

CAREER CORNER

BY SIMA DAHL

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Job Seekers: Do Your Homework

As marketers we've been trained to focus our sales messages on the target prospect with laser accuracy. This requires deep customer insights and a well-crafted story centered on value. The same holds true for your job search. Savvy job seekers today conduct intensive company research to determine whether or not they should even apply for a job, and even more sleuthing as they prep for the interview.

Intelligence: Public, Private and Off the Record

Even small, private companies can be checked out with a little resourcefulness. Obvious public sources of information include a company's website and blog; annual reports and press releases, if available; online profiles in Hoover's and similar business directories; industry reports; and trade journals.

But don't stop there. Check out employee blogs, Twitter streams, LinkedIn profiles and social bookmarking sites. Facebook, too. "Social technologies like LinkedIn and Twitter allow candidates to perform some serious job-seeking espionage. If you know where and how to look, you

can easily differentiate yourself from others who aren't as prepared," says Nick Kinports, a Chicago-area marketer who credits social networking with finding his current position.

Then tap your network. See who you know who can put you in touch with current or past employees. Your local **AMA** member directory is another great resource. Look for staff turnover patterns. Bone up on industry news that may impact the company's success.

If you decide you want to pursue a job lead and are fortunate enough to secure an interview, conduct another round of research. Go back to those same formal and social sources you previously uncovered for a deeper dive. Margaret Essary, national director of business development for staffing firm Paladin, says, "If you are working with a recruiter, they should be a wealth of information and able to fill you in on company culture; the interviewer's style, concerns and expectations; and the areas of your background you should highlight to make a strong impression."



Your goal is not only to prepare for their questions of you, but also to prep questions for them. Anything you find online is fair game. Disgruntled staff. Missed sales targets. Failed product launches. If you catch wind of it, the time to ask is long before they make you an offer.

Happy hunting!

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For more career tips from Sima and to view the **AMA's** job board, visit MarketingPower.com/careers.

AMA NEWS

Welcome, AMA-Southwest Michigan!

The **AMA** Board of Directors welcomed the **AMA's** 76th professional chapter to the **AMA** community June 10. AMA-Southwest Michigan Chapter's charter was approved during the **AMA's** annual board meeting in Chicago. The new chapter, boasting 52 professional members, will be based in Three Rivers, Mich., and will draw marketers from nearby metropolitan areas like Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. The Southwest Michigan Chapter, led by President Wes Martz, has set a goal of reaching 75 professional members within two years and is well on its way! Martz is vice president of marketing at Kadant Inc., a \$226 million global manufacturing firm, and a faculty member at Western Michigan University, where he also serves as the faculty advisor to the school's collegiate **AMA** chapter. Other Southwest Michigan board members for its inaugural year include Jennifer Andrews, vice president of membership; Alyssa Jones, vice president/secretary; Mike McCardle, vice president of community relations; Danielle Rohrer, vice president/treasurer; John Stap, vice president of communications; and Nancy Struck, vice president of programming. Congratulations, AMA-Southwest Michigan Chapter!

