

Why You Should Use Association Websites in Your Job Search

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

The focus of my career has been researching [jobs from employer career pages](#), [job sites](#), association sites and consolidating these jobs in one place. Through the course of this work I have learned how to track down jobs that few people know about and where applicants are likely to have a good chance of getting hired when they apply. One of the best places to track down jobs which (1) few people know about and (2) you stand good odds of getting an interview if you apply, is association websites.

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Virtually every profession, geographic group, race, religion and so forth has an association. However, most people do not spend a lot of time searching association websites for jobs and, instead, concentrate their efforts on the largest and most well-known websites. For example, they may search Monster, CareerBuilder and so forth for jobs. Or, they may simply do a search on Google for jobs and click on one of the listings. You need to remember that most commercial job sites are experts in advertising themselves and getting you there. Associations are not experts in this so the jobs on their websites are far less likely to be found by [people looking for jobs online](#). One of the smartest things you can do is research association websites for job opportunities and leads. The people you are competing with in the job market generally are not doing this.

There are associations for literally everything. There are associations for people who work in toy companies, for example. There are associations for people of different races practicing a certain profession. There are associations for different geographical areas. There are associations for groups of people who graduated from a certain school. The list of associations is massive and by tracking down associations that pertain to what you do you can get tons of jobs.

I will never forget a phone call I received several years ago from an organization that was upset that people were applying to a job we had researched from their site. The organization was a fundamentalist Christian organization in the Farm Belt and had posted a job on a fundamentalist Christian association site for an attorney who followed "the ideals of Jesus Christ our savior in his professional and personal life."

Attorneys who need jobs are often willing to apply anywhere and once this job went on our site LawCrossing, the organization started getting lots of applicants—including Jews, Muslims and people who were not religious at all. Additionally, many of the people were applying were from places like New York City (who had probably never set foot in Kansas in their entire life). The organization was not amused.

Once the organization found out why they were getting all these applications from LawCrossing they called, very upset. The call very quickly was forwarded to me because our confused customer service representatives did not know how to handle the call (we typically will not take down jobs from our site if the information is publicly available on the Internet). The caller was very nice and explained that they had put the job on the fundamentalist Christian site because this was the sort of lawyer they wanted to hire. The caller told me they needed an attorney who would "worship with them" and "pray with them" and did not want to have to interview all sorts of people for the position who did not fit this mold.

While I do not remember how I resolved this call, I was fascinated after the call about the power of association sites. What a great way to track down jobs! Companies and organizations that post jobs on association sites do so because they are seeking a very specific sort of person. They know exactly what they want. Similarly, if you fit the mold of what the association stands for then you are likely to fit in there as well. For example, if there is an association out there for people who are of a certain political affiliation—the odds are pretty good that employers posting jobs on the site are seeking people of this political affiliation.

Employers typically like posting jobs on association websites. First of all, many of them are members of the associations and want to support their respective associations by posting jobs. Most association websites get a substantial portion of their revenue from the posting of jobs. Accordingly, associations are very active in [promoting job posting to their member companies](#). This results in a good flow of jobs coming onto association websites on a consistent basis. However, as I mentioned above, most associations are not experts in attracting "job seekers" to their sites. Thus, while an association may get a decent flow of jobs to their site they may not get a good flow of applicants.

It also typically costs employers less money to advertise on association sites. For example, many associations may charge as little as \$25 for an ad on their site compared to \$500 or more for Monster. This means you are likely to see jobs from employers who would normally not pay to advertise on a larger site.

Employers typically like posting jobs on association sites because applicants from association sites tend to be serious about their profession and much stronger. The best applicants from an employer's perspective are those who demonstrate a commitment to their occupational field.

The [best recruiters](#) typically like to post their jobs on association websites as well—or spend time networking on the sites, posting comments on their blogs, searching resumes. The best recruiters typically will get their hands into everything going on in their industry. They will research "niche" association sites for candidates while most "average" recruiters will stick to

larger sites. The reason you should care about recruiters on association sites is that they are typically the most skilled: If they are skilled enough to be [networking](#) on small sites and looking for you there, they are likely to be skilled at locating employers who are "off the radar" as well.

Most association websites also contain "chat boards" where people talk about all sorts of things—including jobs. You would be absolutely amazed how many [opportunities you can find](#) on association websites just by hanging out on their chat boards and conversing with various people. I have heard of people getting jobs like this numerous times.

In addition, by spending time on association websites you can often learn what sort of people at companies in your industry are extremely busy. If someone is incredibly busy doing a job like your own—learning what company they are working for could be a smart move. You could go apply to this company and see what happens.

One of the coolest things with association sites is also that there are all sorts of [announcements for various networking events](#), seminars and so forth on these sites. Most of this stuff you would never learn about if you were not hanging out on the site. These events are incredible opportunities to meet industry leaders in your association and others. By spending time on association sites you can have access to all of this information as well.

There are a [ton of sources](#) you can search for jobs on association websites. Associations tend to be grouped according to either (1) geographic location or (2) occupational field, specialty, or industry. Our goal at companies like [LawCrossing](#), [EmploymentCrossing](#) and [Gig](#) is to [consolidate jobs from all these associations](#). However, you can certainly locate associations without these services. One of the best things you can do is simply search Google for a list of associations. In addition, using the Google and Yahoo! Directories can often yield a good source of leads.

If you are in the job market, I cannot recommend using association sites for research enough.

Resources for Searching for Jobs on Association Websites

Occupational Field/Specialty/ and Industry Associations

Google Directory of Associations

http://www.google.com/Top/Business/Associations/By_Industry/

Yahoo Directory of Associations

http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Organizations/Trade_Associations?skw=list-of-trade+associations

Weddles Directory of Associations

<http://www.weddles.com/associations/index.cfm>

Paid Directories of Associations

http://www.associationexecs.com/dsp_Demo_Signup.cfm?gclid=CKDcllCGoaMCFQo5gwodmVhF4w

<http://www.gale.cengage.com/servlet/ItemDetailServlet?region=9&imprint=000&titleCode=GAL7&type=4&id=110996>

<http://www.marketingsource.com/directories/associations/us//>

Geographic-Based Directories of Associations

Organizations Based in Specific Cities

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Organizations_based_in_the_United_States_by_city

Organizations Based in Specific States

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Organizations_based_in_the_United_States_by_state

InfoPlease is a Good Source

<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0004878.html>

Manta is a Great Source

http://www.manta.com/mb_33_F0_000/associations_non_profits

Good Sources of International Organizations

<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/resource/internat/igo.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_organizations

<https://www.harrisonbarnes.com/>