

# Advertising and communications by Leonards



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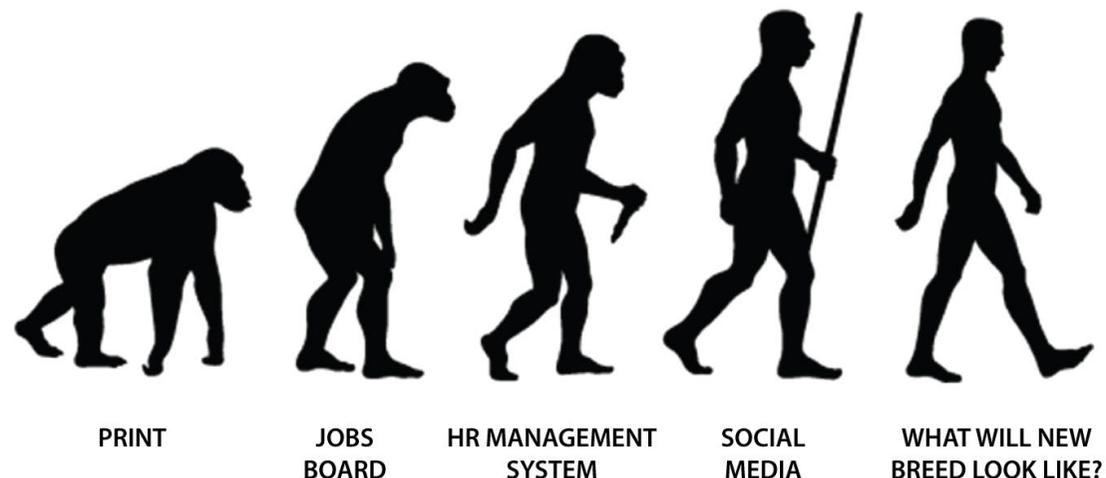
# Where are we now?

Recruiting has experienced its most rapid evolution in the last 5-10 years and by far the greatest impact has been felt since John Fairfax said in 1841 “I wonder if a recruitment section would work”.

It has been primarily driven by the emergence of digital notice boards and the rapid evolution of HRIS. These are of course major developments in the internet of things. 

## Where are we now?

Let’s take a small step back and see how much we have evolved in the last 5-10 years.



Before focusing on Recruitment, it is useful to review the changes that have occurred in the last five to ten years that have such a profound impact on the way we purchase and recruit!

It was not that long ago that the newspapers, especially the metro weekend paper would come in two parts full of Real Estate, Car Ads and Positions Vacant. They were the publishers “Rivers of Gold” that have now been greatly reduced and largely substituted with digital notice boards with an ever-advancing search functionality. The newspaper sections still exist and can deliver value however they have been substantively subsumed into digital notice boards. 

# The rise of the digital notice board

Here are the main examples of print to digital substitution:



It's easy but erroneous to view this huge evolution with a linear mindset. The key benefits of digital notice boards is that there is effectively one collection point of relevant market data that can be easily and readily accessed and searched. Further the next steps of an enquiry, application or payment are very user-friendly processes; so easily grasped in fact that they became mainstream in a very short time period.

As an advertiser it was interesting to observe a great irony that the owners of the Notice Boards spend significant advertising amounts in traditional media to promote their on-line brand to become THE notice board of consumer choice.

It has not been a complete migration however with remnants of a traditional base remaining, mainly in higher value purchases such as commercial real estate or high end residential. It is interesting to note commercial property is one that has persisted in print with the major mastheads having well represented feature days for commercial property.

# Focus on recruitment advertising

This print advertising value for real estate was ironically further recognised with the recent print cessation of nearly all of News Local publications except for some suburbs with high value real estate. The industry still sees value with local print publications as having value to promote their client’s property.

Lower value purchases however have been all but subsumed by web notice boards and it has only been accelerated with efficient commerce enabling direct purchase backed with an efficient on-line managed door to door dispatch.

## Let’s Focus On Recruitment

The Challenge – As an employer; is to be able to attract and discern quality applicants from vast recruitment pools.

Recruitment is arguably the area of greatest digital evolution and it has still the longest way to go, mainly because we are dealing with the complexity of human relationships rather than just a transaction.

Employers are buying productive relationships which cannot always be found with sheer volume probability. In fact, it has become apparent that volume creates one of the biggest pressures in recruitment which has arisen in recent years particularly as the ease for applicants to apply has risen significantly.

