



# 2018 Recruitment Media Benchmark Report



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## **i About this Report:**

For this study, we analyzed 2017 pay-for-performance recruitment media buying from over 400 companies across every major industry. To clarify, we did not assess duration-based or slot-based job advertisements in this report. Only recruitment media paid for on a cost-per-click (CPC) or cost-per-applicant (CPA) basis were factored into this study.



# Introduction

In today's saturated digital world, recruitment professionals are faced with the major challenge of reaching the essential talent they need to help drive their organization forward. Today, online job advertising consumes roughly 30% of overall recruitment budgets and is becoming a topline priority as the talent landscape becomes increasingly competitive. The introduction of new job advertising sources and models in the marketplace and a renewed focus on recruitment marketing tactics have highlighted the need for greater transparency of advertising spend and performance. As recruiters continue to allocate more of their budgets toward job advertising, understanding the performance of spend is becoming more and more crucial to drive a better ROI.

This report cuts through the noise and provides benchmark data on job advertising performance. The report will help you identify the sweet spots and optimizations needed to target candidates by device, by function, and in specific geographical markets.

## By reading this report, you will have access to data including:

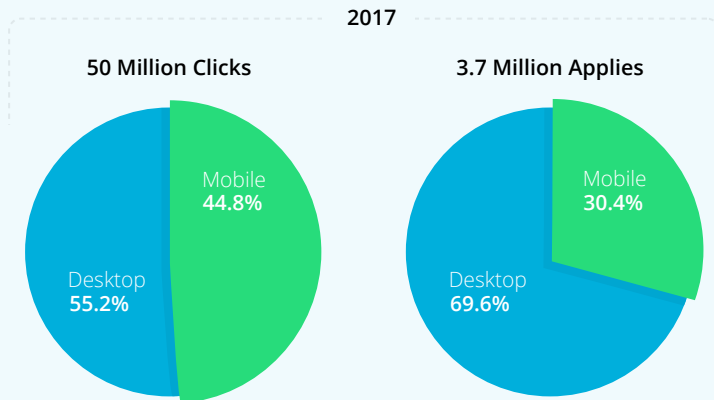
- Breakdown of job ad clicks and applies by device
- Apply rate by device, industry, and geography
- Cost-per-click bids by industry and geography
- Optimal performing length of job titles & job descriptions
- Apply rate by avg. Glassdoor rating & number of benefits listed in job ad



## WHAT'S IN THE REPORT?

# We analyzed data from 50 million clicks & 3.7 million applies in 2017.

Our research was based on recruitment media from over 400 companies who marketed their job ads on a pay-for-performance basis - cost-per-click or cost-per-applicant - and have compared our findings to our prior year's research.



## ✓ Key Findings - 2016 to 2017:

- The percent of applies on a mobile device increased 5.5% from 2016 to 2017. We believe this indicates that employers have prioritized improving their mobile application process and capturing more candidates on mobile.
- Conversely, the number of applications being completed on a desktop computer or laptop declined by 2.2% from 2016 to 2017.

## Section I

# Conversions: Apply Rates

### What is an Apply Rate?

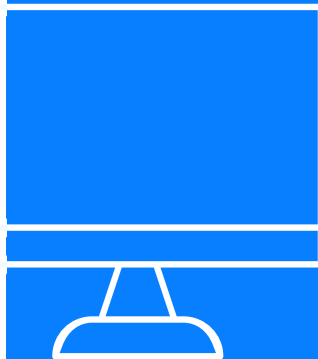
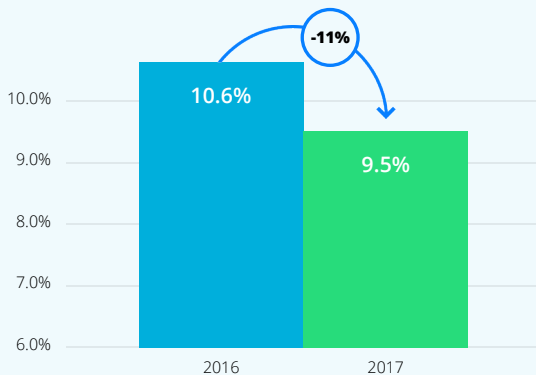
Apply rates illustrate the number of candidates who click on a job ad that also end up applying. A higher apply rate indicates stronger applicant flow.



