

Job fairs ditch paper for bar codes

By Melissa Korn, Wall Street Journal

Job fairs can be infuriating – and inefficient.

Candidates wait on line in front of a booth. When they finally get to the front and start asking questions about that dream career in engineering, the recruiter says he's actually handling marketing jobs for the company and that other guy, also surrounded by a crowd of candidates, is the right person to talk to. Half an hour, down the drain.

For employers, it's not much better. Recruiters spend hours talking to hopefuls who stand no chance of being hired, while the really stellar candidates who need to be courted get frustrated and walk away.

There's no easy fix, but there are signs of progress. Nearly 80 companies, including Bank of America Corp. and bio-pharmaceutical company AbbVie Inc., have partnered with Chicago tech firm Recsolu LLC to make the process slightly more palatable.

Using the firm's Recpass technology, job-fair attendees can submit their information (name, contact info, résumé) once via a mobile app, and then use a QR code, a type of bar code, to reload it for each company whose booth they visit.

Representatives from those companies can immediately screen for work authorization or years of experience, directing those who don't meet qualifications to one area, where the applicant can learn some basics about the company, and sending top prospects to another group, where they can be courted a little more personally. Some firms even use the quick screens to invite candidates to hospitality suites for additional

meetings that same day.

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