Ease of application in this case presents an evolutionary challenge. Every evolutionary process has breakthroughs that lead to new problems or evolutionary challenges (EC’s). For recruitment, the main evolutionary pressure points look as follows:

## Recruitment Break throughs and Evolutionary Challenges

Recruiting Challenge	Evolutionary Breakthrough	Evolutionary Challenge
Volume Jobs Boards	Great talent, high consumer acceptance and advanced search in one web location	To improve efficiency to identify quality applications while processing high volumes of variable quality applications. 
Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS)	Streamlined human resource process and greatly reduced manual process from recruitment to payroll with on demand electronic files	Ensure human discernment still plays a critical part in selection and applicant screening. The Application Programming Interface (API) can be a two-edged sword that promotes efficiency and volume while potentially opening the volume flood gate that can only be system controlled. 

# Focus on recruitment advertising

Recruiting Challenge	Evolutionary Breakthrough	Evolutionary Challenge
Branding	Recruitment awareness has been focused through strong advertising on to the providers digital jobs board which has been accepted by the market (seekers and employers).	Ensure the employer’s brand value is not diminished or subsumed and the employer has opportunity to build their general market brand awareness. This is a particularly important communications opportunity for councils. 
Passive Disruption	Most digital jobs boards now have targeted emails that enter potential applicant’s mailboxes for jobs that may interest them, despite not looking, passive disruption.	Passive disruption generated by jobs board recruitment has not reached the impact of high-profile job advertisements that adorned newspapers with great effect 5-10 years ago. It is an elephant in the room and is a key reason why Recruiters (Head Hunters) are still as popular as ever. I have spoken to recruiters that still carry “Black Books” of quality applicants (more on Black Books later)! 

## Next Phase Evolutionary Trends – Rise of your “Owned Space”

As consistently proven over the Age of Humanity, we are highly adaptable and always looking for opportunity and solutions. Arguably the greatest development that has occurred in the last few years has been the adeptness of businesses to utilize their OWN digital assets. These assets primarily are your web site, social media accounts, first party data and communication systems.

Councils are very well placed to greatly improve not only their ability to recruit high quality talent but also to exploit the momentous opportunity to greatly promote their OWN brand and communications. The techniques will be described below but it should be remembered this great enablement has been primarily through the advent of higher bandwidth / 5G internet.

## Your Web Site for recruitment is your best asset, or problem!

Increasingly general consumer and community behaviour is to seek out the organisations website for information. An awareness is generated by a stimulus, usually created by advertising, social media or practiced functionality (such as a bank) which drives the need and search for information.

# Focus on recruitment advertising

A small indicator of the general web users growing knowledge is that when they land on a web page, only 20% are clicking on the paid ads inevitably at the top of the search page while 80% are going to an organic listing often a few spaces down the page. This is demonstrating the more knowledgeable and targeted searches that are now being undertaken. Hold this thought for later!

Over the last two years there has been a marked change in applicant quality sources and also actual applicant searching behaviour. This can be demonstrated from a sample taken from our recruitment software (eziJobs) regarding jobs advertised in 2019 and 2020 where we measured the applicant source and how the application source proportionately changes from the initial application to the final cut interview stage.

## Source Application Analysis for 2019/2020

The broad sample of 1,035 positions received 28,587 applications. These applications were tagged and recorded for their source e.g., Council Web Site, SEEK, Indeed, boutique web site, scraped together with many other sources.

For analysis purposes they were classified into four categories:

### **Paid Media – General:**

This is any media purchased by council from a publisher with a general market focus. This would include SEEK, Indeed (Paid), Linked In, Career One, Newspapers etc

### **Paid Media – Boutique:**

Specialist websites by vocation or industry e.g. CouncilJobs, LG Assist, Planners, Hoopla, Arts Hub etc

### **Free – Scraped:**

This included primarily Indeed and Adzuna ads scraped from varied notice boards

Owned: Applications direct to the council website, from councils intranet, referred by friend/family etc

# Focus on recruitment advertising

## Results

Media Type	Initial Application Numbers	% of Total	Applications Interviewed	% of Total
Paid Media - General	12,314	43%	408	24%
Paid Media- Boutique	1,135	4%	93	5%
Free -(Scraped)	3,444	12%	101	6%
Owned	11,694	41%	1,130	65%
Totals	28,587	100%	1,637	100%

The table shows that Paid Media provided the highest numbers of raw applicants with only 24% making an interview. Paid Media had an inverse relationship with Owned media which demonstrated a dominant share for quality applicants where the proportion rose from 41% to 65%.

