



2022 RECRUITING METRICS

Benchmark Data by Industry

INTRODUCTION

In CareerPlug's third annual Recruiting Metrics Report, we continue to analyze our hiring data to shed light on hiring metrics and trends for [small businesses](#) across various industries. Our team analyzed hiring activity in 2021 from **more than 14,000 employers** — covering more than **5.2 million applications**.

In this report, you will find analysis of data covering the **hiring funnel** from initial visit through hire, organized by industry.

This report will establish industry-level benchmarks for key hiring metrics, including:

- Average click and application rates
- Conversion rates from click to application, from application to interview, and from interview to hire
- The number of applicants typically needed to make one hire
- The average time it takes to contact applicants — and how long it typically takes to contact a hire
- The top sources for applicants and hires
- The times of the year that are most likely to produce the highest application rates

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction | 02. |
| 2021 and The Great Resignation | 04. |
| Hiring Benchmark Metrics Defined | 05. |
| Conversion Rate Metrics Defined | 06. |
| What We Learned About Hiring in 2021 | 07. |
| Hiring Data by Industry | 12. |
| Automotive | 13. |
| Cleaning Services | 15. |
| Education & Childcare | 17. |
| Fitness | 19. |
| Healthcare | 21. |
| Home & Commercial Services | 23. |
| Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation | 25. |
| Personal Care | 27. |
| Restaurant & Food Service | 29. |
| Retail | 31. |
| How to Improve Your Hiring in 2022 | 33. |

2021 and The Great Resignation

It's impossible to view 2021 as a normal year for employment. The availability of widespread COVID vaccinations in the first quarter of 2021 helped push employers to ramp up their hiring in order to meet the demands of an American public eager to return to normal. But employers in some industries faced something unexpected – their once-reliable applicant pool had shrunk.

In 2021, the labor market faced massive readjustments largely driven by job seeker sentiment in what many have called "[The Great Resignation](#)." Jobs that were once easily filled (for example: service sector jobs like restaurants, retail, hospitality, etc.) faced a candidate population reluctant to return to work or opting instead to pursue the influx of new work-from-home roles in other industries.

Looking at our own data, we found that the number of new jobs posted using CareerPlug in 2021 increased 49% over the previous year. However, the number of people applying to jobs actually decreased by 30%. Translation: **2021 saw fewer job seekers applying for more roles.** By any measure, 2021 was a candidate's market.



136,699

New Jobs Posted
in 2020

203,298

New Jobs Posted
in 2021



7,458,254

Total Applicants
in 2020

5,235,789

Total Applicants
in 2021

At CareerPlug, many of our clients are small business owners in some of the hardest-hit industries, so these hiring pains hit close to home for us as well. We hope that the hiring data in this Recruiting Metrics Report empowers small businesses with insights and advice on how they can better shape their hiring practices to make the right hires – even in a very tight labor market.

Hiring Benchmark Metrics Defined



Views Per Job

How many views a job posting gets

Applicants Per Job

The number of applicants received divided by the number of jobs posted

Applicants Per Hire

How many applicants were received to make one hire

Average Days to Contact

The number of days it took to contact an applicant, starting from the minute the applicant applied

Average Days to Contact Hire

The number of days it took to contact an applicant who became a hire

Average Days to Hire

The number of days it took to hire an applicant, starting from the minute the applicant applied

Conversion Rate Metrics Defined



View-to-Applicant Conversion Rate

How many views of a job posting turn into applications



Applicant-to-Interview Conversion Rate

How many applications turn into interview invitations



Interview-to-Hire Conversion Rate

How many interview invitations turn into hires

What We Learned About Hiring in 2021

In analyzing the data, we found the most significant takeaways to be the answers to the following questions:

1. How many job views convert to applicants?

Rates of job view-to-applicant conversion rates are down significantly in all industries. In 2020, businesses saw an average view-to-applicant conversion rate of 7%, but **in 2021, that figure dropped to 3%**. This is just one more indicator that while these job seekers are seeing more job postings, they are applying to fewer.

Views-to-applicant conversion

| INDUSTRY | VIEWS-TO-APPLICANT RATE |
|---|-------------------------|
| Automotive | 4% |
| Cleaning Services | 5% |
| Education & Child Care | 3% |
| Fitness | 2% |
| Healthcare | 2% |
| Home & Commercial Services | 3% |
| Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation | 3% |
| Personal Care | 3% |
| Restaurant & Food Service | 3% |
| Retail | 5% |

2. How many applicants convert to hires?

Many employers want to know how many applicants it takes to make one hire. But that's a tricky question to answer without looking at a few other variables:

- The applicant-to-interview conversion rate
- The interview-to-hire conversion rate

In 2020, the average applicant-to-interview conversion rate was 15%, but in 2021, the average rose to 20%. Similarly, the interview-to-hire conversion rate saw a small rise from an average of 9% to 11%. This makes sense because with fewer applicants applying to jobs, employers are sending [interview invitations](#) to a larger portion of the candidates that do apply.

However, it's worth noting that while 2021 saw a dramatic decrease in applicant flow (down 30%), those decreases were **not** felt as dramatically further downstream in the hiring funnel. The average applicant-to-interview and interview-to-hire figures saw only modest changes. This suggests that [employers don't necessarily need more applicants](#) at the top of their funnels to make their hires – they just need to convert applicants to interviews and interviews to hires at slightly higher rates in order to hire as effectively as they have in the past.

Applicant-to-interview conversion

| INDUSTRY | APPLICANT-TO-INTERVIEW CONVERSION RATE |
|---|--|
| Automotive | 21% |
| Cleaning Services | 24% |
| Education & Child Care | 27% |
| Fitness | 13% |
| Healthcare | 22% |
| Home & Commercial Services | 20% |
| Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation | 23% |
| Personal Care | 19% |
| Restaurant & Food Service | 19% |
| Retail | 15% |

Interview-to-hire conversion

| INDUSTRY | INTERVIEW-TO-HIRE CONVERSION RATE |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Automotive | 7% |
| Cleaning Services | 4% |
| Education & Child Care | 10% |
| Fitness | 11% |
| Healthcare | 14% |
| Home & Commercial Services | 6% |
| Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation | 18% |
| Personal Care | 9% |
| Restaurant & Food Service | 19% |
| Retail | 13% |

Applicant-to-hire conversion

| INDUSTRY | APPLICANTS PER HIRE |
|---|---------------------|
| Automotive | 72 |
| Cleaning Services | 114 |
| Education & Child Care | 38 |
| Fitness | 71 |
| Healthcare | 33 |
| Home & Commercial Services | 87 |
| Hospitality, Entertainment & Recreation | 25 |
| Personal Care | 59 |
| Restaurant & Food Service | 28 |
| Retail | 51 |

3. What are the best times of year to post jobs?

January proved to be the best month to post a job in 2021 by a significant margin. **Jobs posted in January received an average of 40% more applicants per job than the yearly average.**

The worst month to post a job was April, which saw a steep decline in applicants per job – about 22% lower than the yearly average. This decline improved somewhat in May, while resuming a normal uptick in applicant flow in the summer months of June and July.