## Desktop apply rate fell 11%, while the unemployment rate also declined.

We observed a decrease in the desktop apply rate from 10.6% in 2016 to 9.5% in 2017. Similarly, the unemployment rate in the US decreased by 10%, as we'd presume that candidates were more selective in applying to jobs.

Apply Rate on Desktop, 2016 - 2017

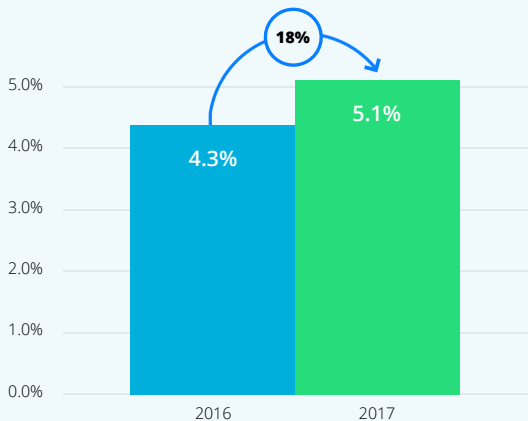




## Mobile apply rate increased 18% as candidates applied more on mobile.

The mobile apply rate increased from 4.3% in 2016 to 5.1% in 2017. As the percent of applications being completed on mobile is increasing, candidates are more willing and able to apply for jobs from their phones or tablets.

Apply Rate on Mobile, 2016 - 2017



### ✓ Key Tip:

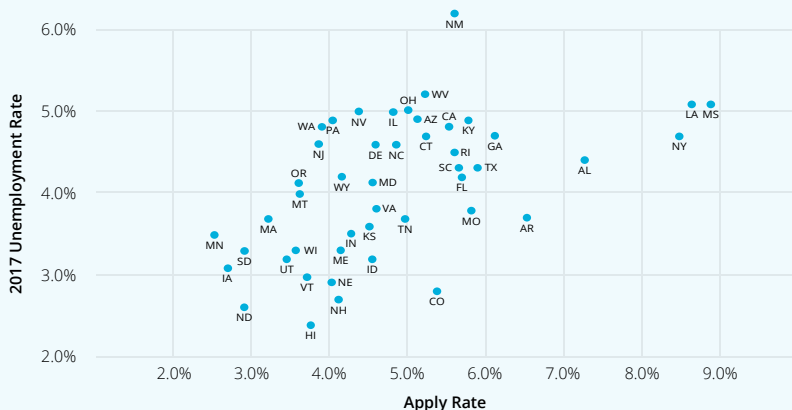
Improve your mobile apply rate to convert more candidates by i) reducing the number of questions in your mobile application, ii) enabling candidates to upload a resume from their phone, and iii) ensuring the average apply time is 5 minutes or less.



# States with lower unemployment rates had lower apply rates.

There was a noticeable correlation between state-level apply rates and unemployment rates. For example, while the apply rate in Minnesota was exceptionally low (2.53%), its unemployment rate was also low at 3.5%.

