



High performance. Delivered.

New Approaches to Job Placement

The Challenge

The central political and social challenge facing Germany today is its comparatively high unemployment rate. At the same time, the demands made on employees have changed dramatically. Few jobs today can be performed satisfactorily without knowledge of the Internet. However, only two out of three German citizens use the Internet, whether on the job or at home. The potential of this technology for modern employment administration is enormous; the Internet is becoming the central channel for job placement and recruitment. It is predicted that in two years, half of the job placements will take place over the Internet.

Therefore, the German Federal Employment Agency (BA) is seeking to improve and expand its range of Internet services. In what ranks as one of the largest and most innovative public-sector projects in Europe today, and with the aid of Accenture, the "Virtual Job Market," a comprehensive Web- and IT-supported solution, has been created, modernizing employment placement fundamentally. The project has four modules:

- An Internet job market that provides job-seekers and employers free access to job-listings and applicant profiles, making possible an automatic matching process;
- An online portal that supplies information concerning BA's range of services, as well as current information on the job market;
- A job-robot that searches the entire Internet for additional job-listings from employers, making this information available to the BA's placement professionals;
- A new internal placement, advising and information system (VerBIS) to replace BA's old IT-system. This system makes up the largest part of the project.

Strategy

The virtual job market is part of a comprehensive and complex reorganization process underway at the BA. As a modern service provider for the job market, the BA is striving to achieve several objectives:

- Nationwide transparency of supply and demand within the job and training markets;
- Rapid access to applicant- and job-listings, to those offering and those seeking work, and the associated acceleration of the matching process on the job and training markets;
- Full deployment of all capacities in order to provide sustained support to matching in the job and training markets;
- Unbureaucratic communication-channels for transmitting offers and information;
- Flexibility in responding to specific market necessities.

Key factors for the success of the Internet services offered by the BA are the ease and speed of searching for work, training and personnel, as well as communication within the job market. In just a few years, nearly all companies and the majority of those seeking work will have access to the Internet and to the wide level of knowledge that would allow them to make extensive use of the possibilities offered by electronic job-market portals. From a political labor-market perspective, this would reduce the frictional unemployment caused by the lack of transparency, and significantly quicken the necessary matching processes.

The BA, then, is striving for a qualitative leap with its Internet-supported job-placement system. The aim is not to force commercial operators out of the market, but rather that they too profit from the BA's virtual job market. All customers will then have access to a single Web-address as a starting point for all job and training inquiries. The intention is to include, and handle in an automatic and partner-like manner, the opportunities offered by as many operators as possible. The combination of an improved process of gaining information online and professional support and advice should lead to a significant increase in efficacy and efficiency.

The Solution

In December 2003, the first phase of the "Virtual Job-Market" was up and running, and on time: the job market and online portal can be found at www.arbeitsagentur.de. In addition, the job-robot is available to BA employees across Germany. However, the "Virtual Job-Market" is much more than its Internet aspect with its search-capacity. The essential element is the implementation of the second phase: the replacement of the antiquated internal IT system, which employees of the placement agencies have worked with since mid-1980s, through VerBIS, the innovative Web-based solution developed with the help of Accenture.

The open and scaleable technical architecture of the portal is based on J2EEE and enables the implementation of complete and efficient placement processes. General data files relating to vacant positions and job-seeker profiles are constructed in "clearing databanks," and then made available via the Internet to all those involved in job placement. Other features of the service portal include applicant/application management and integrated messaging services, as well as self-administration of job-seeker profiles and employment vacancies. Intelligent IT-based search mechanisms optimize the matching of supply and demand, increasing

the accuracy of placements. At the same time, the new IT systems modernize specialized processes and integrate them into the portal. The internationally leading HR-XML standard provides the foundation for consistent and current data storage as well as data transfer with job-market partners.

The benefit to the customer

- The support of the BA's goal to shorten the average length of unemployment: assuming a reduction of one week, savings of around a billion Euros are possible;
- The matching of supply and demand becomes simpler, more flexible and more efficient; job seekers and employers receive improved personnel services, including more precise placement suggestions and additional services;
- A differentiated and targeted profiling integrates specialized services, significantly reducing processing and waiting times, and enabling an accurate selection of measures and services;
- A greater access to job listings because of improved employer interfacing and automated data exchange;
- The closer cooperation with job seekers coupled with an increase in individual activity.

Further Information

Info-de@accenture.com

www.accenture.com
www.accenture.de
www.accenture.ch
www.accenture.at