In a typical year, the holiday season months of November and December are usually the worst months to hire, but 2021 was not a typical year. April's dip in applicants coincides with a steep increase in new jobs created as businesses ramped up their hiring. Many more new jobs were posted, the number of applicants did not keep up with the demand, so competition for candidates became fierce in April.



Best Month to Post Jobs

January



Worst Month to Post Jobs

April

4. Where are the best places to post jobs?

Job boards are the most common source for applicants, producing an average of **72% of applications** across all industries in our analysis. If absolute volume is your goal, [posting your job](#) to job boards is your best bet. But despite being the source of most applicants, **job boards do not produce hires at nearly the same rate as other sources.**

Applicant Hire Rates



1%

JOB BOARDS

Job boards produced 72% of all applications **but less than half** of the hires in our analysis. Companies that rely solely on job boards are likely to find that the applicants they receive are less responsive and of lower quality than applicants generated through other means, including their own careers page, referrals, and custom links.



5%

CAREERS PAGE

In our analysis, an applicant who applied directly from a company careers page was **4 times more likely to be hired** than an applicant from a job board.



22%

REFERRALS

An applicant who applied from a referral was **18 times more likely to be hired** than an applicant from a job board.



22%

CUSTOM SOURCES

These are sources in which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry-specific job boards, local and niche job boards, etc.) Custom source applicants were **17 times more likely to be hired** than those from a job board.

Job Boards Produce Quantity, But Not Always Quality

The reasons for these stark differences in applicant-to-hire rates may vary, but our experience shows us that applicants who apply from job boards are more likely to be sending out dozens applications in short order, with less consideration for their qualifications for the role or their interest in the specific job.

By comparison, an applicant who takes the time to research a role and apply directly through a [company careers page](#) is more likely to have spent time considering their own fit for the role and the company. Likewise, an applicant who is referred to a job is much more likely to be excited about the position and be a good match. And while [custom sources](#) vary among industries, employers that use them consistently find high-quality candidates they may not have found on the major job boards.

Hiring Data by Industry

The following sections of this report are analyses containing comprehensive hiring data for the following industries:



01

Automotive

02

Cleaning Services

03

Education & Child Care

04

Fitness

05

Healthcare

06

Home & Commercial Services

07

Hospitality, Entertainment,
& Recreation

08

Personal Care

09

Restaurant & Food Service

10

Retail

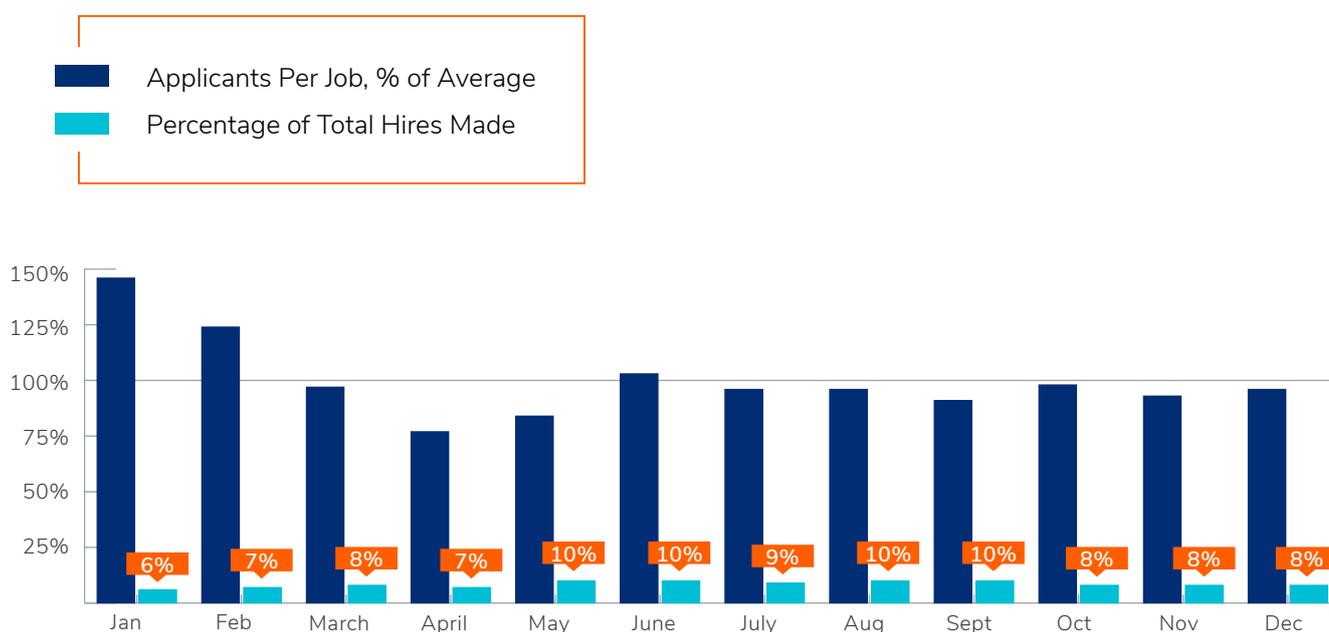
Automotive Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 433
- **Applicants Per Job:** 19
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 72
- **Average Days to Contact:** 5.4
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 4.5
- **Average Days to Hire:** 21.5

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

As with all industries in our report, **January** and **February** saw the highest percentage of applicants. After a sharp dip in April, applications stabilized in the summer months and remained steady for the rest of the year.