Apply Rate by State



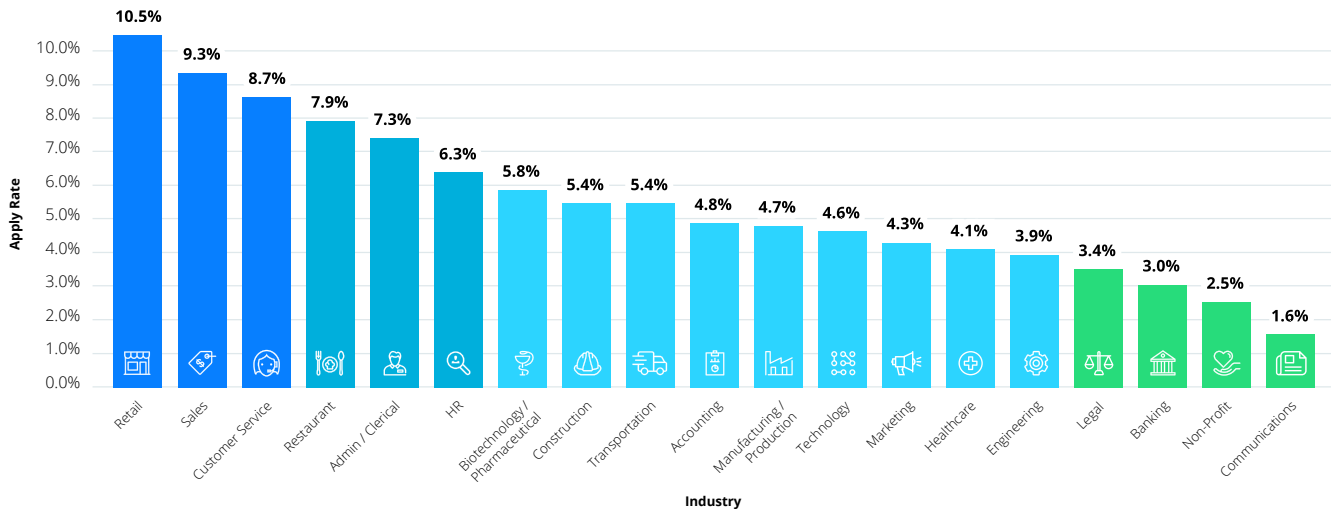
## Key Tip:

- Consider the market and unemployment trends in the areas of your job openings and where you are actively recruiting. This may give insight into the difficulty of finding candidates in your geographic area. Lower apply rates make competition much stiffer in particular markets.
- As competition for talent varies by market, understand how this will impact your recruiting strategy. Adjust your strategy and bid up in more competitive markets to gain access to the talent that you need.



# Industries with hourly jobs, which are often broadly distributed across geographies, had higher apply rates.

The highest apply rates were found for jobs in Retail (11%), Sales (9%), Customer Service (9%), and Restaurant (8%).



## Section II

# Pricing

Cost-Per-Click Job Ad Bids

### What is Cost-Per-Click (CPC) Recruitment Media?

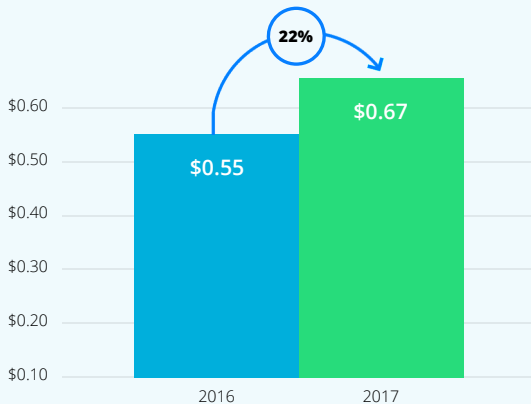
With a CPC job advertising model, advertisers pay every time a candidate clicks on a job listing from a search results page.



## The average CPC price increased 22%, indicating signs of market competition.

The average CPC bid increased from \$0.55 in 2016 to \$0.67 in 2017. This suggests that employers bid higher in 2017 to reach and obtain candidates in what was an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Cost-Per-Click Job Ad Bid, 2016 to 2017