Paid Boutique maintained a steady share over for a lower proportion of 5% approximately between Initial Application and those qualifying for an interview. This demonstrates that Paid Boutiques deliver quality applicants albeit at a smaller volume.

The outstanding conclusion which is a growing trend is that not only is Councils “OWNED” media space providing strong initial numbers, but they are proving to be the primary source of quality applications. This is a trend observed in other industries where in travel for example local accommodation providers who have been under pressure from On-Line booking agents have been able to establish their OWN media space on their web sites for bookings rather than the aggregator digital booking options.

# Recruitment trends

## The Emerging Recruitment Trends

The one clear takeaway is that job applicants, particularly local applicants, are closely watching their local councils' jobs board. Council is a publisher with the web site being the key asset.

This finding can also be cross checked with a quick review of your Councils Google Analytics and looking at your web site user's trends and usage patterns. From observation of some large councils the recruitment page is the most visited page on Councils web site, sometimes 4 times more than its next ranking page. Clearly Council is seen by job seekers as a recruiter of value.

The other major asset that council is developing as digitization progresses is the accumulation of quality candidate data which is accumulating within their own HRIS. Of particular importance is that they now have data banks of quality applicants more on this later.

The challenge now in the next evolutionary stages is to:

- Ensure excellent User experience (UX) for the volume of quality web traffic viewing Councils website.
- Exploit technology to produce quality, low-cost volume recruitment videos that also promotes Councils brand.
- Utilize the growing data bases in Councils HRIS (Human Resources Information Systems)
- Grow data bases with quality sources of quality candidates such as proven boutique web sites.

These challenges are critical to not only being successful in your OWNED space but also so your brand, message, culture

or organization is not diluted or subsumed by a PAID publisher. This means it is as it technically known as CRUCIAL!!

For the purposes of this discussion however I will just focus on the key subject of "Recruitment" and talk about low-cost videos for recruitment. I am passionate from observing and working in advertising and recruitment from many angles that this is the best "Bang for Buck" initiative for Councils to focus on.

I can hear the objections cry out "but we already do video" with my reply being a challenge! Is it impacting, affordable while exploiting the latest game changing waves of video technology advances? Thankfully achieving these objectives its one of the easier tasks in this technological revolution.

## Video is Great but It Has to be Seen

### Current Problem: Video Content is costly and is Not Being Viewed

Council video is generally housed on a separate platform with little or no linking to the users web journey causing a big disconnect between relevant content and the users search journey. Linking content to the web site journey is crucial. You have to be pretty hopeful to simply- post on Vimeo or You Tube and wait for your content to go viral!

I have reviewed a lot of high quality (high cost) video content primarily on Councils You Tube accounts. Unfortunately, this content, (typically housed in an unrelated place to the normal user's web site journey) will experience typical statistics of 250 views over three years; hardly influencing content and not the original intent!

# The video opportunity

## The Solution: To Ensure Video is Incorporated into the Users Practical Web Journey.

This obviously requires understanding of the typical journeys and how content and (UX) can benefit. However by accepting the preeminence of the Councils Jobs Board, the obvious solution is to include great content about the individual roles into the job seekers journey. The ideal solution is to be confident e and place it within each job, not just a general content piece about recruitment that's a high level recruitment page menu option.

This means moving from generic recruitment videos to specific job videos!

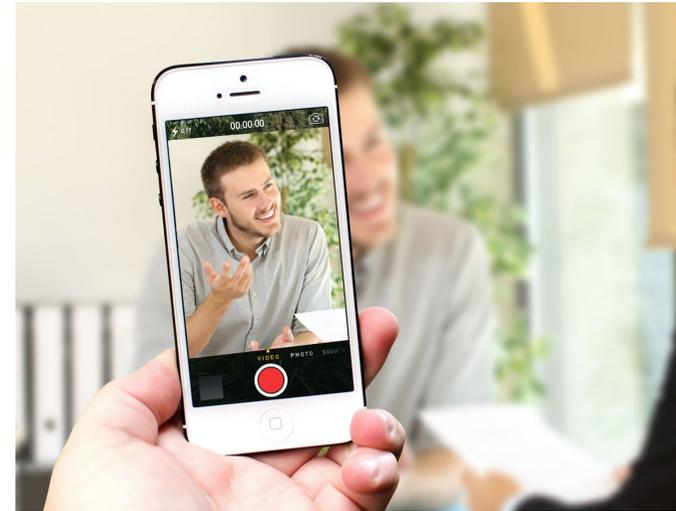
- Birth of the low-cost video Jobs Board and Council Communications Promotion

This is an easy and obvious step and can easily link in with your recruitment system. With a smooth (UX) it will become the norm for anyone serious about the position to positively view the content. The videos objectives are to

- Inform about Council culture, achievements, ambitions – The Story!
- Provide a suitability filter for the applicant, “sounds like me”.
- Start to build positive Council relationships with not only the successful candidate but also all applicants who are quite likely residents of the LGA.
- Costs similar to a Jobs Board posting – circa \$500.

