

Using Video Email Messages to Create Competitive Advantage

– By Paul Siker, CEO, Advanced Recruiting Trends, LLC

Recruiters of every persuasion are always seeking the opportunity to create some sort of tangible competitive advantage. Something, (heck, *ANYTHING!*) that can help recruiters to differentiate themselves in today's marketplace seems worth pursuing – just look at the extent to which recruiting professionals are climbing aboard the Twitter bandwagon. Don't get me wrong – when deployed appropriately, I think Web 2.0 and social networking tools such as Twitter make eminent sense, and represent yet another step in the ongoing evolution of the recruitment landscape.

The latest tool that I have been leveraging to my advantage is Video Email. Video Email messages give me the opportunity to immediately distinguish myself from my competitors. First, I am afforded the opportunity to "humanize" myself. I am no longer merely a faceless, one-dimensional voice over the telephone. Instead, Video Email allows me to become a living, breathing, multi-dimensional person. The client or candidate with whom I am attempting to engage or follow-up has the ability to see me and to formulate impressions based upon both their visual and auditory senses.

Second, my messages are typically succinct and are more of the follow-up variety ("Great talking with you," "Appreciated your time today," "Getting back in touch," etc.). Third, the web-based technology that I use to transmit Video Email messages (more on this shortly) actually tells me when my Video Email message has been viewed by the recipient, or has been passed along to other individuals - an invaluable feature. Fourth, feedback to these messages indicates that recipients not only like Video Email, but regard it as being "cool." While *personally* have no inherent need to be "cool," there's not much to dislike about message recipients concluding that I am technically savvy or am communicating in an innovative manner.

While other Video Email hosting providers may exist, I really like and recommend NetBriefings' ProClaim QuickTouch product. I have a Logitech QuickCam (Cost: \$50.00), connected to my laptop, which interfaces seamlessly to NetBriefings' QuickTouch program via the web (a very small piece of free user interface software must also be installed on your PC). After invoking the ProClaim QuickTouch program, I can quickly record a message and then preview it to make sure that the message contains the information that I want to convey. Next, I click on email and an outlook message containing a link to the recorded video message is automatically generated. The video message is hosted by NetBriefings, so no attachments need to be embedded into the email.

If you are interested in checking out Video Email messages, NetBriefings allows you to use a free, albeit less feature-intensive, version of ProClaim QuickTouch, called ProClaim QuickTouch Lite. Again, all you need is an inexpensive web-cam and a few minutes to install the software. To see screenshots that reflect how simple this tool is to use, or to view an actual sample Video, go to www.artofrecruiting.com/nb.htm. Also, if you want to conduct your own demo of NetBriefings' ProClaim QuickTouch product, simply go to the following link: <http://www.netbriefings.com/proclaim/trial-proclaim.shtml>. Just fill out the demo registration form and enter "ART" in the promotional code field, and in minutes you can begin experimenting with, and creating your own Video Email Messages.

Video Email messages are unlikely to replace conventional Email messages, but I do believe that if deployed thoughtfully, these messages offer recruiters an opportunity to communicate with clients, candidates, and prospects in a novel and interesting way that creatively leverages Web 2.0 technology. If done well, I believe that this messaging format can contribute to an overall communications and branding approach that favorably distinguishes you from competitors.