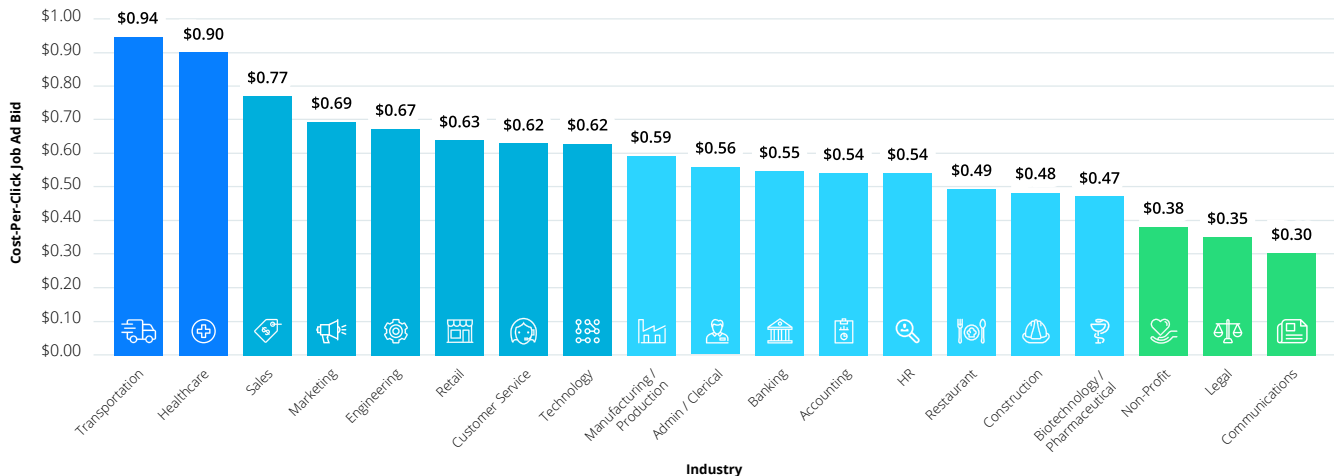
### ✓ Key Tip:

With the strength of the job market today and competition for applicants, the average cost-per-click and cost-per-applicant are increasing. This makes it even more important to effectively manage job advertising sources and make the most of limited recruiting budgets.



## By industry, CPC bids also increased where competition is generally stiffer.

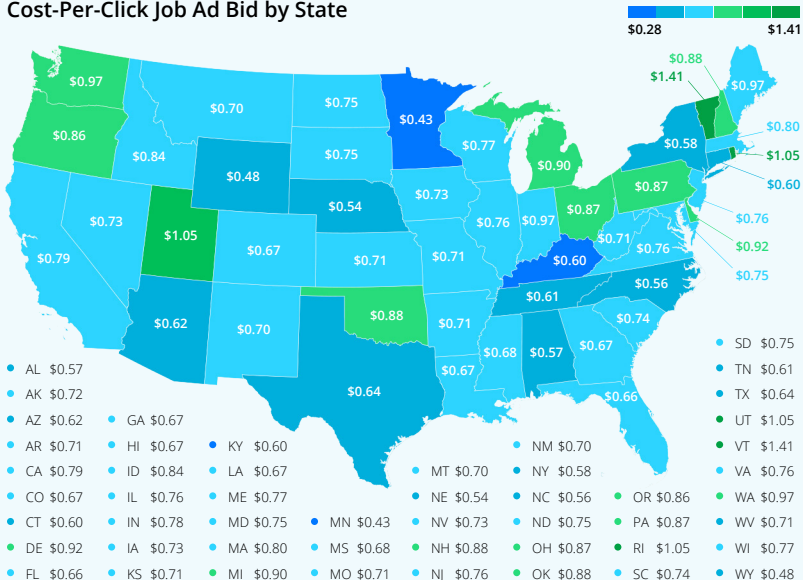
For the second year in a row, the industry with the highest average CPC bid was Transportation (\$0.94), a function with high-churn and turnover requiring these employers to actively advertise in high volumes.





