



Getting in the door with a multimedia resume

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After Ryan Dougherty sent out about 70 traditional resumes to prospective employers and got no responses, he decided he needed to shake things up.

"I had to take a different approach," he explains, but he didn't quite know what to do. That is, until he came across a video resume site called InterviewClips.com and thought, "What do I have to lose?"

He quickly made a video resume and decided whenever he applied for a job online that he would upload a cover letter with a [link to the video](#) instead of a standard resume.

Bingo!

Not only did employers start calling, but he ended up landing a job as budget manager and assistant to the dean of the University of San Francisco's nursing school in March. He believes the video resume set him apart.

"Of all the 55 or so applications we received, Ryan's was the only one who had a video resume attached," says Jossie Orense, who was an assistant to the dean at the time he applied for the job.

The video resume definitely helped get him in the door, she says. "It was our first time to ever receive a video link, we were curious about what he had to say."

In this tough economic environment, more job seekers are looking for ways to set themselves apart, and some have decided the bedrock of the job search — the traditional formatted resume — needs to go the way of the Flintstones.

Multimedia resumes that allow you to include photographs, samples of your work, videos and even Twitter feeds are gaining favor. In addition, people in the job hunt are using



their own Web sites, blogs and social **networking** sites such as LinkedIn, in lieu of or as a supplement to, the traditional resume.

More job applicants going digital

While there are no hard statistics on the growing use of such unconventional resume alternatives, hiring managers and **human resources** experts across the country say they're definitely seeing more applicants that are going digital with their resumes.

"It's an increasingly competitive **job market** and people are trying to distinguish themselves from the crowds by using different platforms and media," says Robert Pietrykowski, assistant vice president of human resources at Cleveland State University.

Lauren Wilson, a graduate student studying human resources at Missouri State University, had been looking for a paid internship outside her state since August, but only got serious interest when **she opted to create a multimedia resume** through VisualCV.com.

The online resumes includes her photograph, samples of her work, and a link to her LinkedIn profile; and she can now track who looks at her cyber resume.

"I wanted to show my work and my face, and express my passions," she says.

Within a week of sending out her VisualCV, she heard from Yahoo. She starts her internship at the **search engine** company on May 26, and is relocating to the company's headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif.

"I can't say I got the job because of it, but I think it made me seem more legit. Being from southwest Missouri, maybe people didn't take me as seriously," she surmises. "I think having the VisualCV made the difference."

After years of being scoffed at by human resource professionals, video and multimedia resumes are finally getting attention, says Joyce L. Gioia, a strategic **business** futurist and CEO of The Herman Group.



“Younger job seekers are embracing technology,” she says. In a tight labor market, people are doing everything they can so that their resumes don’t end up lost among endless piles of paper.

Gioia believe the die-hards stuck in the HR past need to be more open to newfangled resumes, because “eventually ink on paper will go away completely.”

Indeed, who needs a resume when you have a LinkedIn account, right? Social **networking** sites provide a great way to put all your information online in a nice organized format.

But noooo. When I asked a number of HR experts and hiring managers about multimedia alternatives, their first reaction was, “We still want the paper resume.”

Why?

“The HR staff is drowning in paper, but like a government program, HR systems die hard,” says David Lewis, regional manager for Express Employment Professionals in Oklahoma City. “By introducing a non-typical resume, you may actually make the HR staff’s job harder while potentially exposing them to a lawsuit.”

This has been the main argument in HR circles for some time now. The thinking is that these visual media open an employer up to litigation because suddenly you can see the person’s race, or maybe find out about their religious affiliation based on a video or social media profile.

I asked a few HR experts about the legal ramifications, and most said, given the ever-changing technological landscape, hiring managers can look up so much of this information via a Google search today that the argument is moot.

That said, nothing will keep a prospective employer from making a quick judgment call when they see your photo, a video of you, or your personal background on Facebook, says Jerry Glass, president of F&H Solutions Group, a human resources consulting firm.



"The demise of the paper resume is greatly exaggerated," says Glass. "It's still, by far, the dominant way to get in front of prospective employer."

Nothing to lose

For many job seekers, creating a video of themselves or pulling together a hip-looking multimedia resume may not be up their alley. So you risk doing more harm than good if you send off a dopey video of yourself or you don't look ready to take on the job.

If you've sent out hundreds of resumes to no avail, what do you have to lose?

But be prepared to possibly shell out some dough. Dougherty's video cost about \$400, and he had to go to the company's film studio in San Francisco, where a professional director coached him in the best way to present himself. The price included a secure URL for the video.

Other options, such as the VisualCV, are free to job seekers. Most social media sites also offer free services where you can post your accomplishments and include a host of links.

Ari Herzog, laid off last year from the Newburyport Mayor's office where he was an assistant chief administrative officer, has pretty much abandoned the traditional resume.

When he applies for a job, **he uses LinkedIn** and **his VisualCV**.

Recently he applied for a job at a Boston based advertising agency he heard about through a friend. Instead of just uploading his resume on Monster.com, he reached out to a contact on LinkedIn who worked for the firm and had that person forward his LinkedIn profile and the VisualCV URL to the recruiter.

"A couple of days later, I got a call asking for a **phone** interview," he says. "Ultimately I was not hired, but it's proof the system works."