The key challenge is to make it cheap (as DIY as possible) and easy, so it forms a natural part of every recruitment.

The advent of sophisticated I Phone or Android versions that have high quality video now allows Council to significantly contribute to each job video which greatly reduces the cost.



The reason cost is stressed (outside of the obvious need) is that we can evolve video into the volume side of recruitment which means it has to be affordable i.e. cheap! There are a lot of job videos around now but they are professionally shot and not practical from a cost or time perspective for most jobs. For instance, this video is a great promotion of both the company and role but is not something that can be readily afforded for general roles. It is a great video though!

**[www.vimeo.com/366163955/0186e01612](https://www.vimeo.com/366163955/0186e01612)**

# The video opportunity

## What Features Will a Low-Cost Jobs Board Video Contain?

To be successful the following criteria must be met:

- The main body of the video is professionally produced in a one-off reusable template.
- Each individual job can be uploaded into an empty component of the template hence ensuring its reusable capacity preferable from an I Phone or Android.
- The ideal format would be a 3 frame, 90second, template based video with the following example structure:



### **INTRODUCTORY FRAME - Reused and Professionally Produced**

Professionally produced introduction to the council. Preferably narrated by the CEO or Mayor. They would discuss the attractions and features of the council, its culture, challenges and pass to the role generally e.g. “I hope you like what you are going to hear about this position” (30 seconds)



### **THE JOB FRAME - Unique for each job – Council Shot**

This is the video done by mobile phone and should be the manager discussing the role, type of person, extolling the culture and benefits. There are many great examples of these! (40 seconds)



### **THE WRAP UP FRAME - Reused and Professionally Shot**

The trailer frame where CEO/Mayor finishes the video with a “Sounds like You? Then we’d love to hear from you” message

An example of one recently produced can be viewed here:

[www.ezisuite.net/resonate](http://www.ezisuite.net/resonate)

# The video opportunity

These videos will be low cost as they:

- Maximise the reusable content by allowing the professionally scripted and produced Introductory and Wrap Up Frames to be continually reused. Another feature is to have more than one introductory frame depending on the job seeker audience e.g. Executive, Outdoor, Trainee etc.
- The Job Frame will be effectively DIY and shot with a smart phone and either internally or with professional help edited into the video between the Introductory and Wrap Up frames.
- The current council jobs board will allow for easy URL referencing to You Tube as part of the application process. This is not dependent on having a recruitment system jobs board and can be easily uploaded onto Councils own jobs board, everyone can do it!

The cost of each ad should be comparable to a standard jobs board postings of wider audience budget at circa \$500. This will allow Council to invest in its own brand and create the community awareness of its presence and achievements while helping to ensure only the best quality applicants apply.

Typically, this will focus on the Councils EDM (email) communications platforms already being used by councils to promote events and community news etc. The main evolutionary.

# Conclusion

I am sure this evolution is only just beginning however while not being a futurist its plain to see that the continually improving band width is now allowing for ever improving web functionality. The emergence of video has been a dominant factor in advertising particularly in the last two years and this will only continue. It is important to incorporate this now into one of Councils most important forays into advertising, Recruitment. 

Further, data base (particularly 1st party data) and its integration into communications is becoming vital for organisational growth.

Admittedly it has resulted in the proliferation of emails competing for your consumer dollar or community attention. However the Evolutionary Challenge (EC) which is being realised is growing this first party data into a platform that provides a valued relationship driven communications. Again, Councils by having significant OWNED media assets are very well placed to take advantage of this relationship position at low cost with high value.

The next few years will see the same rapid evolution however if implemented well, it will not just create more change. It will significantly improve Councils recruitment and overall communications impact while also positioning Council to compete in the contest for skill and talent. We now all have high quality tools, it's a challenge now to use them well.

For information about this report or advice on your recruitment, please contact Richard Faithorn at [richardf@leonards.net.au](mailto:richardf@leonards.net.au)

Good luck!!

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