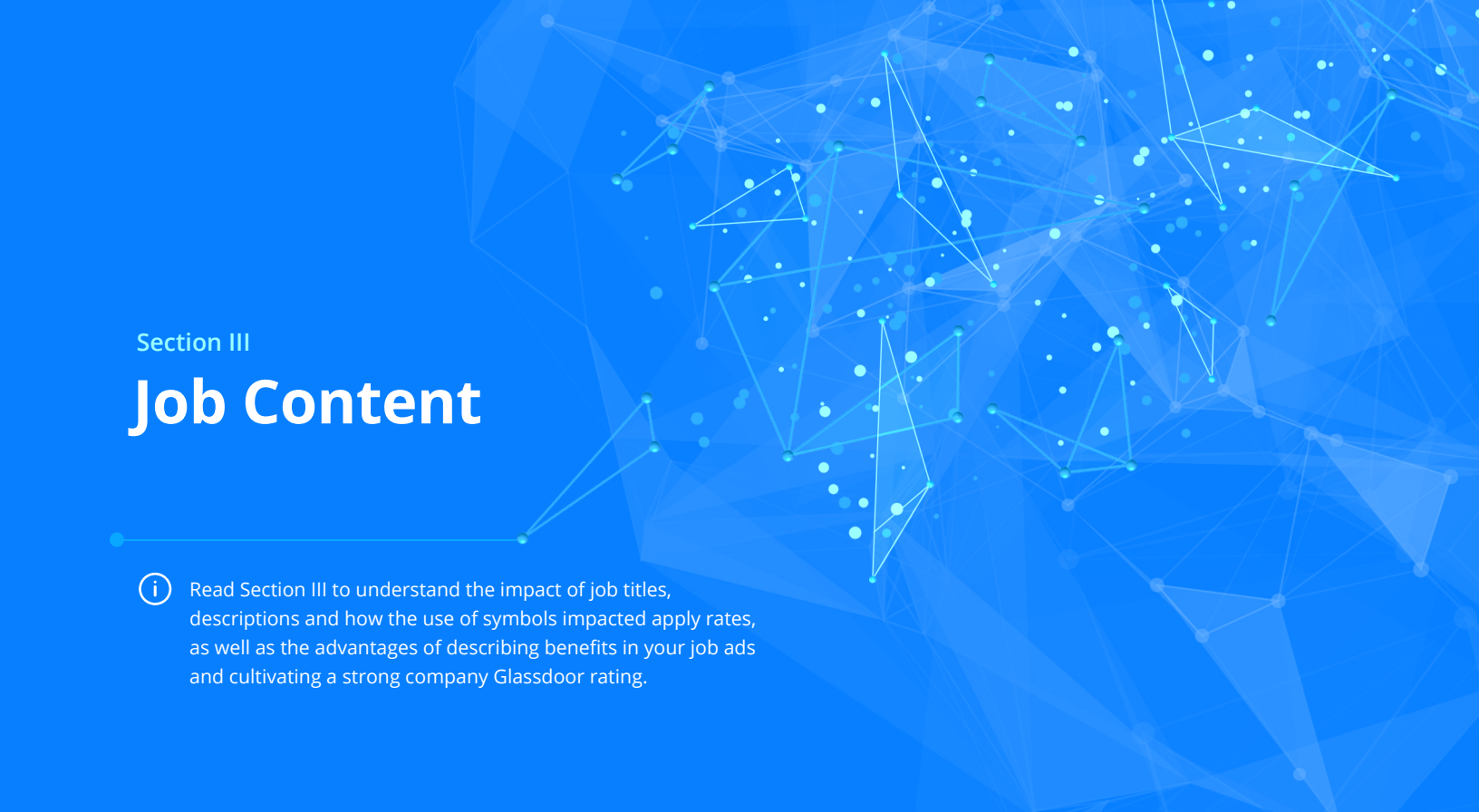
## Average CPC bids differed on a state-by-state basis.

Cost-Per-Click Job Ad Bid by State




### ✓ Key Tip:

Consult average state CPC prices for budgeting purposes and to understand how you can bid appropriately to drive the most traffic to your open jobs.



