

## JOB HUNTING ONLINE

If you're looking for a design staff position, you'll be researching opportunities in a number of different ways. In addition to active personal networking and portfolio drop-offs at local agencies, you'll be spending a lot of time checking for job listings on the Internet. Here are some tips to help you with that online research. Obviously, these tips also provide guidance for studios posting positions.

Start by visiting the sites of specific companies that you'd like to join. This is an especially good way to find out about in-house positions because corporate hiring policies often dictate that job openings be publicly posted. Simultaneously, these notices may appear as classified ads in industry publications. To stay on top of such listings, haunt the sites of the companies you're interested in and watch the newsstand for the latest issues of key publications.

The next step is to visit online job boards. This can be a frustrating experience. Large, general interest sites are often cluttered with out-of-date listings for positions that have already been filled, and very few of the listings on the largest job sites are for design positions. When an appropriate listing does come along on one of the major sites, the competition can be overwhelming—you may be one of several hundred people responding. When you spot a new listing, it's important to respond promptly. Send your information within one week of the posting date. If more time than that has passed, the employer will have moved on their hiring process. The typical cycle for employers looks like this: a week or two of advertising, then a week or two spent screening applicants and conducting telephone interviews, followed by a couple of weeks of in-person interviews and negotiations, after which the hire is completed.

When you submit applications online, often you won't receive any acknowledgement that your information was received. Many large sites use software to screen candidates, so it's very important for each application to incorporate the keywords used in the job listing itself. Most online job boards are free, but they require candidates to go through a registration process. Instead of allowing you to simply post your résumé, many require you to complete a questionnaire. This allows them to standardize all candidate information in a searchable database. Be cautious about the personal information that you provide. To protect yourself against hackers and the possibility of identity theft, do not give your Social Security number, date of birth, or any personal financial data. After registering with job sites, you may begin to receive marketing messages and spam. To minimize this, you may want to give job sites an e-mail address that you can later cancel after you've landed a job. Also, some sites have a limited posting period for candidate information. If you're still on the job market after several months, you'll need to re-register if your original listing has expired.

Some job sites are general, while others are industry-specific. For creative positions, it's best to start with sites that are specific to design. Here are several that are hosted by industry publications and professional organizations:

- AIGA Design Jobs  
[www.aiga.org](http://www.aiga.org)  
*(AIGA members can search this national job bank by state and category, and post portfolio files.)*
- Creative Hotlist  
[www.creativehotlist.com](http://www.creativehotlist.com)  
*(This site is hosted by Communication Arts magazine. You can search design jobs by region, category, and industry. You can also post portfolio files.)*
- IDSA Employment  
[www.idsa.org](http://www.idsa.org)  
*(This site features many industrial design job listings.)*
- SEG D Job Bank  
[www.segd.org](http://www.segd.org)  
*(The listings here focus on environmental graphic design.)*
- Adweek Classifieds  
[www.adweek.com](http://www.adweek.com)  
*(This is a searchable database of jobs in design, advertising, and public relations.)*

- HOW Job Bank  
**[www.howdesign.com](http://www.howdesign.com)**  
*(HOW magazine hosts this searchable database of national listings.)*
- Coroflot Jobs  
**[www.coroflot.com](http://www.coroflot.com)**  
*(This is a searchable database of U.S. and international job listings, primarily for industrial designers. You can also post portfolio files.)*
- Graphic Artists Guild JobLine  
**[www.gag.org](http://www.gag.org)**  
*(You can sign up for a paid subscription to a weekly e-mail listing of staff positions and freelance opportunities.)*
- Ad Age Career Center  
**[www.adage.com](http://www.adage.com)**  
*(This publication has classified listings, mostly for advertising and public relations.)*
- American Advertising Federation  
**[www.aaf.org/jobs/index.html](http://www.aaf.org/jobs/index.html)**  
*(The AAF maintains an online job bank.)*
- Talent Zoo  
**[www.talentzoo.com](http://www.talentzoo.com)**  
*(This site features advertising jobs and industry news.)*

At this point in your job search, if you haven't found any listings that interest you, the next step might be to begin visiting large, general job sites. If you do, keep in mind the drawbacks mentioned above. General sites include the following:

- Monster Jobs  
**[www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)**  
*(This site promotes itself as having more than one million job postings and tens of thousands of résumés. You can set up automatic notification of new listings that meet criteria you define.)*
- CareerBuilder  
**[www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)**  
*(This site has some listings for advertising and graphics. You can block particular companies from seeing your résumé. This is a great feature if you don't want your current employer to know that you're thinking of leaving.)*
- Craigslist  
**[www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)**  
*(This is more of an online community, with lots of people looking for apartments and romance. It does include chronological job listings by area and category, but few are design-related.)*
- Yahoo! HotJobs  
**[hotjobs.yahoo.com](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com)**  
*(This site has national job listings by category. You can set up automatic notification of new listings that meet your criteria, and you can block particular companies from seeing your résumé.)*

In addition to the paid listings that it receives directly from employers, Yahoo! HotJobs has developed a search feature that checks for listings on other sites. A similar service is available from these companies:

- Simply Hired  
**[www.simplyhired.com](http://www.simplyhired.com)**  
*(This specialized search engine indexes help-wanted listings from hundreds of sources. You can filter the results using many different criteria.)*
- Indeed  
**[www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)**  
*(This is another specialized search engine that checks for listings on other sites.)*

When you spot a job listing that interests you, your next step should be to research that employer. Visit their own site for background information including their size, services, and clients. Do a

search on Google for recent news stories about them. Many design firms also have profiles in online business directories such as the following:

- Core77 / BusinessWeek Design Firm Directory  
**[www.designdirectory.com](http://www.designdirectory.com)**  
*(Profiles can be searched by name, location, or design specialty.)*
- The Firm List  
**[www.firmlist.com](http://www.firmlist.com)**  
*(This is an international directory of Web design and development firms.)*
- Agency Compile  
**[www.agencycompile.com](http://www.agencycompile.com)**  
*(You can search marketing and advertising agencies by type, location, size, or client industries.)*
- Adweek Directory  
**[www.adweek.com](http://www.adweek.com)**  
*(Limited information is available for free. Payment is required for the full directory, which contains detailed profiles of 6,400 agencies, PR firms, and media buying services.)*

Learning more about the employer will help you to customize the cover letter and résumé that you send. It will also give you a better sense of how you might edit the contents of your portfolio to match the firm's activities. Finally, learning more about the company is great preparation for an interview. Not only can online research turn up a job opportunity, it can make you a stronger candidate.