

Contractor CVs and résumés: a guide to alternative formats

Contractors may find that alternative curriculum vitae (CV) formats could help them win new contracts.

Of course it has always been the case that a carefully structured, well written and **effectively designed CV** or résumé will have a better chance of grabbing the attention of an agent or client. It is an essential part of securing an interview, the next stage of the **contractor sales process**.

Now alternative CV formats are emerging, which contractors in some sectors, or who wish to differentiate themselves, can use to really stand out. For example, social networking sites such as **LinkedIn** have created simple applications that enable contractors to create PDF CVs based on their online profiles. And for the more adventurous contractor, online tools are proliferating that can create **'infographic' CVs**, video-based CVs and personal branded adverts.

Using LinkedIn profiles to help secure contracts

According to LinkedIn's statistics, contractors who have completed their online profile are 40 times more likely to receive opportunities. A LinkedIn profile is relatively quick and easy to produce, and requires similar very basic information to a **contractor CV**.

LinkedIn profiles allow other LinkedIn users to recommend contractors, which could be a powerful sales tool. Contractors can search for contracts that are intelligently mapped onto their skills and experience profiles, and they can also search for other LinkedIn contacts they might know at that client.

When it comes to generating a PDF or paper CV at the touch of a button, all the information is stored in a single location, which reduces duplicate information.

For clients and agents the online networking site can be very useful. When faced with hundreds of separate, emailed applications, a recruiter can only apply limited filtering. But with a similar number of LinkedIn applications, a recruiter can use online filtering to, for example, filter out any contractor who doesn't have at least five recommendations.

'Advertising' and personal brand building on social networking sites

Facebook can be used both by contractors and recruiters. It is not the only social networking site, but at the time of writing **claims to have** over 750m active users, so may have the greatest reach. **Google+** is a fast-growing alternative.

Contractors can literally advertise themselves via their Facebook page, creating and managing their personal brand over time. Recruiters increasingly use Facebook to find candidates. And clients are increasingly using it to seek out contractors, because it can be much cheaper and more targeted than using a traditional recruitment agency.

So creating and maintaining a Facebook page can be valuable. But there is a health warning with using social media sites: personal and business pages must be kept strictly separate and contractors should think carefully before making public any personal information that may portray them in a negative light. Monday morning Facebook or Google+ posts complaining of a hangover won't look good to a potential client.

'Alternative' CV formats – videos and infographics

Using social and professional networking sites adds further functionality and another dimension to traditional CV formats. But some contractors and other jobseekers have really started to push the boundaries, aided by a suite of online tools and paid-for service providers.

Video CVs allow contractors to record a video CV describing their skills, experience and past assignments. Some paid-for services will host the video and issue a link, so recruiters and clients can view the CV. These have yet to take off in mainstream contracting and a contractor must be very confident in front of the camera, and create a tight script for the CV to have maximum impact.

'Infographic' CVs present a contractor's skills, experience, career information and other data in a graphical format. These can be a powerful 'marketing' tool, particularly in creative and new media sectors, and stand out from mainstream text-based CVs. However, as with video CVs, infographic CVs have yet to enter the mainstream contracting sectors.

“
For the more adventurous contractor, online tools are proliferating that can create 'infographic' CVs, video-based CVs and personal branded adverts
”

Content remains king – carefully target your CV, whatever its format or medium

The majority of UK-based contracts with mainstream recruitment agencies still require a standard, **high impact CV**. But it could pay dividends for contractors seeking to differentiate themselves to have an additional CV in another format that could be sent to agencies and clients likely to be receptive to a different approach.

What has not and will not change with CVs is the need for each one to be carefully **targeted** to highlight the value the contractor can add to the client's project, and the specific skills/expertise they have for that project.

So, as with applications using 'traditional' CV formats, contractors should do their due diligence on any assignment beforehand and determine what content and format would be most suitable for each application.

Published: Wednesday, August 31, 2011

© 2016 All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Please see our [copyright notice](#).



ABCe verified website - last audit confirmed *134,482 monthly unique visitors*

© Copyright 2016 Byte-Vision Limited UK. All rights reserved [Copyright notice](#)