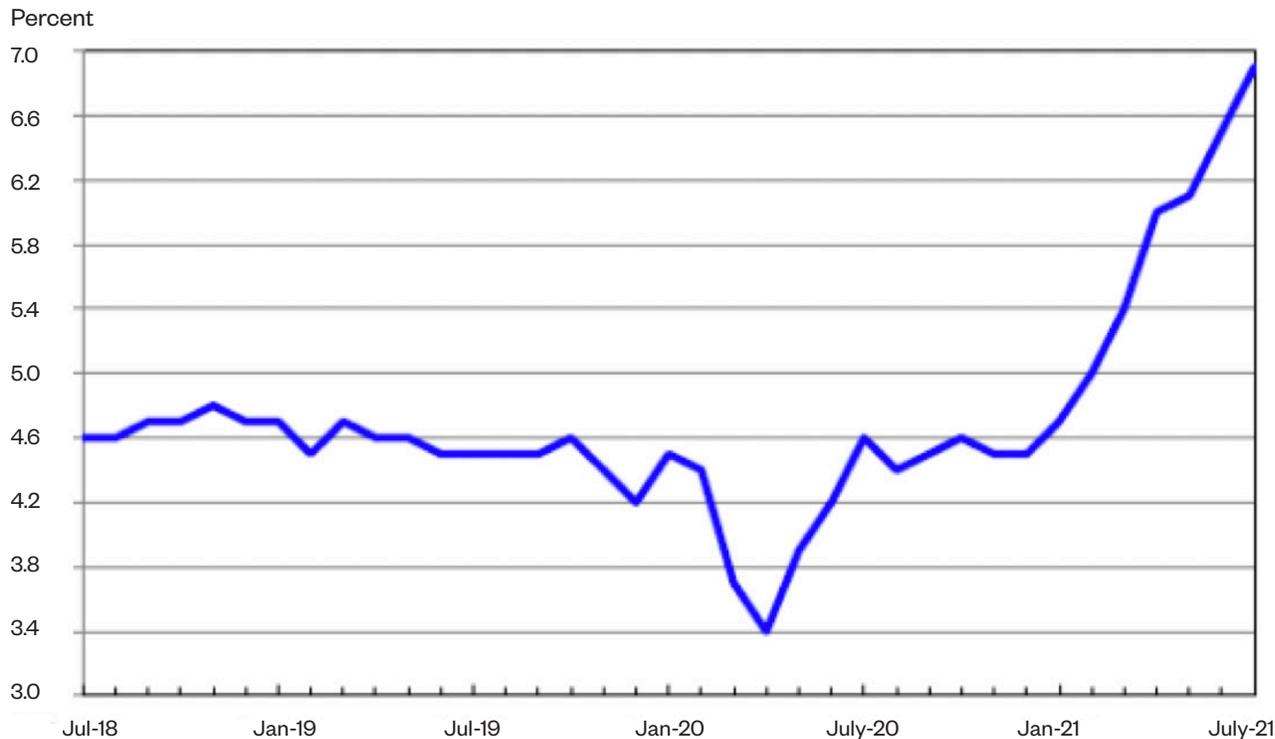
Skilled and unskilled professionals in a wide range of industries have options; this is a job seekers' market.

It's worth pointing out that predictions about a deep and prolonged recession and a difficult economic recovery were false. In all fairness, economic forecasting during a global pandemic was risky at best. Now that the numbers are in, it turns out "the Covid-19 recession" was the [shortest recession in U.S. history](#), officially lasting only two months, from February 2020 to April 2020.

It was one of the deepest recessions on record (a nod to our economist friends), but the recovery has been nothing short of phenomenal, with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reporting a record [10.9 million job openings](#) as of the last day of business in July 2021.

This chart helps put the job openings data in perspective.

