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Career Sites Reimagined

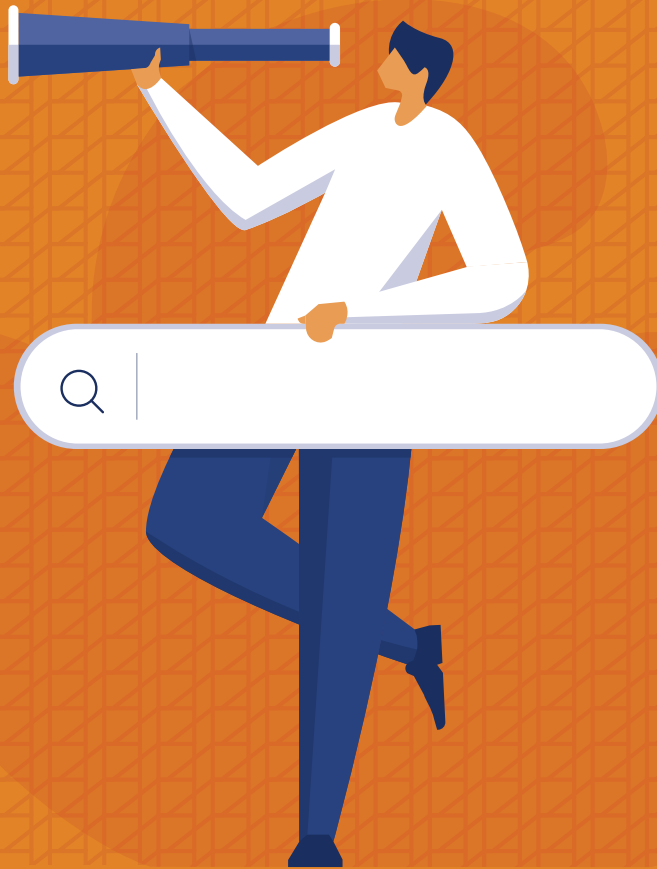
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Career Sites Reimagined



Introduction

Career sites are undergoing a fundamental transformation — and it's not happening quietly. Once considered a “check the box” or branding touchpoint, the career site is now a strategic priority with growing urgency and even C-suite visibility. For many organizations, especially those competing for high-volume and high-skill talent, the career site is now seen as a critical extension of the employer brand, candidate experience, and even business performance.

The traditional career site model — static, content-heavy, and largely employer-centric — is no longer serving the needs of today's job seekers. Candidates expect digital experiences that mirror the convenience and personalization of consumer platforms. In response, a new generation of career sites is taking shape: leaner, more intuitive, conversational, and far strategic front door to the organization.

New research from Aptitude found that:

1 in 4 companies are looking to invest in a new career site this year.

62% of those companies stated that they are receiving pressure from their C-level executives to improve the career site

This report explores the changing role of career sites, the challenges with the traditional models, and the benefits of a new era of AI and conversational career sites. Through new research, data insights, and market examples, we'll examine how enterprise employers are redefining what it means to engage and convert talent early in the process.

1 IN 4
COMPANIES
ARE LOOKING TO
INVEST IN A CAREER
SITE THIS YEAR



From job search that surfaces relevant roles instantly, to interfaces that guide rather than overwhelm, this new model reimagines what it means to attract and convert talent.

This shift is not being driven by startups or fast-moving disruptors, but by large enterprise organizations — brands like Marriott and Nike that are setting the tone for what modern, high-performing career sites should look and feel like. These companies are moving beyond templates and legacy CMS platforms, investing in custom-built experiences that are conversational, hyper-personalized, and service-led.

But this evolution is also part of something bigger. Career sites are no longer standalone assets — they sit at the intersection of a bigger conversation in TA Tech around candidate experience, engagement, and outcomes. They are where first impressions are made, where talent pipelines are activated, and where company culture becomes real for prospective hires. In this sense, the career site is not just a recruiting tool — it's a company initiative.

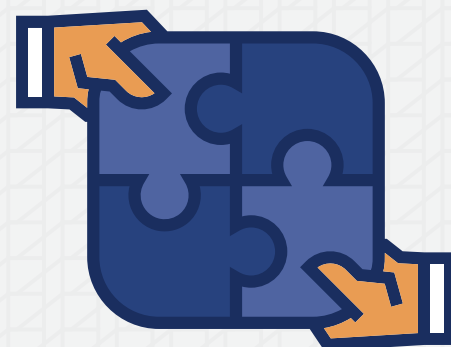
This report will look at the following:

Investment in Career Sites Today

Challenges with Traditional Career Sites

Key Trends in the Future of Career Sites

The Business Impact of Conversational Career Sites



The career site
is not just a
recruiting tool —
it's a company
initiative.



