

Recruitment leaders remain sceptical of AI benefits, APSCo research reveals

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Thursday, 5 March 2020

- 28% of recruitment firms are currently using AI & automation
- A further 33% of businesses plan to introduce this technology within the year
- Greater efficiency seen as a benefit by 73% of respondents
- 59% said 'a less personal experience for candidates' could be a disadvantage
- 39% of firms reported a year-on-year rise in demand for candidates with experience in AI and automation

AI and automation are changing the face of recruitment, but leaders remain sceptical of the capabilities and benefits of new technologies. That is according to the latest research from The Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo (<http://www.apsco.org/>)).

61% of firms adopting new technologies

A recent survey by the trade association found that 61% of staffing firms are either currently utilising AI or automation in the recruitment process (28%), or have plans to introduce new technology in the next 12 months (33%).

Unsurprisingly, the proportion of companies harnessing the power of AI broadly increases in line with business size: among firms with an annual turnover of less than £2m, 39% are – or will soon be - using AI. For firms with an annual turnover of over £50m, this figure jumps to 88%.

Greater efficiency seen as a benefit by 73% of respondents

When quizzed on the greatest benefits of using AI and automation in the recruitment process, the top three identified across the board were: 'greater efficiency'; 'positive impact on time-to-hire'; and 'reduction in human error' (noted by 73%, 56% and 40% of respondents respectively).

'A less personal experience for candidates' concerning for 59% of respondents

While those surveyed were clear on the benefits they hoped to achieve by exploring new technologies, the research also identified several concerns associated with incorporating AI and automation into the recruitment process. Among respondents, 59% said 'a less personal experience for candidates' could be a disadvantage; 56% said the 'level of financial investment required' was a barrier to implementation; and 43% believed 'the complexity of layering new technology with existing systems' could be a challenge.

Rise in demand for AI specialists

When the sample was asked if they had recorded a rise in demand for candidates with experience in AI and automation over the past year, 39% said 'yes'. Among businesses in the highest turnover bracket, this figure increased to 56%.

In addition, one in four of those surveyed (24%) revealed that they had noted the emergence of new job titles for professionals to work within AI and automation within the past 12 months. For companies with the highest turnover, this figure stood at 44%. Examples given included, 'AI Data Scientist', 'Automation Consultant', 'VP of Platforms' and 'Knowledge Engineer'.

Commenting on the findings, Samantha Hurley, Operations Director at APSCo, said:

"No facet of the consumer or business world is immune to the opportunities presented by rapidly advancing technology – and within the talent acquisition sector, the speed of digital transformation can seem particularly swift.

"At a time when experts predict that 47% of all jobs will be automated by 2034, it is no surprise that rapid technological advancements are not only impacting the way that recruiters work today – but also the nature of the roles we are recruiting for.

"However, our results suggest that, while the potential associated with AI and automation is no doubt exciting for recruitment leaders, we are still a long way from universal adoption. It seems that the plethora of options available - coupled with scepticism around the capabilities of tools currently on the market – mean that many firms, while aware of the benefits of new technologies, are yet to take the plunge.

"That said, AI and automation are already beginning to relieve consultants from mundane and repetitive tasks. In doing so, technology is freeing up valuable time which can be better spent engaging with clients and candidates in a way which no machine could. Recruiters are vital to ensuring that businesses have the skills they need to navigate the future of work - and they must call on the technology at their disposal to make it happen."

- Ends

Carly Smith
BlueSky PR
T: +44 (0)1582 790 708
E: Carly@bluesky-pr.com
W: <https://www.bluesky-pr.com/>

About APSCo

APSCo was formed to give all firms involved in the recruitment of professional talent who have a commitment to excellence, the specialist support and distinctive voice they need to be successful.

APSCo is the only UK recruitment trade body with an international footprint with in-country operations in Germany, Singapore and Australia. It gives candidates and employers a trusted badge of quality while providing member firms with an innovative range of services designed by recruitment experts to boost performance and reduce exposure to business and financial risk.

These services, combined with its growing international profile, commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and opportunities for professional networking give APSCo members a unique opportunity to develop their businesses and gain competitive advantage.

www.apsco.org