**Job openings rate, seasonally adjusted
July 2018 - July 2021**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

In other words, opportunities are now plentiful. Add to this, [preferences](#) for and employer willingness to accommodate different ways of working – remote, hybrid, flex time – and job seekers don’t have to seek for very long. Barring unforeseen circumstances, hiring organizations should expect ongoing talent acquisition challenges in 2022, especially in Q1 and early Q2.

Actionable Advice

Because candidates are often fielding multiple offers, time to hire takes on new importance. With this in mind, look for ways to shorten your apply and decision-making processes.

For starters, is your job application easy to complete? [Appcast Research](#) finds that a mobile apply time of less than five minutes results in a higher apply rate. Since mobile has now overtaken desktop as the preferred device, the mobile apply process is particularly important.

Does a potential employee really need to interview with five people? Every interview adds time to the process. Similarly, is it possible to confirm education and other credentials during the interview phase, rather than as a separate step? Don’t compromise standards but do look for ways to quickly move candidates through the pipeline so you don’t lose them.

Organizations struggle to find recruiters.

Talent acquisition professionals are also difficult to find, which, needless to say, does not make it any easier to solve other hiring challenges.

Insights from LinkedIn shows demand for recruiters increased nearly seven-fold from June 2020 to June 2021.

And the situation does not appear to be improving. Appcast Research finds there were three times as many employers looking to fill recruiter jobs in August 2021 in comparison to January 2021, and that apply rates by month for recruiter jobs have been trending downward.

Actionable Advice

LinkedIn indicates that the primary source of new recruiters is other functions within Human Resources, so recruiting internally may be an option.

At the same time, enlist the services of your employees for external searches. As a CEO at one company looking to fill open positions recently said, “we all need to become recruiters.”

Employee referral programs have their advantages (good employees tend to refer others like themselves) and their disadvantages (programs don’t always help further diversity goals). Fortunately, there are ways to have the best of both worlds by implementing a [diversity focused employee referral program](#). What’s more, no matter the labor market, employee referrals remain a top source of hire.

Talent acquisition professionals, dealing with organization-wide and departmental staffing shortages, seek assistance.

To manage the recruiting workload, talent acquisition professionals will have little choice but to explore new solutions. Technology, like [programmatic recruitment technology](#), allows for more effective sourcing of candidates.

Technology alone, however, cannot always solve every issue. Sometimes you need additional people power, especially when it comes to leveraging data to improve recruitment outcomes.

This is where an [enterprise programmatic managed service](#) can make a difference. Advantages of an enterprise programmatic managed service include:

- Technology capabilities and data you may not have access to;
- Tech know-how your staff may not have;
- Data analysis skills your staff lacks; and
- Time your staff doesn’t have.

Actionable Advice

When you use an enterprise programmatic managed service, you aren't surrendering control. As a matter of fact, you end up with greater control of your spend and your time, which allows you to better focus on the people aspect of talent acquisition decisions.

It costs nothing to explore and weigh the benefits of this and other solutions. In the coming year, if not sooner, it's worth considering a different approach.

Work location remains mostly flexible, for now.

After more than 18 months where remote and hybrid work arrangements have become the norm, there is still confusion about location as it relates to recruiting and hiring.

Is an open role remote, remote as a last resort, or "remote for now"? Is the position fully remote or hybrid? How is "hybrid" defined?

These aren't idle questions; they are questions would-be applicants want answered. [Job ads](#) should include this information.

That said, the answers aren't always clear-cut. Corporate culture is a consideration, as are other factors.

Actionable Advice

[Appcast Futurecast: Recruiting and Hiring Workers for Remote Jobs](#) can help you evaluate roles from the standpoint of location.

