



Industry Bulletin From The Starr Conspiracy Intelligence Unit

Big Data Drives a Big Deal: LinkedIn Acquires Bright.com

The \$120 million acquisition marks the largest in LinkedIn's history

By Lance Haun, Editor, TSCIU

Note: This bulletin is part of The Starr Conspiracy Intelligence Unit's industry coverage. The views expressed here are based on publicly available information, as well as our own industry background.

FORT WORTH, Texas (Feb. 11, 2014) — Big data recruiting is taking the spotlight, and it probably won't be the last time big data is the big reason for an acquisition this year. [LinkedIn acquired the job-matching site Bright.com](#) last week for a combination stock and cash deal worth \$120 million, surpassing the \$119 million LinkedIn paid for SlideShare in 2012.

Bright — driven by data science and machine learning — aimed to give employers a better way to hire and job seekers improved access to the best jobs. Current customers will have access to the platform until the end of the month. The acquisition marks the latest of many smaller takeovers by LinkedIn, the leading professional social network, since it went public in 2011.

Is an upgrade to LinkedIn Recruiter on the way?

On the minds of many customers (and probably some at LinkedIn's headquarters) is the future of LinkedIn Recruiter. The sourcing tool — first released in 2008 — has had some upgrades over the past six years, the latest of which was the addition of a full mobile experience for both recruiters and end users.

On the other hand, there hasn't been a radical departure from the legacy of Internet recruiting: a combination of job posting and profile search. LinkedIn's audience and profiles continue to grow, though. [Earnings reports](#) show LinkedIn's Talent Solutions division brought in nearly \$860 million (55 percent of the company's total revenue) in 2013 — the first year the division out-earned Monster Worldwide (\$808 million in 2013).

With these favorable financial results, it could be easy for LinkedIn to rest on a relatively proven formula for success: Drive the right people to fill out a profile, and give employers increased ways of finding and connecting with them. But if they utilize the talent and technology they've acquired from Bright, it could lead to the most substantial upgrade to LinkedIn Recruiter since it was released.



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Do recruiters want these big data recruiting technologies?

Bright joined other newer companies such as [Gild](#), [Entelo](#), and [Jobscience](#) in the big data trend and has continued to push the limits of recruiting. But for all the progressiveness that those in HCM usually associate with talent acquisition, there is still a strong contingent of recruiters who like tried-and-true tools, including the phone and, yes, even job boards.

Clearly, though, there is an aggressive early-adopter community and an appetite for new technologies to give companies the next edge in talent acquisition.

For Bright, it meant turning [\\$20 million in Series A and B funding into a cool \\$120 million](#). That leads one to believe that LinkedIn needed Bright more than Bright needed an exit. While there are some happy investors this month, other players in big data in HCM have a successful exit to point to when they push for their next round of funding. That's a good thing for everyone who is a fan of innovation in the HCM ecosystem.

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