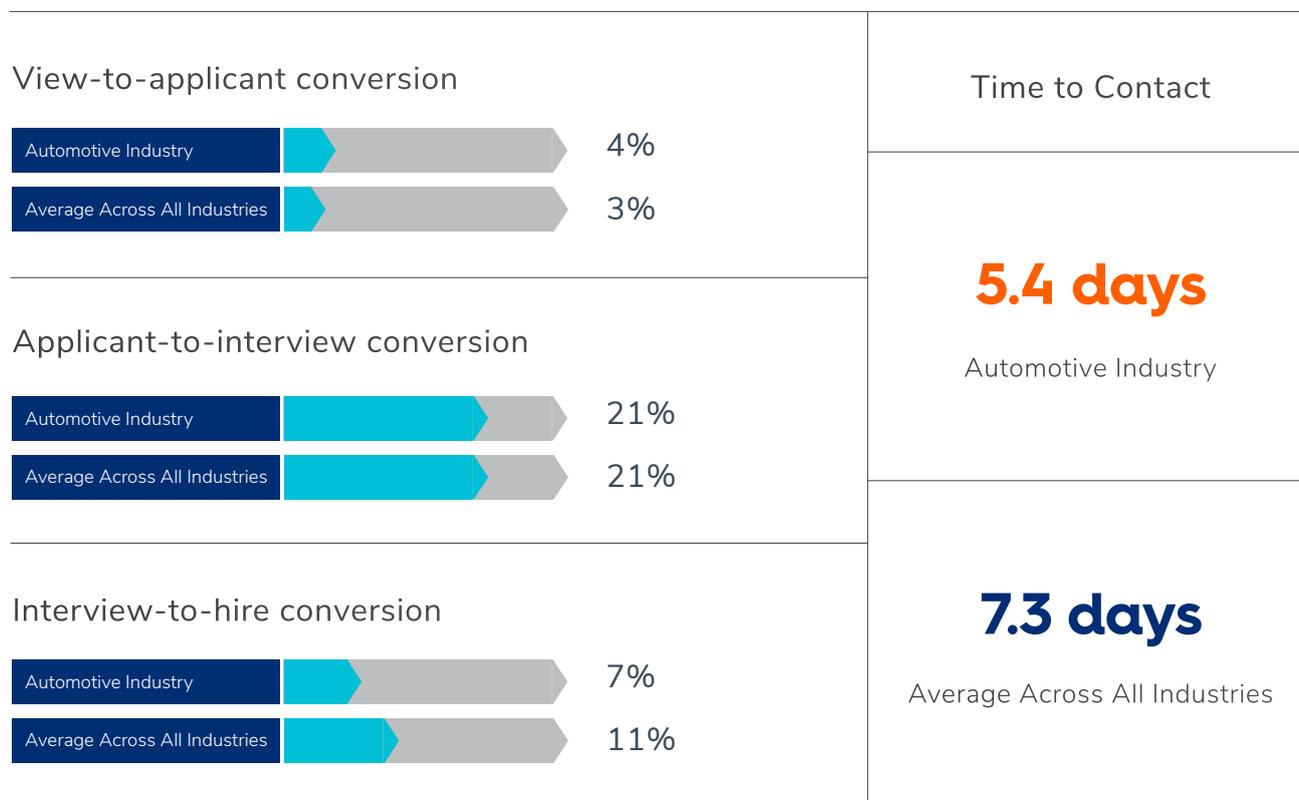
APPLICANT SOURCES

While job boards produce 79% of applicants, they only produce 56% of hires. Compare that to company careers pages, which account for only 9% of applicants, but a whopping 26% of hires. Referrals also brought in less than 1% of applicants, but 24% of those referrals became hires, making it a high-quality applicant source for automotive businesses.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 79% | 11% | 9% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 56% | 6% | 26% | 9% | 3% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 4% | 13% | 24% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ In 2021, the number of views per job was up significantly in the automotive world, with each job post averaging 433 views. However, job applications were down to just 19 applicants per job. With such fierce competition at the top of the hiring funnel, it's important for automotive business to **make sure your job postings are enticing candidates to apply**. This will be crucial in 2022, as the data shows job seekers aren't wasting time on job postings that don't catch their interest.
- ➔ **Automotive businesses should focus on employer branding** to attract candidates by giving them a sense of what they can expect from the job, your company culture, and why your business is a great place to work.
- ➔ Automotive employers also found success in recruiting outside the major job boards (e.g. Indeed, LinkedIn, etc.) by posting their jobs to custom sources, such as **Craigslist** and sending **referral email campaigns to their existing customer base**.

Cleaning Services Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 745
- **Applicants Per Job:** 34
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 114
- **Average Days to Contact:** 5.4
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 2.3
- **Average Days to Hire:** 16.2

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

As with all industries in our report, **January** and **February** saw the highest percentage of applicants. After a sharp dip in April, applications spiked to above-average levels beginning in the summer months and then stabilized to normal seasonality through the end of the year.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Job boards produce the majority of applicants (76%), but produce a little more than half of all hires. Compare that to company careers pages, which account for only 9% of applicants, but 18% of hires. Custom sources proved to be very successful for cleaning services businesses, bringing in just 1% of applicants, but 14% of hires overall.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 76% | 14% | 9% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 54% | 11% | 18% | 14% | 3% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 2% | 13% | 25% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p>  <p>Cleaning Services Industry 5%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p>  <p>Cleaning Services Industry 24%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>5.4 days</p> <p>Cleaning Services Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p>  <p>Cleaning Services Industry 4%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ The average job posting in this industry receives a high amount of applicants, and employers invite a high percentage of them to interview. However, very few of these interviews result in hires – at only 4%, this is the lowest interview-to-hire rate of all industries in our study. If you're looking to improve your results, **use [text recruiting](#) to send clear follow-up information (such as interview reminders) after an applicant applies to keep them engaged throughout the hiring process.**
- ➔ **Custom sources have proven to be a highly successful recruiting method** for this industry. In 2021, cleaning service businesses used custom sources including referral emails to customers, state department of labor websites, and local chamber of commerce websites.
- ➔ Cleaning service businesses are underutilizing an untapped source of high quality applicants – referrals. While referrals bring in less than 1% of applicants in this industry, they convert to hires at a staggering 25%. You can **increase the quality of your applicant pool by [asking your existing employees](#) and customers for referrals.**

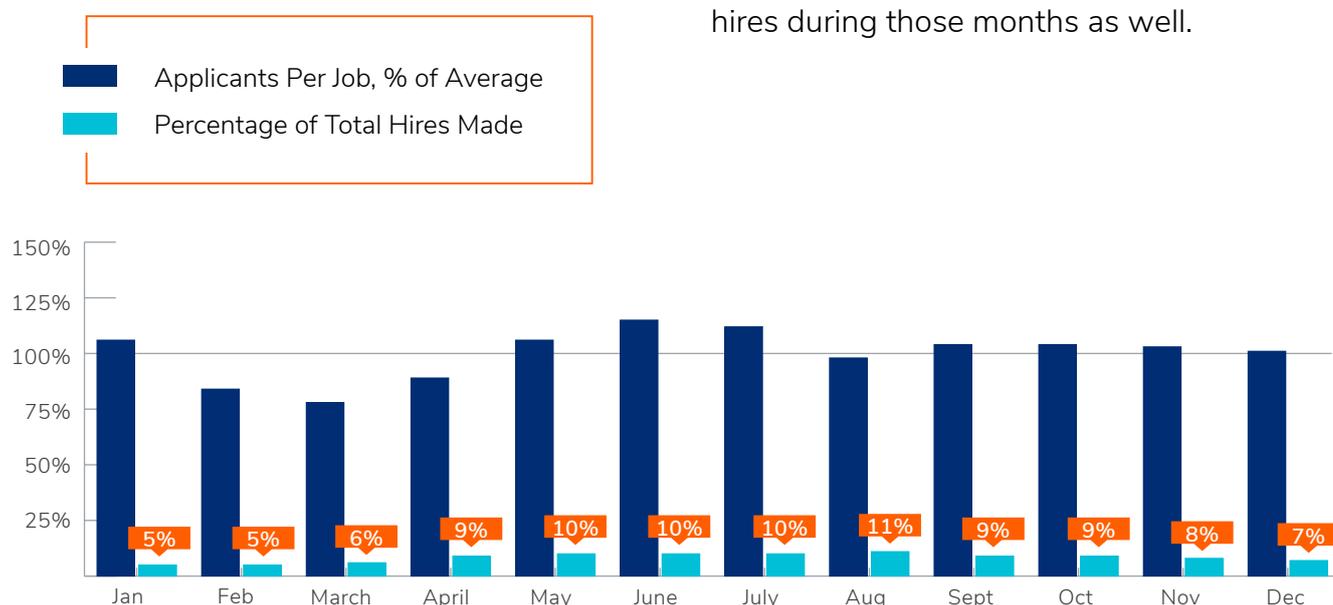
Education & Childcare Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 866
- **Applicants Per Job:** 23
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 38
- **Average Days to Contact:** 6.9
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 2.7
- **Average Days to Hire:** 23.3

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Education & childcare hiring in 2021 reflected normal seasonality for this industry. While most industries in our report saw the most applicants at the beginning of the year, this industry instead saw heightened applicant activity in the summer months of **June** and **July**. Employers made the most hires during those months as well.