You may also want to consider how your organization answers this question: [Is remote a benefit or a location?](#)

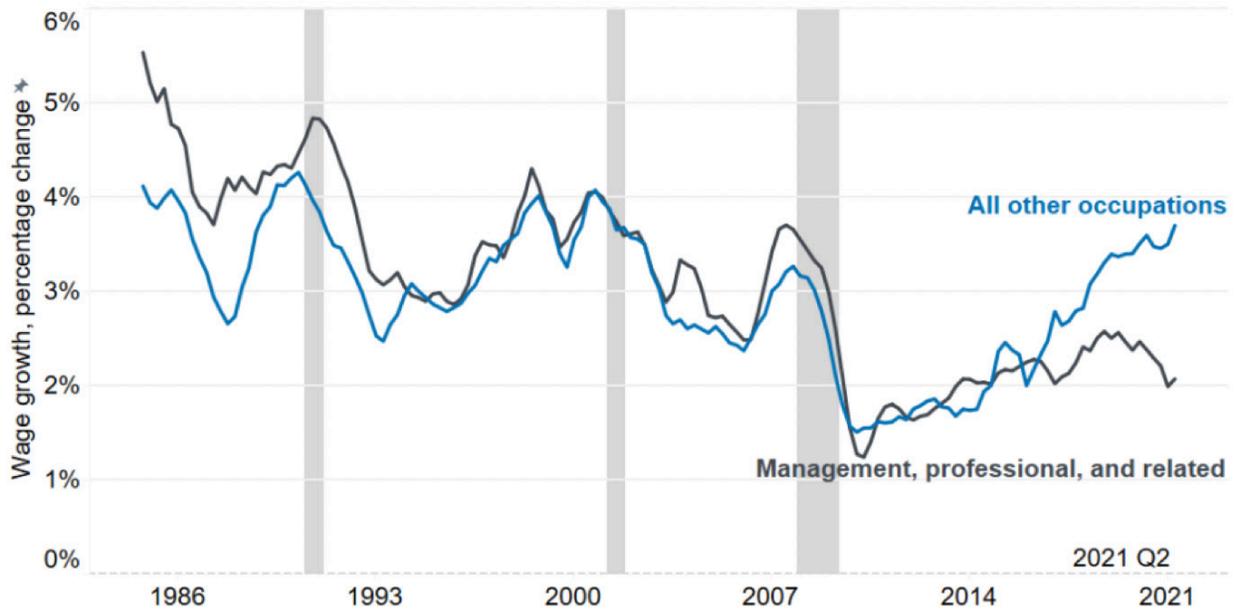
Hiring organizations up the ante to attract candidates.

"Money doesn't talk, it swears," said Bob Dylan. And in these times, it certainly does.

Higher wages and salaries have become a given in the current labor market. This trend is unlikely to reverse in the near-term – although some economists expect wages and salaries to stabilize in 2022.

Meanwhile, research from The Conference Board finds that as higher wages and salaries have been trending upward for blue collar and service jobs – in leisure and hospitality, wages are growing particularly fast – increases have not been as dramatic for management roles.

**Employment Cost Index (wages and salaries),
percentage change of the last 4 quarters over the preceding 4 quarters**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
The Conference Board

While this chart provides insight into trends, it should be noted that average wage growth doesn't tell the whole story. For example, it has never been harder to hire restaurant staff. The mismatch between candidate supply and demand has resulted in restaurant wages rising 46.2% over the past three years, according to the BLS.

And pay is only part of the financial equation. Meaningful signing bonuses will likely remain popular.

Note the word “meaningful.” Appcast Research finds that although 4.3% of a representative sample of job ads from January 1, 2021 through July 31, 2021 mentioned signing bonuses, overall, those ads did not result in higher apply rates. In fact, job ads with signing bonus language returned fewer applies than job ads without signing bonus language, 3.4% vs. 5.5%.

Appcast also looked at industries / job functions from January 1, 2021 through July 31, 2021 where signing bonuses were more frequently mentioned. In Transportation, 14% of job ads included signing bonus language; in Hospitality, 11.5% included it; and in Healthcare, 6.3% of job ads mentioned signing bonuses. Here, the results were similar. Job ads with signing bonus language had lower apply rates.