1

Investment in
Career Sites



42%
Increased

44%
Remained the same

8%
Decreased

6%
Don't know

70%

OF ENTERPRISE
COMPANIES HAVE
A DEDICATED
CAREER SITE

Growing Investment in Career Sites

There has always been an urgency around career sites, but this year even more so. We found that 70% of enterprise companies have a dedicated career site. As labor markets tighten and candidate expectations evolve, organizations are realizing that their ability to compete for talent starts with the experience delivered on their career site. No longer seen as a static entry point or a compliance-driven necessity, the career site is now viewed as a critical part of the TA tech stack.

Our research shows that 1 in 4 enterprise companies plan to replace their career site within the next 12 months, an indicator of just how misaligned current solutions have become with candidate expectations. These replacements reflect more than cosmetic updates — they are efforts to fundamentally rethink search functionality, site speed, design simplicity, and personalization.

This urgency is driven not just by internal dissatisfaction, but by the reality that a poor career site directly impacts candidate drop-off, time-to-hire, and brand perception. For many TA leaders, the career site has become the most visible — and most urgent — fix on their roadmap.

Backing this urgency is a marked increase in financial investment. forty-two percent of companies report that they are increasing their investment in their career site over the next year. This is a strong sign that organizations are beginning to treat their career site not as a one-time launch, but as a living digital product — one that must evolve, iterate, and improve over time.

42%

OF COMPANIES REPORT
THAT THEY ARE INCREASING
THEIR INVESTMENT IN
THEIR CAREER SITE
OVER THE NEXT YEAR

Key drivers for this investment include pressure from senior leadership, urgency to improve the candidate experience, and demand for more consumer-like experiences that candidates now expect. Companies are prioritizing investments in:

- **Smarter, faster job search experiences**
- **Conversational and guided interfaces**
- **Personalized content and language localization**
- **Frontline and mobile-first application flows**
- **Real-time analytics to inform continuous optimization**

The Career Site as a Catalyst for Broader Transformation

Importantly, investment in the career site often serves as a gateway to wider digital transformation across the talent acquisition function. A modern career site requires better content strategy, tighter integration with ATS and CRM systems, clearer employer value propositions, and more advanced analytics.

As a result, rethinking the career site can create momentum for:

- **Employer branding refreshes**
- **Recruitment marketing automation**
- **Diversity and inclusion storytelling**
- **Enhanced candidate relationship management**

For many organizations, the career site is where change starts — because it's the most visible, most candidate-facing asset. And once momentum builds, it often leads to broader improvements across the recruiting ecosystem.

There is real urgency — and real opportunity — in reimagining the career site. It is no longer optional or low-priority. It's the front door to your hiring process, your brand, and your culture.

Challenges and Realities

As the career site takes on greater strategic importance, the limitations of traditional models have become more visible — and more costly. Despite being the starting point for most job seekers, many career sites still fall short of delivering the kind of efficient, engaging, and intuitive experience that today's candidates expect. And for many traditional providers, the cost of a career site has gone up. Companies often spend several hundreds on the career site and additional content services to support it.



There is real
urgency — and
real opportunity —
in reimagining
the career site.

2

Top Challenges with Career Sites



Problems with Search

58%

Low Engagement

52%

Lack of Analytics

50%

Site Bloat

42%

Inability to Target

40%

Leading companies have reimagined search as a **core design element**, placing it at the center of the candidate journey.



A closer look at the data and candidate behavior reveals a number of challenges including search, lack of analytics, and low engagement. Additional challenges include site bloat and inability to target audiences like frontline workers.

Ineffective Search Experience

Search is arguably the most essential feature of any career site — and one of the most underperforming. Candidates arrive with a clear intent: to find a role that matches their skills, goals, and availability. Yet in many cases, the search bar functions poorly, filters are limited, and job results feel generic or irrelevant.

This disconnect results in lost engagement early in the journey. If candidates can't find what they're looking for in under a minute, they're likely to abandon the site altogether.