APPLICANT SOURCES

This industry has more success with **sponsored job ads** on major job boards (like Indeed and ZipRecruiter) than any other industry in our study. At the same time, the organic (non-sponsored) job postings on those same job boards produce the fewest applicants among our industries. Still, careers pages and custom sources continue to be better sources for candidates that convert to hires at a much higher rate.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 48% | 35% | 15% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 37% | 20% | 34% | 7% | 2% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 2% | 1% | 6% | 17% | 19% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Education & Childcare Industry 3%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Education & Childcare Industry 27%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>6.9 days</p> <p>Education & Childcare Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Education & Childcare Industry 10%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Education & childcare employers in our study turned to sponsoring job ads in 2021 as part of their recruiting strategy, which makes sense in an industry so impacted by a lack of qualified candidates. But even though this strategy resulted in an increase in applicants and hires from sponsored ads specifically, if you look at the aggregate total of those applicants plus the applicants received from organic job board postings, it ends up being on par with results seen by other industries, just broken out differently.
- ➔ Our advice for employers in this industry is to **broaden your applicant pool to ensure you're not relying only on the job boards – whether through organic or sponsored posts – for applicants**. For example, one consistent source of high quality applicants across all industries is **referrals**. Ask your employees and customers for referrals to get better results in your next round of hiring.
- ➔ Focus your efforts on **improving your employer brand online**. Since company career pages yield 34% of hires, it's important to ensure that you have an attractive careers page that results in more applications from high-quality talent. Similarly, custom links provide an effective source of hires, so make sure your jobs are posted in places like industry-specific job boards or local university job boards.

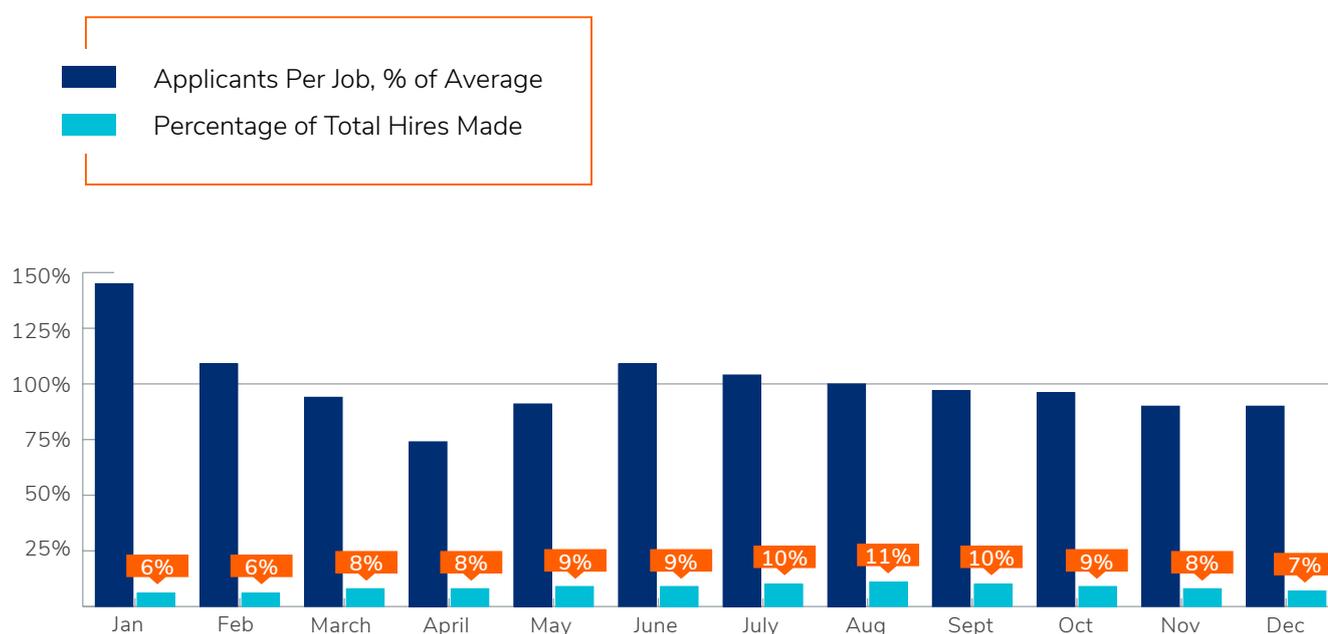
Fitness Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 1369
- **Applicants Per Job:** 33
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 71
- **Average Days to Contact:** 13.8
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 7.8
- **Average Days to Hire:** 24.3

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

In a typical year, fitness businesses see a huge spike in applicants in **January**, and 2021 was no exception. While applicants were most active in January, fitness employers actually did the least of their hiring in January, meaning that they missed out on the peak applicant volume for the year.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Company careers pages are responsible for nearly half of all hires despite only bringing in 24% of applicants. Compare that to job boards, which bring in 71% of applicants, but convert to hires at a much lower rate, resulting in only 42% of hires overall. Fitness employer careers pages remain the highest performing of any industry in our study, year after year.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 71% | 4% | 24% | <1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 42% | 4% | 49% | 3% | 2% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 3% | 17% | 12% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Fitness Industry 2%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Fitness Industry 13%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>13.8 days</p> <p>Fitness Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Fitness Industry 11%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Applicant flow for the fitness industry peaks in January – a consistent trend we’ve observed over the past three years. However, most fitness industry employers do the majority of their hiring during the summer months and face a smaller applicant pool at that time. If you’re able to, **consider recruiting in January** ahead of the summer months when competition for talent is higher.
- ➔ One explanation for the extraordinary careers page hire rate is that fitness is an industry with a [huge overlap between their customers and their potential employees](#) – people who love coming to your gym are often the people that are best qualified and most interested in joining your team. **Focus your efforts on marketing your employment opportunities to your customers.** Investing in a [strong careers page](#) and making it visible and accessible to your customers is a great way to maximize this source. If it’s hard for them to find your open positions, you might lose great potential candidates to a competitor.
- ➔ The fitness industry has the greatest time-to-contact figure in our study. **Contact applicants sooner** so that you can [convert more of them into interviews](#) and have a larger talent pool to choose from the further you get down the hiring funnel.