There are any number of reasons this could be the case. The jobs may be especially difficult to fill, regardless; the signing bonuses offered may not be substantial enough; or there may be a requirement that employees remain with the company for a period of time before signing bonuses are paid.

Actionable Advice

Know what the competition is paying to attract the candidates you seek. This includes wages and salaries, signing bonuses, and benefits that have a tangible financial value.

Is it necessary to match what others offer?

Let's put it this way, in this labor market it's unrealistic to think you can pay \$12 per hour when the competition is paying \$18 and offering a substantial signing bonus payable upon signing.

Job “advertising” gets more specific.

Job advertising is advertising. If you're merely creating job postings and not creating job ads, chances are you have not fully embraced a [recruitment marketing mindset](#).

This is problematic because savvy recruitment marketers, against whom you are competing for candidates, view job advertising as advertising, and they are creating job ads that attract candidates.

These job ads are increasingly specific when it comes to employment offerings. As an example, instead of indicating that a company offers “a competitive benefits package,” the ads list individual benefits.

Why?

Research conducted using Appcast data finds that each benefit you include in a job ad increases the apply rate by 1% to 5%. If this is surprising, it shouldn't be. Candidates want details, especially details that address their needs.

Here's another example. Several companies have recently begun including mental health benefits in their job ads. These may not be new offerings but with [mental health a top concern](#), hiring organizations recognize the value of advertising (there's that word again) these benefits.

A recent job ad from Axios mentions mental health benefits twice, under the heading “Additional pandemic-related benefits.”

Actionable Advice

This is a trend with immediate payback, and it's easy to follow best practices. Check out other job ads, especially for the same or similar positions. What are your talent competitors emphasizing?

Also, think like a job seeker. If you were on the other side of the desk, what would you want to know?

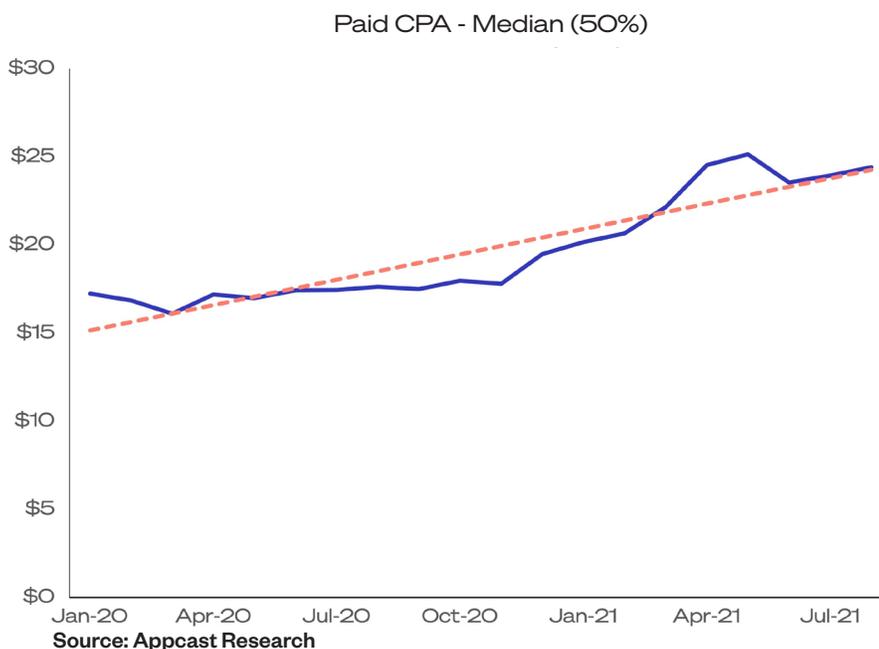
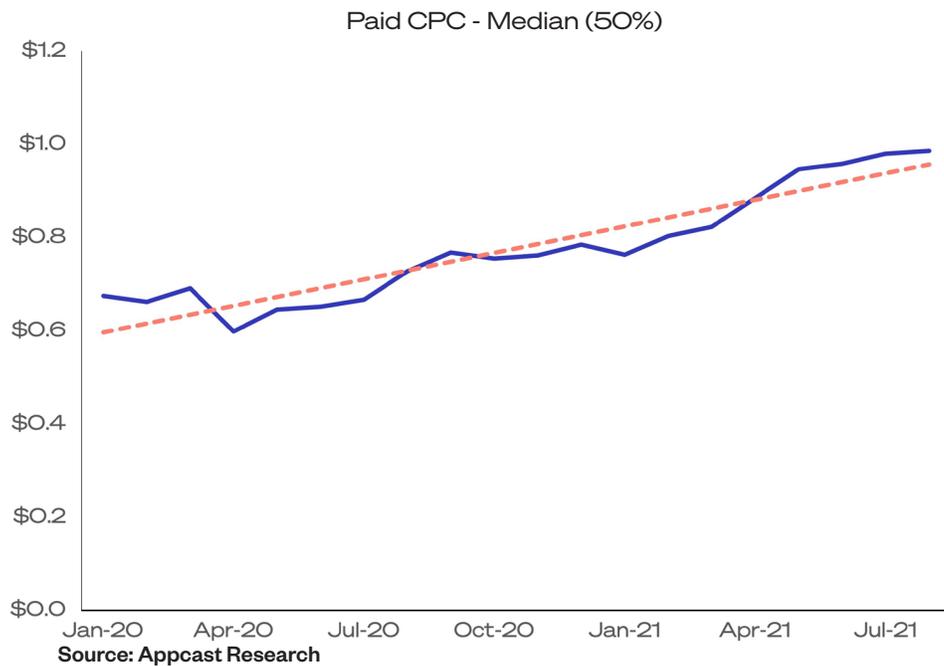
Get specific, get candidates.