Leading companies have reimagined search as a core design element, placing it at the center of the candidate journey. With intuitive filtering by role type, location, and brand, career sites can enable fast, personalized job discovery — reducing friction and aligning with how people navigate digital platforms in their daily lives.

Slow Time to Engagement

Time-to-engagement — the length of time it takes a visitor to take meaningful action — is a critical performance metric. Yet, **72% of companies report that it takes more than five minutes** for candidates to engage with their career site in any meaningful way.

This delay is often due to complex navigation, long content pages, and unclear calls to action. Instead of guiding users toward relevant roles or helpful resources, legacy designs tend to overwhelm or distract.

Modern career sites streamline this process, using dynamic content, personalized landing pages, and job-first logic to engage candidates within the first few clicks.

Content Bloat and Fragmentation

Historically, organizations have taken a “more is better” approach to career site content. But in many cases, this leads to site bloat, where candidates must wade through page after page to find relevant information.

Our research shows that **60% of companies have more than four pages on their career site**. While well-intentioned, this excess content can actually undermine engagement — especially when it’s outdated, redundant, or hard to navigate.

Top-performing sites are flipping this model, offering less content, more relevance, and a streamlined flow that focuses on action, not brochure-style storytelling.

Under-Serving Frontline and Hourly Talent

A major blind spot for many employers is the experience of frontline and hourly workers, who represent a significant percentage of the global workforce.

Yet, only 28% of companies with hourly roles have a dedicated career site experience for this segment. This is a missed opportunity. These candidates often apply via mobile, value speed over polish, and expect fast, frictionless experiences — especially for roles in retail, hospitality, and healthcare.

Companies like Marriott and Nike are leading the way with tailored job searches, simplified applications, and location-aware content that directly supports this segment.

TruGreen reimaged its career site and saved \$1.8 million in 12 weeks.

60%
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CAREER SITE





**Candidates
expect better —
and leading
employers
are already
delivering it.**

Limited Analytics and Optimization

Most companies track basic site metrics like visits and page views, but very few have access to behavioral analytics that can improve candidate conversion. Without insights into search abandonment, drop-off rates, or time-on-task, career sites remain static assets instead of adaptive, performance-driven platforms.

In the absence of actionable data, employers struggle to answer key questions:

- **Why are candidates dropping off?**
- **Which jobs are most viewed but least applied to?**
- **What content actually drives engagement?**

Unlocking these insights is essential to evolving the career site into a continuous optimization engine — one that adapts and improves based on real-time candidate behavior.

The Cost of Inaction

These challenges are not just technical flaws — they represent missed opportunities to convert interest into action. In a competitive hiring landscape, every extra click, confusing menu, or slow-loading page can cost a qualified candidate.

Organizations that continue to rely on outdated, bloated, and employer-centric career sites risk falling behind. Candidates expect better — and leading employers are already delivering it.

The career site is no longer a static repository of job postings and corporate messaging. As candidate expectations evolve, a new set of design and experience principles is emerging — rooted in speed, relevance, personalization, and emotional connection. Below are five defining trends that are reshaping the way organizations, particularly enterprises, think about their career sites.



Key Trends in Career Sites

3

Key Trends in Career Sites

When we asked candidates what they value most in a career site experience. The responses paint a clear picture: candidates are looking for functionality, clarity, and human connection — not fluff (see Figure 3).

Top-Ranked Features: Engagement and Guidance

Job alerts, employee stories, and candidate communication tools top the list, each selected by over 30% of respondents.

These features reflect candidates' desire to feel informed, supported, and connected — both during and after their initial site visit.


Conversational Technology Matters

Nearly 28% of respondents cited Conversational AI/chatbot functionality as a priority, reinforcing the growing role of interactive and guided experiences on modern career sites.

This aligns with the trend toward concierge-like navigation — helping candidates feel supported throughout their journey.



28%
OF RESPONDENTS
CITED CONVERSATIONAL
AI/CHATBOT AS A
A PRIORITY



Simplicity isn't
just a design
preference — it's
a competitive
advantage.

Search Is Still a Key Pain Point

A significant share of candidates (nearly 30%) called for more job search filters, while many others requested personalized job recommendations.

This reflects ongoing frustration with generic or clunky search experiences — an area where legacy career sites still underperform.

Clarity and Transparency Are Crucial

Over 29% of candidates selected clear and detailed job descriptions as a critical feature.