Section III

# Job Content

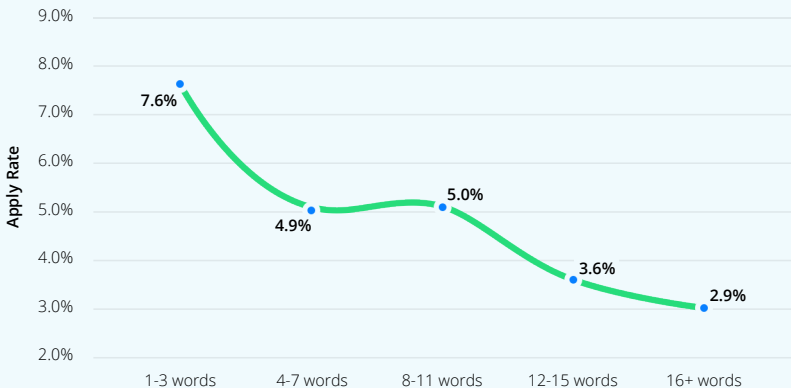
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-  Read Section III to understand the impact of job titles, descriptions and how the use of symbols impacted apply rates, as well as the advantages of describing benefits in your job ads and cultivating a strong company Glassdoor rating.



# Shorter job ad titles led to higher apply rates.

In 2017, the average job ad title contained 7 words. The highest apply rate was for titles with 1-3 words, with a gradual decline in apply rate for titles that were longer.

Apply Rate by Length of Job Ad Title



## ✓ Key Tip:

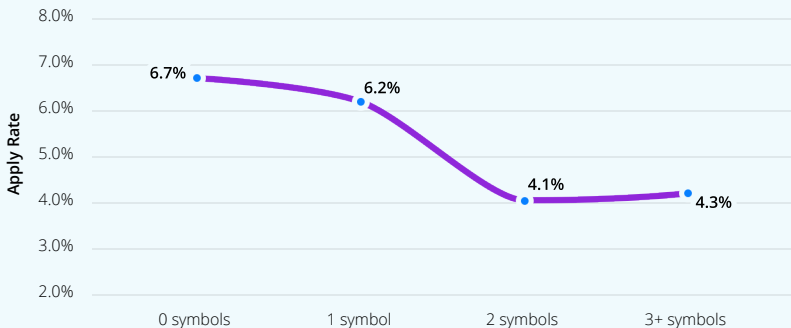
Keep titles to essential words only. Jobs with shorter titles have higher apply rates.



# Using 2+ symbols in job ad titles caused the apply rate to fall by ~30%.

Character symbols such as %, \$, &, and ! did not support a higher apply rate than titles without any symbols.

Apply Rate by Number of Symbols in Job Ad Title



**i** Study Details: This analysis was driven from 552,743 sponsored jobs with unique job titles from Appcast's database.

## An Example:

### INCLUDING SYMBOLS

**Exciting Opportunity in Group Sales  
@ a Travel Company - \$100K+**

**ACME** 34 reviews - Boston, MA

4.3% CTA

### EXCLUDING SYMBOLS

**Group Sales and Accounts Manager**

**ACME** 34 reviews - Boston, MA

6.7% CTA

## ✓ Key Tip:

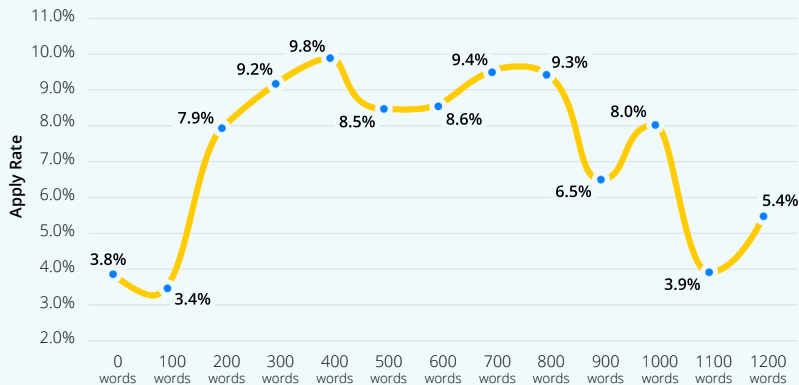
Limit the use of symbols in your job titles. There is significant candidate drop-off on jobs that have more than 2 symbols in the job title.



# Job descriptions with 300-800 words performed best, with an 8-9% apply rate.

We observed a slight bell curve in 2017, as the highest performing job descriptions were between 300-800 words. Job descriptions less than or greater than that range saw lower apply rates.