Hiring organizations continue to spend more, and to expend more.

If there's a bottom-line message, it's this: Overall, costs will remain high.

Recruitment advertising will cost more, because you must pay more to get your job ads in front of the candidates you seek.

Appcast Research finds that overall, across all industries / job functions, from January 2021 through August 2021, cost per click (CPC) increased by 41.25%. Cost per application (CPA) for the same period increased by 27.63%.



For certain industries / job functions, CPA increases were significantly higher. From January 2021 through August 2021, in Food Services, CPA increased by 44.1%; in Hospitality, CPA increased by 45.62%; and in Gig, CPA jumped 62.31%. These are substantial increases, which will impact your recruitment marketing budget.

At the same time, in many cases, you'll have to raise starting salaries and wages to attract candidates. Signing bonuses and retention bonuses will likewise require a financial investment.

The financial reality, while difficult to accept, is relatively easy to quantify.

Things get fuzzy when it comes to the amount of time and energy recruiters expend. It's generally acknowledged that recruiting is [more complicated](#). However, what's sometimes overlooked is the impact of the current labor market. Talent acquisition has become an especially challenging profession, one that requires time and persistence as well as [data analysis and agility](#) to meet what can seem like impossible goals.

Hiring managers want candidates; senior management wants answers. If you find yourself wondering when business will return to normal or if this is the new normal, you're not alone.

Daily pressure and long-term uncertainty can take a toll on your staff, and on you personally.

The actionable advice here is to check in with others, and with yourself, and to be on the lookout for another recruiting trend in 2022: burnout. That's a price you don't want to pay.

Appcast is a leading provider of recruitment advertising technology and enterprise managed services. We help hiring organizations find the right job candidates fast with our advanced programmatic technology and easy-to-use, data-driven analytics.

Appcast helps you to be agile and effective in uncertain times. To learn how we can transform your job advertising so you get the recruiting results you need, [sign up for a demo of our programmatic recruiting solutions](#).

