

Enterprising recruiters in the UK search on Spock

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Sue Weekes



UK recruiters are among the biggest users of the US-based personal search website, Spock.com (founded by Jay Bhatti and Jaideep Singh), the latest beta version of which was launched this August.

Co-founder Bhatti told *Recruiter* that recruiters in the UK have used the site since day one of its beta launch in April. "A lot of them are finding value in using the site," he said. "It [the UK] is where we get the second biggest amount of traffic. I think, overall, the UK is probably slightly ahead of the US in their use of search technology like this."

Recruitment wasn't identified as a key area when the site was launched, said Bhatti, but some recruiters are making as many as 20-30 visits to the site each day and are even requesting new features.

Whereas sites such as Google and Yahoo index web pages, Spock organises information around a specific person and creates a snapshot of their online presence, complete with any relevant links to sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook or MySpace.

"It is a way of building up a fuller picture of the person and their personality," said Bhatti.

He reports that the site is also helping recruiters search for overseas candidates. "We've noticed US recruiters looking abroad for talent because it is in short supply at home," he said. "For instance, they'll check out developers from India because they feel it could be a source of talent."

Spock claims to have 100m people already indexed and says millions are added every day. One concern that has been raised about information on the site is that anyone can contribute to Spock in the same way as contributors to Wikipedia, meaning that a person could add information to someone else's entry. However, Bhatti believes that the need to log-in as a registered user and to show good behaviour will prevent people from spamming or inserting incorrect information.

Paul Farrer, chairman of media recruitment agency pfj, believes that any site which aggregates information on potential candidates and speeds up the process of searching is a good thing but warned: "Employers just need to be sure of the integrity of the information on these types of web sites. There is a lot of interest in this area — I think we're just at the start of things."

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