Healthcare Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 640
- **Applicants Per Job:** 14
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 33
- **Average Days to Contact:** 7.2
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 4.6
- **Average Days to Hire:** 19.5

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Like most industries in our study, healthcare saw the most applicant activity at the beginning of the year (peaking in **January**), but also enjoyed a nice spike in applicants in **June**. Luckily, healthcare employers capitalized on the June spike and made their highest percentage of hires during that month.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Custom sources are very effective channels for recruiting high-quality candidates in the healthcare industry. **Healthcare companies receive only 5% of their applicants from custom sources but a whopping 23% of hires.** In 2021, our clients made use of custom sources such as industry-specific job boards like [myCNAjobs](#), local and state government job boards, career fairs, and referral programs for employees and customers.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 76% | 9% | 10% | 5% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 48% | 6% | 19% | 23% | 4% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 2% | 2% | 6% | 15% | 26% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Healthcare Industry 2%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Healthcare Industry 22%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>7.2 days</p> <p>Healthcare Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Healthcare Industry 14%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Our healthcare employers (largely home healthcare businesses) typically see a lower-than-average amount of applicants per job, likely because the field is more specialized than our other industries. In 2020, healthcare employers averaged 32 applicants per job posting, but in 2021, that number dropped to just 14 applicants per job posting.
- ➔ A low view-to-applicant conversion rate means that job seekers are seeing your job postings, but aren't applying. **Make sure your job postings are compelling** and are updated to reflect competitive pay and benefits as well as COVID-19 safety protocols. For more advice on hiring in the healthcare industry, check out our in-depth resource, [Home Care: A Guide to Recruiting Caregivers During COVID-19](#).
- ➔ Healthcare employers should take the time to **explore niche applicant sources**: industry-specific job boards, local and university job boards, and more. [CareerPlug](#) integrates with two major healthcare industry job boards – [myCNAjobs](#) and the [Home Care Association of America](#) – which means that with just one click, your jobs are automatically distributed where the best applicants are searching.

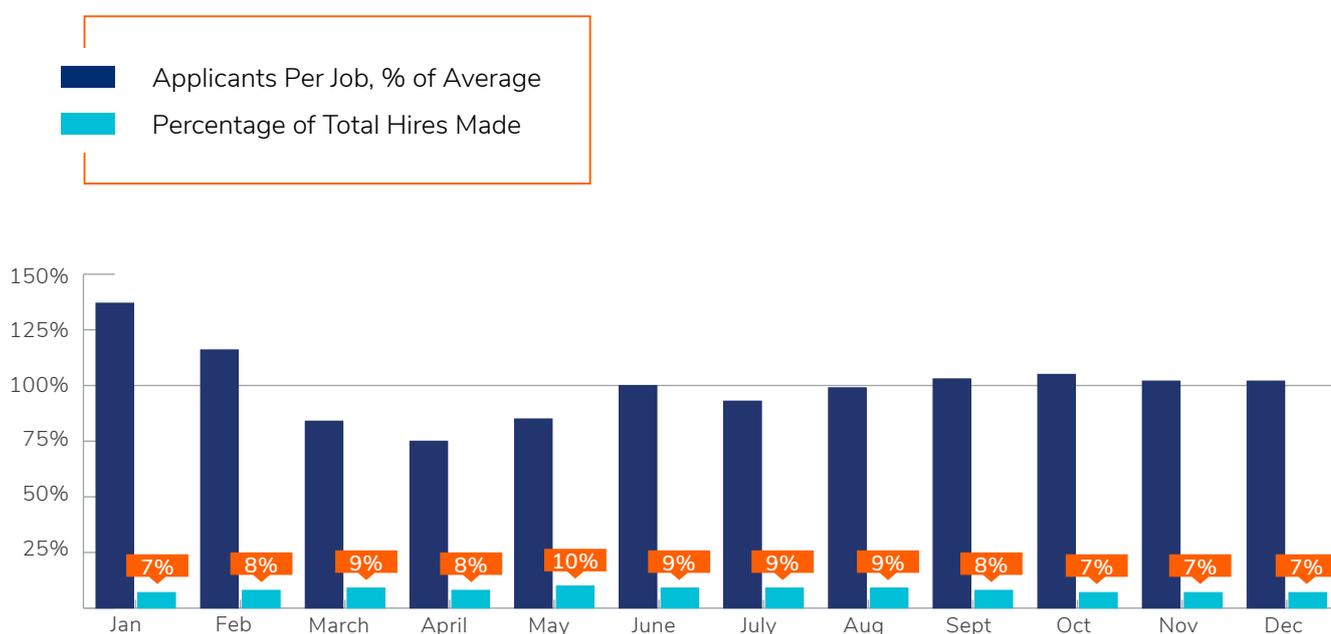
Home & Commercial Services Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 853
- **Applicants Per Job:** 26
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 87
- **Average Days to Contact:** 5.9
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 2.4
- **Average Days to Hire:** 17

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Like most industries in our analysis, home & commercial service employers saw the most applicants in **January** and **February**, then saw a steep drop from March through May. Applicant flow picked up again in June and stabilized for the remainder of the year.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Job boards may bring the largest share of applicants at 78%, but less than half of hires. Interestingly, this industry sees more success from sponsored job ads than almost all other industries in our study. Custom sources also prove to be an [untapped source of high quality candidates](#), so home & commercial service employers should consider adding them to their recruitment strategy.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 78% | 14% | 7% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 48% | 16% | 14% | 18% | 3% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 2% | 19% | 17% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Home & Commercial Services Industry 3%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Home & Commercial Services Industry 20%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>5.9 days</p> <p>Home & Commercial Services Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Home & Commercial Services Industry 6%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

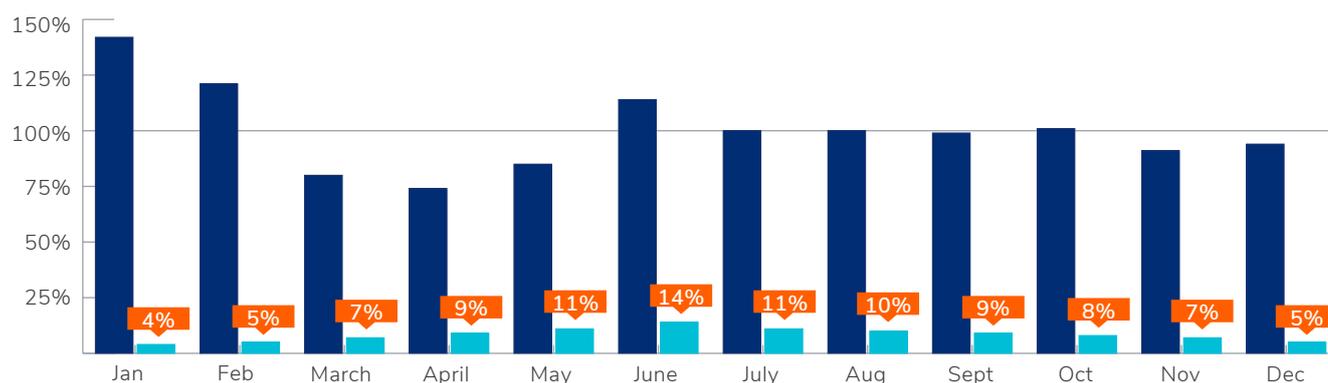
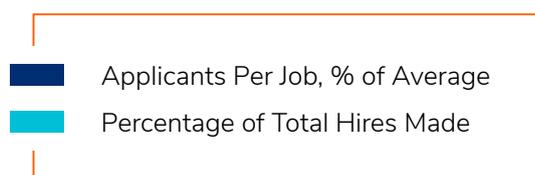
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ At 6%, this is one of the lowest interview-to-hire conversion rates in our study. Our advice: Be more selective about applicants you invite to interview. **Add pre-screen questions and assessments** earlier in your application process to better [screen candidates](#) before you invite them to interview.
- ➔ This is an industry that suffers from a high rate of no-show interviews as candidates drop out of the process after applying or interviewing. You can help increase conversions by [reaching out to high quality applicants quickly](#) and **communicating why you are the best option for them**, since high competition for skilled labor and a [poor interview experience](#) can drive a low interview-to-hire rate.
- ➔ This industry sees more success from sponsored job ads than almost all other industries in our study. It may be worth it for home and commercial services employers to **experiment with sponsoring job postings on job boards like Indeed and ZipRecruiter** to increase your applicant flow and hire faster.
- ➔ Employers in this industry have also had success with custom sources such as **local and state government job boards**, as well as **referral emails to customers**.

Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 1270
- **Applicants Per Job:** 34
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 25
- **Average Days to Contact:** 6.9
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 3.8
- **Average Days to Hire:** 13.7



THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

As with all industries in our study, **January** and **February** were the best months to hire. However, employers in this industry missed out on this high applicant flow, making the least amount of hires during those months. Luckily, job seekers and employers got on the same page later in the year, as applicant flow peaked again in June when businesses began ramping up their hiring for the summer travel season.

APPLICANT SOURCES

For hospitality, entertainment, and recreation businesses, job boards produce the lowest percentage of hires than any other industry in our study. While job boards bring in 73% of applicants total, they account for just 31% of hires. Compare this to company careers pages, which bring in only 12% of applicants, but 34% of hires. Custom sources also perform well in this industry, bringing in 24% of hires.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 73% | 12% | 12% | 3% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 31% | 7% | 34% | 24% | 3% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 2% | 2% | 11% | 36% | 32% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation 3%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation 23%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>6.9 days</p> <p>Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Hospitality, Entertainment, & Recreation 17%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

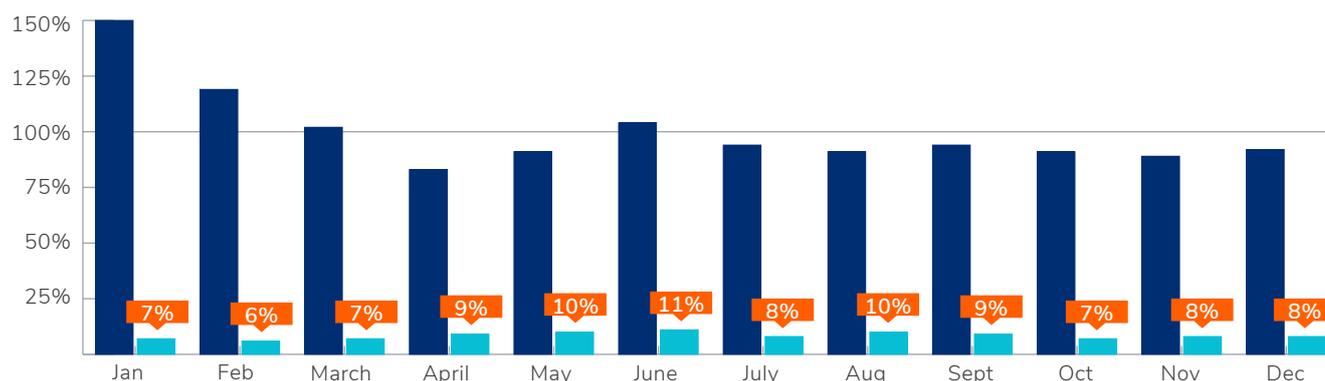
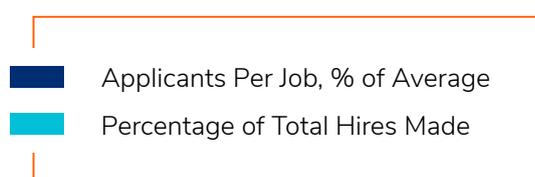
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Job seekers and employers in this industry were not on the same page in 2021. Employers missed out on peak applicant flow in January and February. There may be seasonality affecting your recruiting decisions, but if you want to benefit from a larger applicant pool, you might **consider recruiting in January** instead of the summer months when competition for talent is higher.
- ➔ Job boards may not produce the kinds of results you're hoping for. Instead, businesses should **focus on the biggest drivers of hires** – [company careers pages](#) and **custom sources**, such as local and university job boards, career fairs, and referral emails to customers. Employers in this industry also reported success from **recruiting and hiring former employees**, a practice known as "[boomerang hiring](#)."
- ➔ In 2021, employers in this industry were quicker to hire, shaving a week off their average time-to-hire from 2020. You'll want to move fast before your competition scoops up quality candidates. Try [text recruiting](#) to **communicate with candidates faster**. An applicant tracking system like CareerPlug can also help you quickly evaluate candidates using a proven hiring process, allowing you to accelerate your hiring decisions without sacrificing quality.

Personal Care Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 1007
- **Applicants Per Job:** 25
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 59
- **Average Days to Contact:** 6.7
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 3.3
- **Average Days to Hire:** 18.9



THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

As with all industries in our study, **January** saw the highest applicant flow. However, while employers began to ramp up their hiring in April, applicant flow dropped off dramatically. The summer months brought a little more stability to this industry – applicant flow began to bounce back in June just as employers were making the majority of their hires.

APPLICANT SOURCES

Two sources produce candidates with the highest rate of success: company careers pages and custom sources. Careers pages bring in a quarter of all applicants and 32% of hires overall. Custom sources produce just 1% of applicants, but a whopping 15% of hires. Job boards account for the majority of applicants, but just under half of all hires.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 68% | 7% | 25% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 49% | 3% | 32% | 15% | <1% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 2% | 34% | 9% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Personal Care Industry 2.5%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | Time to Contact |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Personal Care Industry 19%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>6.7 days</p> <p>Personal Care Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Personal Care Industry 9%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Job boards may produce the majority of applicants, but personal care employers can expect to get only 49% of their hires from this source. Diversify your applicant sources to decrease your reliance on the job boards. **Custom sources such as local and community job boards would be a great place to start** – in this industry, sources like these produce only 1% of applicants, but 15% of hires.
- ➔ Personal care employers also reported success from **referral email campaigns** to customers. If you already have a mailing list to market your services to customers, you already have an audience that loves your brand. Take this opportunity to market your [employer brand](#) to them as well.
- ➔ Company careers pages are a huge driver of applicants and hires overall for this industry. Applicants who take the time to research a company on their careers page tend to be the most motivated candidates and are more selective about where they choose to apply. Personal care employers should **invest the effort into creating attractive and compelling [careers pages](#)** to entice these high-quality candidates to apply.