Candidates want to understand not just what the job is, but what it's like — which ties closely to employer branding, DEI transparency, and employee stories.

DEI and Events Rank Lower — But Offer Strategic Value

Fewer candidates selected DEI statements or events information, but that doesn't mean they're unimportant.

These may serve more as reinforcing elements rather than primary decision drivers — offering context and credibility once a candidate is already engaged.

If your career site isn't making it easy for candidates to find, understand, and act on opportunities — while feeling supported and valued — it's not just a missed opportunity, it's a competitive risk.

Less Is More: Dynamic Experiences Over Bloated Content

Modern career sites are shedding their excess. Where many legacy sites still span five to ten static pages, today's leaders are streamlining the experience, minimizing navigation friction, and delivering dynamic content that adapts to the candidate's journey.

Marriott exemplifies this "less is more" approach. Rather than overwhelming candidates with corporate content, the site emphasizes fast load times, a simplified interface, and immediate access to job search. It respects the user's time and keeps the focus on exploration and action, not scrolling.

In an age where attention spans are short and application drop-off is high, simplicity isn't just a design preference — it's a competitive advantage.

Built-In Search and Job Discovery

Effective search is no longer optional — it's a baseline expectation. Candidates expect job sites to work like any top-tier e-commerce experience: predictive, personalized, and fast. Career sites that bury roles beneath layers of content or force users through broken filters are simply being left behind.

Marriott addresses this head-on by embedding intelligent job discovery into the fabric of its site. Candidates can search instantly by location, brand, or role, and see relevant listings in real time — including those targeted to frontline and hourly workers, who are often under-supported on traditional platforms.

When job search is front and center, engagement increases and friction decreases — a pattern echoed in our research.

Conversational and Interactive UX

Static career sites are giving way to experiences that feel guided, responsive, and human. Candidates no longer want to be dropped into a content maze. Instead, they expect a journey that mimics the best of consumer UX — where support, recommendations, and clear calls to action help move them forward.

Marriott delivers on this trend by offering a concierge-like digital experience. The site reflects the brand's hospitality ethos — creating a tone that is warm, intuitive, and supportive. Interactive elements, clear pathways, and tailored calls-to-action ensure that the experience doesn't feel transactional, but relational.

This shift from "content to conversation" is setting a new standard in candidate experience.

Consumer-Grade and Global Design

Today's candidates — regardless of industry or role — bring consumer expectations to the job search. They're comparing the experience of exploring a career site to their favorite shopping, streaming, or travel platforms. As such, design quality, emotional resonance, and mobile responsiveness are critical.

Marriott's site is both visually rich and globally consistent. It offers a multilingual experience with localized content and design parity across regions — crucial for an enterprise brand operating in dozens of markets. This attention to detail builds trust and shows respect for the user's context, whether they're in Seoul, São Paulo, or Seattle.



Career sites that bury roles beneath layers of content or force users through broken filters are simply being left behind.



As the design of
career sites
evolves, so does the
way they're built
and maintained.



Personalization and Inclusive Branding

Career sites must now reflect not only the diversity of roles, but the diversity of the people filling them. That means offering customized pathways for students, veterans, hourly workers, and corporate professionals — and doing so with language that's inclusive, authentic, and emotionally resonant.

Companies' career sites stand out in their ability to tell real stories from real employees, reflecting a wide range of identities, roles, and career journeys. These sites don't just show what jobs are available — they show who thrives in them. This authenticity is key to building connection, especially among underrepresented candidates seeking belonging.

The White Glove Service Model

As the design of career sites evolves, so does the way they're built and maintained. Increasingly, enterprise companies are moving away from rigid templates and standard CMS platforms in favor of custom, expert-managed solutions that feel tailored, branded, and effortless to maintain.

This shift is particularly evident in brands like Marriott, where the career site feels crafted — not copied. Pages are clean, focused, and updated without the internal bottlenecks that often plague traditional systems. The experience mirrors the standard of customer service Marriott is known for, reflecting a growing trend: treating candidates like customers.

In this white-glove model, creative assets, job data, UX design, and analytics are managed as part of a continuous service — not a one-off redesign. The result is a site that adapts as the company evolves, without requiring constant internal lift.



