

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

[CAREERS](#)

JANUARY 24, 2012

No More Résumés, Say Some Firms

By [RACHEL EMMA SILVERMAN](#)

Union Square Ventures recently posted an opening for an investment analyst.

Instead of asking for résumés, the New York venture-capital firm—which has invested in Twitter, Foursquare, Zynga and other technology companies—asked applicants to send links representing their "Web presence," such as a Twitter account or Tumblr blog. Applicants also had to submit short videos demonstrating their interest in the position.

Union Square says its process nets better-quality candidates —especially for a venture-capital operation that invests heavily in the Internet and social-media—and the firm plans to use it going forward to fill analyst positions and other jobs.

Companies are increasingly relying on social networks such as LinkedIn, video profiles and online quizzes to gauge candidates' suitability for a job. While most still request a résumé as part of the application package, some are bypassing the staid requirement altogether.

A résumé doesn't provide much depth about a candidate, says Christina Cacioppo, an associate at Union Square Ventures who blogs about the hiring process on the company's website and was herself hired after she compiled a profile comprising her personal blog, Twitter feed, LinkedIn profile, and links to social-media sites Delicious and Dopplr, which showed places where she had traveled.



Matt Nager for The Wall Street Journal

StickerGiant's John Fischer, right, and interviewee Adam Thackeray shoot a video Monday. Mr. Fischer uses an online survey to screen applicants.

"We are most interested in what people are like, what they are like to work with, how they think," she says.

John Fischer, founder and owner of StickerGiant.com, a Hygiene, Colo., company that makes bumper and marketing stickers, says a résumé isn't the best way to determine whether a potential employee will be a good social fit for the company. Instead, his firm uses an online survey to help screen applicants.

Questions are tailored to the position. A current opening for an Adobe Illustrator expert asks applicants about their skills, but also asks questions such as "What is your ideal dream job?" and "What is the best job you've ever had?" Applicants have the option to attach a résumé, but it isn't required. Mr. Fischer says he started using online questionnaires several years ago, after receiving too many résumés from candidates who had no qualifications or interest. Having applicants fill out surveys is a "self-filter," he says.

A previous posting for an Internet marketing position had applicants rate their marketing and social-media skills on a scale of one to 10 and select from a list of words how friends or co-workers would describe them. Options included: high energy, type-A, laid back, perfect, creative or fun.

In times of high unemployment, bypassing résumés can also help companies winnow out candidates from a broader labor pool.

IGN Entertainment Inc., a gaming and media firm, launched a program dubbed Code Foo, in which it taught programming skills to passionate gamers with little experience, paying participants while they learned. Instead of asking for résumés, the firm posted a series of challenges on its website aimed at gauging candidates' thought processes. (One challenge: Estimate how many pennies lined side by side would span the Golden Gate Bridge.)

It also asked candidates to submit a video demonstrating their love of gaming and the firm's products.

IGN is a unit of [News Corp.](#), which also owns The Wall Street Journal.

Nearly 30 people out of about 100 applicants were picked for the six-week Code Foo program, and six were eventually hired full-time. Several of the hires were nontraditional applicants who didn't attend college or who had thin work experience.

"If we had just looked at their résumés at the moment we wouldn't have hired them," says Greg Silva, IGN's vice president of people and places. The company does require résumés for its regular job openings.

At most companies, résumés are still the first step of the recruiting process, even at supposedly nontraditional places like [Google](#) Inc., which hired about 7,000 people in 2011, after receiving some two million résumés. Google has an army of "hundreds" of recruiters who actually read every one, says Todd Carlisle, the technology firm's director of staffing.

But Dr. Carlisle says he reads résumés in an unusual way: from the bottom up.

Candidates' early work experience, hobbies, extracurricular activities or nonprofit involvement—such as painting houses to pay for college or touring with a punk rock band through Europe—often provide insight into how well an applicant would fit into the company culture, Dr. Carlisle says.

Plus, "It's the first sample of work we have of yours," he says.

Write to Rachel Emma Silverman at rachel.silverman@wsj.com