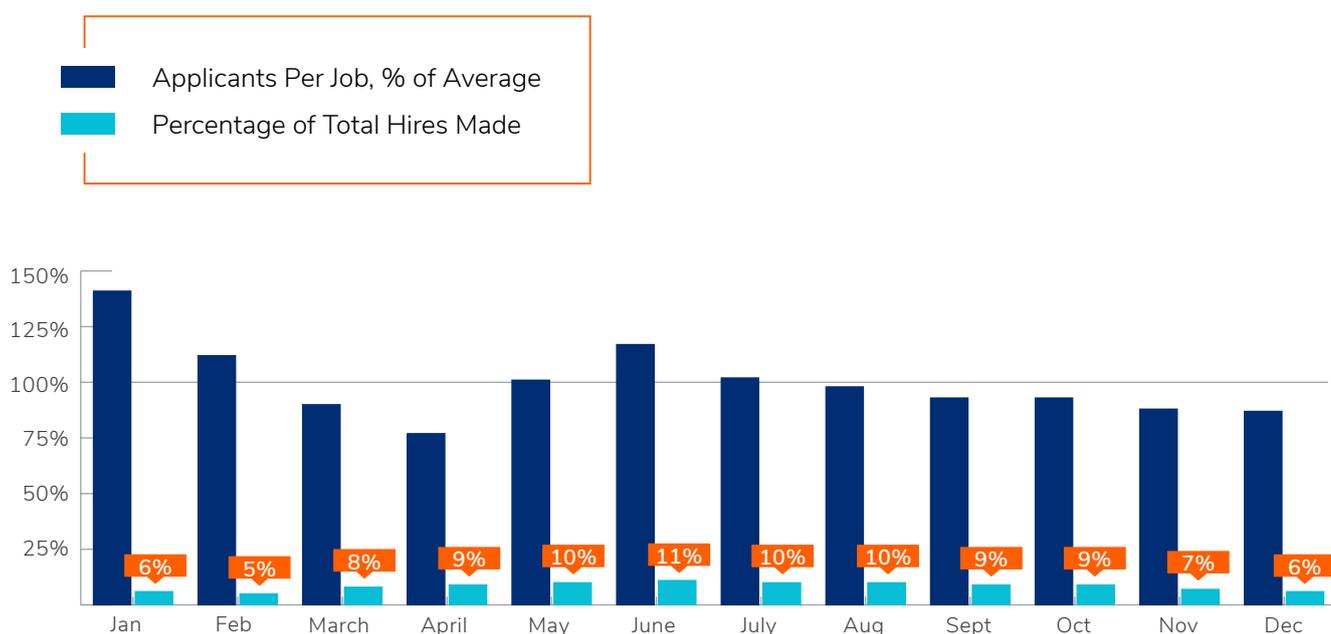
Restaurant & Food Service Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 881
- **Applicants Per Job:** 26
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 28
- **Average Days to Contact:** 7.7
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 3.1
- **Average Days to Hire:** 10.4

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Like all industries in our study, **January** saw the highest applicant flow. While restaurants weren't doing much hiring in January, they were able to capitalize on another uptick in applicants a few months later – May through July saw strong applicant flow that coincided with peak restaurant hiring.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Company careers pages have consistently proven to be a monster success at producing high-quality candidates and the majority of hires for restaurants. While bringing in only 21% of applicants, company careers pages account for a staggering 46% of hires. Compare that to the major job boards, which bring in the vast majority of applicants, but just 36% of total hires.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 73% | 5% | 21% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 36% | 3% | 46% | 13% | 2% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 2% | 2% | 8% | 38% | 36% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>View-to-applicant conversion</p> <p>Restaurant & Food Service Industry 3%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>Time to Contact</p> |
| <p>Applicant-to-interview conversion</p> <p>Restaurant & Food Service Industry 19%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>7.7 days</p> <p>Restaurant & Food Service Industry</p> |
| <p>Interview-to-hire conversion</p> <p>Restaurant & Food Service Industry 19%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ In this industry, company careers pages are the primary driver of hires. This isn't surprising, as this is an industry where your customers and your potential employees have significant overlap, especially in quick-serve and fast-casual dining. People who know and love your brand will be motivated to apply to your business when they're on the job market. Make sure you're prepared to capture that inbound traffic by **having an accessible and attractive [careers page](#)** where your customers can easily find available jobs.
- ➔ This is also an industry that enjoys an above average interview-to-hire conversion rate – close to double the industry average. This means that restaurant employers likely have **strong [candidate screening and evaluation processes](#) at the top of the hiring funnel** and that candidates are saying “yes” to job offers at a high rate. In order to remain competitive in this industry, you'll want to **ensure that you're providing a [positive candidate experience](#) all throughout the hiring process** – from job posting to job offer.

Retail Industry

BENCHMARK DATA

- **Views Per Job:** 625
- **Applicants Per Job:** 34
- **Applicants Per Hire:** 51
- **Average Days to Contact:** 7.1
- **Average Days to Contact Hire:** 3.7
- **Average Days to Hire:** 19.2

THE BEST TIME TO HIRE

Applicant flow peaked in **January** and stayed strong through **June** (with a very brief but sharp dip in April). However, the second half of the year saw steadily declining applicant volume just as retail employers were doing most of their hiring – resulting in a total mismatch between job seeker activity and employer demand.



APPLICANT SOURCES

Job boards produce 78% of applicants, but just 48% of hires. Meanwhile, company careers pages account for just 15% of applicants, but 35% of hires – a great ROI for retail recruiting. Equally as impressive: Candidates who apply from custom sources (such as local and university job boards or email marketing campaigns) make up only 1% of applicants, but 13% of hires.

| SOURCE | JOB BOARDS | SPONSORED JOB ADS | CAREERS PAGE | CUSTOM SOURCE* | REFERRAL |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|
| % of Applicants | 78% | 6% | 15% | 1% | <1% |
| % of Hires | 48% | 2% | 35% | 13% | 2% |
| % of Applicants Hired | 1% | 1% | 5% | 22% | 15% |

*Custom source: A source to which an employer manually shared a job posting (industry job board, local university, Craigslist, etc.)

KEY METRICS

| | |
|---|---|
| View-to-applicant conversion | Time to Contact |
| <p>Retail Industry 5.4%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 3%</p> | <p>7.1 days</p> <p>Retail Industry</p> |
| Applicant-to-interview conversion | |
| <p>Retail Industry 15%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 20%</p> | <p>7.3 days</p> <p>Average Across All Industries</p> |
| Interview-to-hire conversion | |
| <p>Retail Industry 13%</p> <p>Average Across All Industries 11%</p> | |