FAST
PERSONALIZED
EMOTIONAL
SMART
SERVICE-LED

The Future State: Rethinking Value

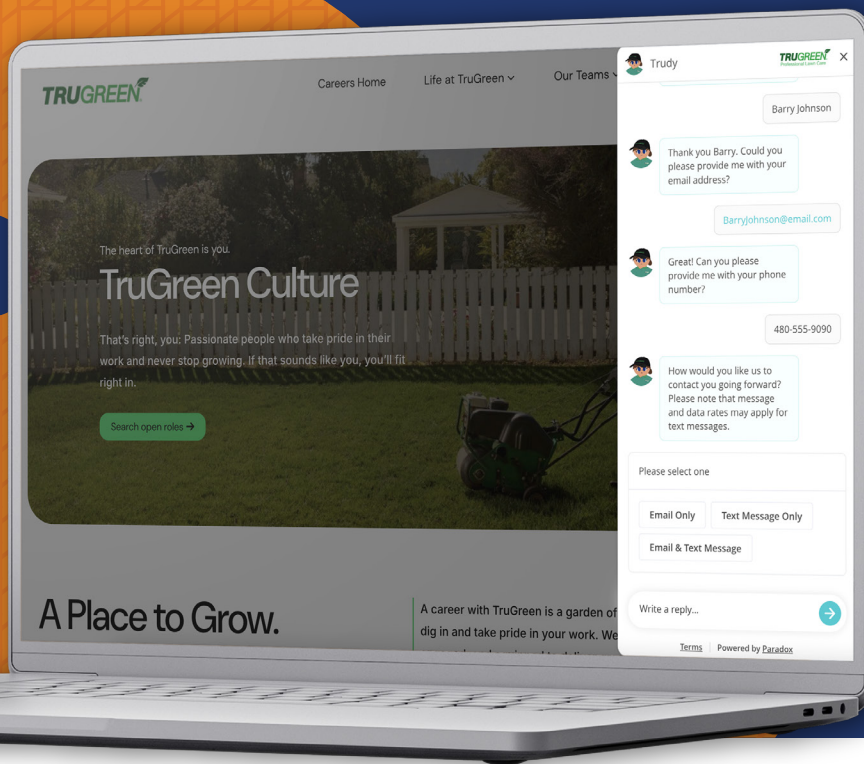
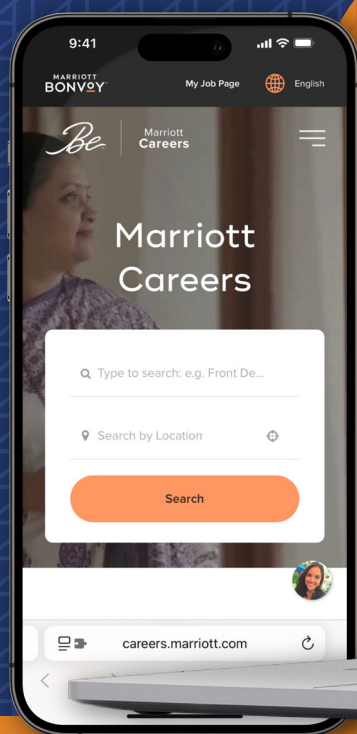
The future of the career site isn't just about design — it's about function, flexibility, and strategic value. Career sites are no longer portals to browse jobs; they are platforms for interaction, insight, and trust-building.

Tomorrow's career site will be:

Fast	✓	Designed for instant job discovery and mobile access
Personalized	✓	Tailored by role, location, and user behavior
Emotional	✓	Rooted in storytelling and brand connection
Smart	✓	Driven by analytics, responsive to candidate behavior
Service-led	✓	Continuously optimized by experts, not locked into static templates

In this model, the career site becomes a living extension of the organization's talent strategy — and for candidates, a seamless, branded, and empowering first step in their journey.





About Paradox

Launched in late 2016, Paradox was founded with the belief that recruiters, hiring managers, and talent leaders should spend their time with people, not software.

Olivia, the company's conversational AI assistant, automates administrative work — like screening, scheduling, onboarding, employee communications, and more — to drive efficiency that gives teams hours back in their week, and enables everyone to do better work, faster.

Since its founding, Paradox has earned the trust of more than 200 clients globally, including some of the biggest brands in the world — General Motors, Medtronic, 7-Eleven, Chipotle, Marriott International, and many more in the Fortune 500. The company has won numerous awards, including being named one of Human Resource Executive's Best HR Products of 2019, and was recently named one of Forbes' Top 500 Startup Employers. To learn more, visit paradox.ai

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