

**Help Wanted –Direct Marketing: What the Classifieds Say About Employers' Expectations  
and What the Job Seekers Say About Their Preparedness**

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## Abstract

In today's information age, help wanted ads become electronically searchable as numerous firms post their job offers online. On the other hand, the job applicants' qualifications/skills also become electronically searchable as increasing number of job applicants post their resumes online. Interestingly, no prior research has investigated the electronically available job market information. The present study thus attempts to examine both the demand side and the supply side of the direct marketing job market equation.

Over 300 direct marketing job ads were collected from three well-known online job banks: [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com), [www.hotjobs.com](http://www.hotjobs.com), and [www.the-dma.org/jobbank](http://www.the-dma.org/jobbank). In the meantime, over 100 resumes were collected from Direct Marketing Association's online resume bank. Data collection for the study was initiated in the middle of January and ended towards the end of March in 2003. As each job ad and/or resume was examined, close attention was paid to (1) educational requirements, (2) experience requirements, (3) required computer skills, and (4) other important requirements, including verbal and written communication skills, analytic skills, and forecasting skills.

The results of our analysis indicate that employers seeking direct marketing personnel placed emphasis on good communication skills, interpersonal/teamwork skills, and computer skills. Interestingly, it was found that over 85% of job seekers felt that they were equipped with verbal and written communication skills. The percentages of job seekers indicating they already have achieved the analytic skills, forecasting skills, interpersonal/team work skills, and database skills were 73%, 47%, 88%, and 69%, respectively. In comparison to the job ads information, the job seekers' job skills exceeded the recruiters' expectations. It appears that direct marketing job candidates were well prepared for the direct marketing positions. This is possible due to the fact that the majority of our studied resumes were posted by direct marketing workers who have an average of 12.7-year practical experiences. This might also result from the case where some job applicants may embellish their skills in order to appear more desirable by claiming that they are capable of running direct marketing campaign on their resumes but their working knowledge on a specific field may not live up to the firm's hiring expectation. Based on our empirical findings, recommendations for direct marketing employers, job candidates, and educators are offered.