KEY TAKEAWAYS

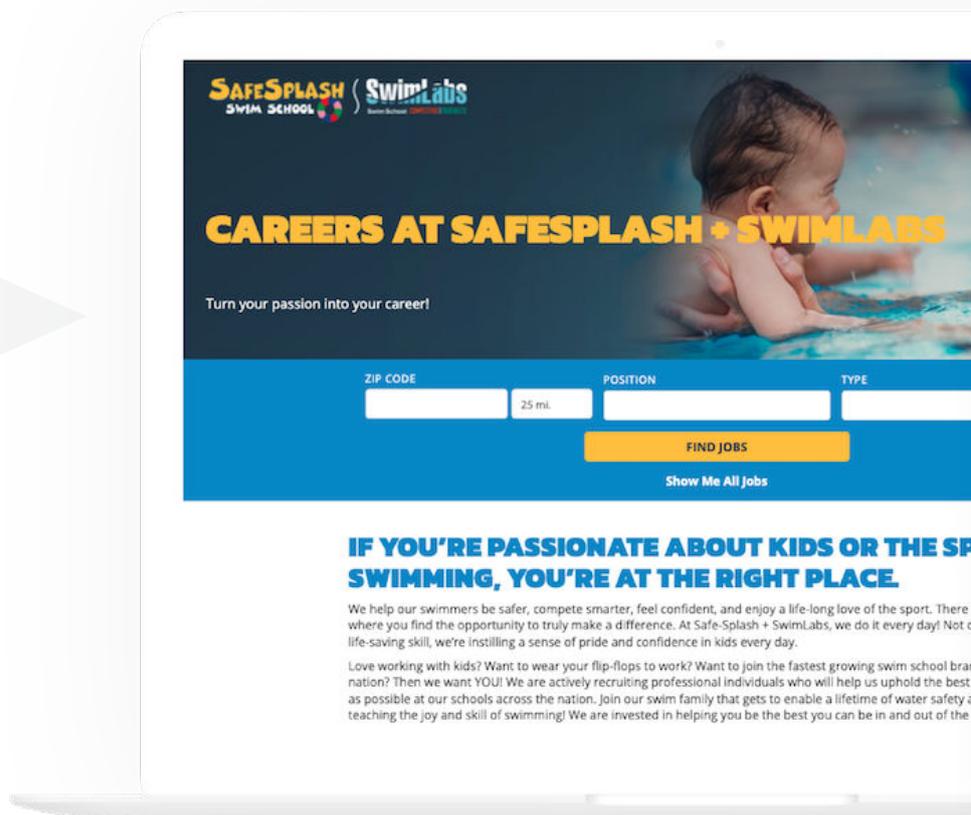
- ➔ Job seekers and employers in this industry were not on the same page in 2021. **Retail employers missed out on peak applicant flow in the first half of the year** and did most of their hiring just as applicant volume was declining.
- ➔ Retail sees a high view-to-applicant conversion rate, but a low applicant-to-interview conversion rate. Businesses that struggle to convert applicants into interviews despite having a high volume of applicants are likely receiving unqualified applicants in the first place. The low success rate but high volume of job board applicants may be partially to blame. Focus your efforts on **pre-screening candidates through questions and assessments** early in the application process.
- ➔ The major job boards are responsible for less than half of your hires, so **diversify your candidate pool with applicant sources other than job boards**. Make sure your **careers page** is engaging (e.g. showcase **employee testimonials** or create a brand employment video). Explore custom sources like local and community job boards, university job boards, Craigslist, employee referrals, and email campaigns to your customers.

How to Improve Your Hiring in 2022

2021 was a rollercoaster year for recruiting, but we've gained insights into what steps businesses can take now to hire top talent regardless of the state of the job market.

1. Build your employer brand and showcase it on your careers page.

Company careers pages are a hugely successful source of hires, but an untapped source of applicants overall. Candidates who take the time to research a company tend to be high-quality candidates who are more selective about where they choose to apply. Invest in creating an engaging and attractive [careers page](#) that showcases [employee testimonials](#), aspects of your company culture, and your [core values](#).

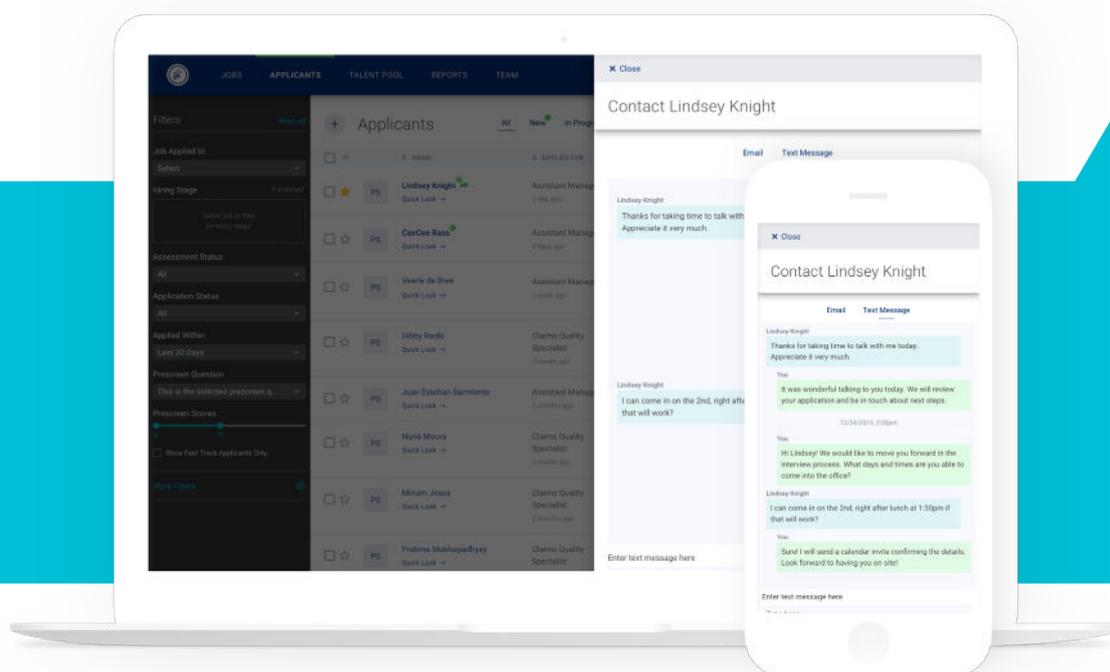


2. Create better job postings to stand apart from your competitors.

In 2021, we frequently heard from employers who were [concerned about the declining number of applicants](#) to their jobs. But our data shows that job postings received just as many views per job as in 2020 – however the number of applicants per job was cut nearly in half. This tells us that **job seekers are seeing your postings, they're just faced with more options than ever, and they're only applying to the opportunities that appeal to them the most.** As an employer, it's crucial that you write [enticing job descriptions](#) so that candidates are compelled to apply to your business and not your competitors. Practice [pay transparency](#) by offering [competitive pay and benefits](#) and advertising it in the job posting.

3. Create a job marketing strategy that doesn't rely on job boards.

Compile a list of [custom sources](#) like industry-specific job boards, community message boards, local and university job boards, and email campaigns to customers. Compile another list of employees, friends, and colleagues in your personal network to reach out to for referrals. Our data shows **these sources produce the highest-quality candidates, yet the lowest percentage of applicants.** Plan on targeting them before your next round of hiring.



4. Communicate with candidates faster.

Employers are now quicker to hire, shaving nearly a week off their time-to-hire between 2020 and 2021. You'll want to move fast before your competition scoops up quality candidates. Try [text recruiting](#) to communicate with candidates faster. Text messages receive an 8 times higher response rate than email, along with a much faster response time. An applicant tracking system like CareerPlug can also help you [quickly evaluate candidates](#) using a proven hiring process, allowing you to accelerate your hiring decisions without sacrificing quality.



ABOUT CAREERPLUG

CareerPlug is a software company on a mission to solve the #1 challenge of running a business: attracting and hiring the right people. More than 14,000 clients love working with us because we give them a proven playbook to make the right hires. And you don't need to be an HR pro to succeed, since our software is easy enough for anyone to use. We're committed to Making Hiring Easier for all businesses. And it's our goal that by sharing original research reports like this one, we can contribute to this mission.

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