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Retirement

Jobs Sites Boom for the 50-Plus Set

By Emily Brandon

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The challenge: matching older workers who aren't financially ready to retire, or simply want to stay active, with companies eager to hire such employees. The solution: websites where seasoned job seekers can post their résumés and sift through job postings and companies can list jobs (often for a fee) or buy ads aimed at an older workforce.

There's been an explosion of these websites, and the reason is simple: Many people are faced with the prospect of working longer than they might have planned. Social Security is replacing an increasingly smaller portion of household earnings, many workers' 401(k)'s and IRAs contain only modest balances, and Americans are often saving virtually nothing outside of these retirement funds.

Luckily, much of the retirement savings shortfall can be offset by working as little as two to four years extra, according to Boston College's Center for Retirement Research. A survey of 400 employers by the center found that a quarter of workers in their 50s will be financially unprepared for retirement and will want to stay on the job at least two years past the traditional retirement age.

Of course, that doesn't necessarily mean that employers want older workers—who are often more experienced but also more expensive than their younger counterparts—to stay. The center found that employers are lukewarm about retaining even half of their older workers who want to keep working.

But in this mismatch lies opportunity. Somewhere there is a company that wants an experienced older person willing to work hard, mentor younger workers, or put acquired wisdom to good use. And somewhere else there is a worker who needs the money or health insurance, or simply wants the mental stimulation and social interaction of a new job.

Internet entrepreneurs have scrambled to fill this niche by starting websites, from [Seniors4Hire.org](#) in Huntington Beach, Calif., to [RetireeWorkForce.com](#) in Holmdel, N.J.

"I think they're a positive sign that a labor market is forming, as more and more people decide to

work longer and more and more employers start to look at this population as a source of talent," says Marc Freedman, CEO of the Civic Ventures think tank and author of *Encore: Finding Work That Matters in the Second Half of Life*.

One site, [RetirementJobs.com](#), lists between 20,000 and 30,000 open positions that are refreshed several times each week. "We have connected up with a group of very strong brand employers that are going out of their way to be friendly to workers over 50," CEO Tim Driver says. Most of the jobs are in "the retail sector, and a large number of jobs are in the financial services business, companies that have an increasingly older customer base and...are looking for workers of a similar age," Driver adds.

Many of the websites are heavily weighted toward retail jobs, which often offer flexible and part-time hours. "I have some unease about the kinds of jobs being marketed on these types of websites," Freedman says. "I don't feel like any site has emerged that is doing a particularly good job of matching people at this stage in life with opportunities that fully match their experience."

Some of the sites, like [WorkForce50.com](#) and [RetiredBrains.com](#), offer jobs available nationwide, with positions ranging from clerical to management. Others specialize in a particular career area. [ExecSearchs.com](#), for example, focuses exclusively on midlevel and executive positions in the nonprofit, government, and education sectors. [YourEncore.com](#) recruits experienced scientists, engineers, and product developers for short-term assignments.

[Here](#) is a guide to websites matching older workers with employers.

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