Apply Rate by Length of Job Description



## Key Tip:

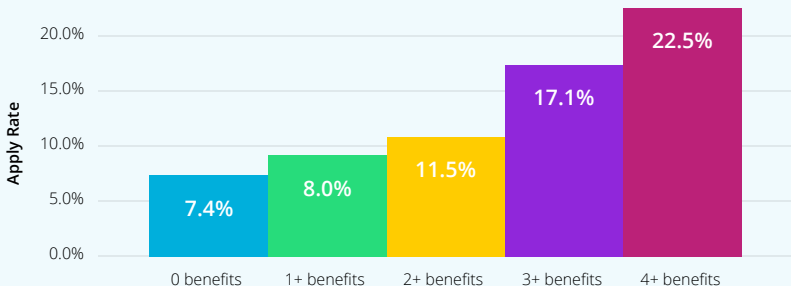
Keep your job descriptions concise, while still offering enough information about the position. Emphasize exciting benefits offered and provide honest detail about what it's like to work at your company.



# Mentioning benefits in job ads radically motivated candidates to apply.

There was a direct correlation between apply rate and the number of benefits listed in a job description. Benefit types assessed for this study included medical insurance, employee discounts, travel perks, and office benefits.

Apply Rate by Number of Benefits Mentioned in a Job Ad



*Study Details: This analysis was driven from 552,743 sponsored jobs with unique job titles from Appcast's database.*



## Key Tip:

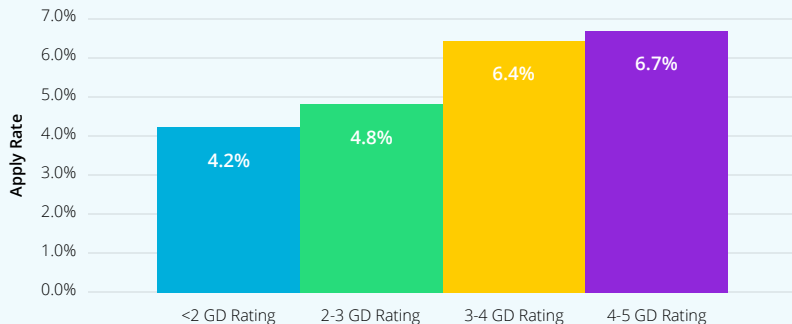
In today's ultra-competitive job market, it is important to emphasize what benefits you offer; it helps motivate candidates to apply.



# Companies with higher Glassdoor profile ratings saw higher apply rates.

Organizations with a higher Glassdoor profile rating attracted more candidates on job ads than those with a lower one.

Apply Rate by Glassdoor Profile Rating



Findings based on a beta research project conducted by Appcast comparing the average click-to-apply rate with Glassdoor ratings across 300+ organizations.



## Key Tip:

Stay up to date with your Glassdoor rating, respond to reviews and do your best to instill a positive culture throughout your organization. When advertising your open jobs, your Glassdoor rating will affect the number of candidates that choose to apply.



# About Appcast

Appcast is on a mission to revolutionize recruitment advertising. As a team of recruiting industry veterans, technologists, & data scientists, we believe that data and software can help employers, staffing firms, job sites, and agencies alike dramatically improve recruitment advertising outcomes.

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## Exchange

### **Pay-Per-Applicant Job Ads**

Pay-per-applicant, not per-click. Get quality applicants for 30% less than cost-per-click job sites.



## Brand

### **Targeted Employment Brand Ads**

Promote your recruitment brand message to specific communities of candidates using real-time data.



## Clickcast

### **Programmatic Job Ad Optimization**

Improve the ROI of your performance job ad spend by 20%+ with rules-based & algorithmic bidding.



## Solutions for Job Sites

### **Power your job site growth**

Discover how Appcast's plug-and-play suite of solutions can increase your site's revenue and drive your business forward.

Interested in more job advertising resources? [Visit our website](#) to access our content library.



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