

Scannable, Internet, and HTML Electronic Résumés

CHAPTER 13

by Donald Asher

A résumé-writer friend of mine, Walt Schuette, thinks the drawings on the cave walls at Lascaux are nothing less than the first résumés. They show the painters' prowess in hunting, just the kind of information a potential employer would need to know 15,000 years ago. Résumés have been evolving ever since. Letters of introduction served as résumés in the last century and part of this, then the barest list of employers and dates, and now the sales-oriented document you've been learning to write in this book.

The latest developments in this continuum are scannable and Internet résumés. The optimum approach is to write the best résumé you can, using the advice provided so far, and then *modify* that document to work as a scannable or Internet résumé. Here's how.

Wait a minute! Let me say right here that if you don't get this chapter, skip it and skip the next one and keep going. Don't become bogged down in technology gobbledygook if it's not your thing. Get on with the book, get on with the job search, and get on with your life. *No stumbling blocks allowed.*

Scannable, Internet, and HTML Résumés are Electronic Résumés

Scannable and Internet résumés have certain features in common. They are used to create an electronic database of your skills and abilities that is then indexed by search engines. So you write your electronic résumé for a search engine, not for the eye and heart of a human.

For this reason, electronic résumés are very noun-based, not verb- or adjective-based. Search engines will not be impressed with everything you "created" or how "proactive" you were. They are looking for nouns like *cost accounting* and *biotechnology*. Most keywords employers use to search résumé databanks are nouns, and highly specific nouns at that.

You need to consider the search tools AND, OR, NEAR, and NOT, as well. Often employers search for general terms to describe the field AND some specific software package, brand name, or former employer, for example: *administrative assistant AND PowerPoint*, or *computational chemist AND MatLab AND Java*, or *computational chemist AND (Dow OR Dupont)*.

Since search engines have not achieved the level of artificial intelligence yet, they are easily fooled. If you live on Spanish Lane and are involved in research into possible medicinal derivatives of Spanish moss, many search engines will jump to the conclusion that you speak Spanish, as well. This can work for you or against you.

If your graduate business degree is a master of science in management, you will be disqualified from all those searches specifying an MBA. So go through your exciting, written-for-a-human-being resume and add in clarifying nouns, in parentheses, if need be, so that it is idiotproof. Here is one example:

Krannert Graduate School of Management (Graduate School of Business)

Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana

MS, Management (Master of Science in Management)

(equivalent to MBA, M.B.A., Master of Business Administration)

You see that being redundant is not only okay in an electronic resume, it is in fact the *best way for you to present critical information*. Anticipate the most common and obvious ways to present important aspects of your background, and then list them all.

Obviously, you can stack the deck in favor of hits by spamdexing, using wording that you think a potential employer will search for. For example, in your profile or objective, you can say, “Interested in biotechnology and cost accounting, especially with such quality companies as Genentech, Dow Pharmaceutical Sciences, XOMA Corporation, Genelabs Technologies, Bio-Rad Laboratories, and Abgenix.”

Get it?

Do not spamdex! Your goal is to get humans to look at your resume for all those positions for which you are fully qualified, not to get spam hits where you look like a jerk.

Many electronic resumes have a keyword list at the top, but I recommend you leave your powerful profile alone and have your keyword list at the bottom of your electronic resume, even if it repeats a lot of the information presented elsewhere in the same document. **Keep the top of your résumé designed to impress a human**, who will hopefully eventually see it. The search engine will be happy to read all your resume, I assure you, whereas the human will start at the top, expecting to be impressed right away. Remember, with humans it’s win or lose in the first ten lines.

Some people point out somewhere in their electronic resume, “Printed version provided upon request via fax or overnight courier.” If you’ve advanced to the human-review level, you don’t want to be stuck with an ugly, clunky printout from an electronic version.

The length of an electronic resume is virtually irrelevant. Don’t worry if it is three or four pages long. The computer won’t care. Start your resume with the word resume on the first line, without accents and all by itself, and end your resume with this last line, “End resume,” on the final line, all by itself. Do not number or otherwise mark page breaks, and remove any page numbers and page headings from your printed version.

Scannable Peculiarities

Start every line on the left margin. Don’t center *anything*, not even your name. Having multiple right and left margins confuses scanners. Remove all graphics, lines, borders, bullets, underlining, bold, and italics. Do not right justify. Separate paragraphs with a

double return and headings with a triple return. Computers interpret space as a change in topics. Take bulleted tables and lists and turn them into comma-delimited sentences. For example, take this:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| . Accounting | . Cost Accounting |
| . Payroll | . Management Accounting |
| . Tax Filings | . Special Studies |

and turn it into this:

Accounting, cost accounting, management accounting, payroll, tax filings, taxation, special studies, management studies.

This is the most conservative way to prepare a resume for scanning, but scanners are becoming much more talented. Most can already read italics and bold, though underlining is sure to throw them into fits.

Many companies scan all the resumes they save from the round file, fancy layouts and all. They don't scan in perfectly, but they're still indexable. I recommend that if you are sending in your resume unsolicited to a major company, you provide them with *two* versions of your resume: one for humans and one for scanning. Take a yellow temporary stick-on note and label the unattractive scannable version: "Scannable version."

Be sure to add a keyword list in which you throw in the kitchen sink, pipes and faucets and all.

Internet and HTML Peculiarities

The problem with generalizing about Internet and HTML résumés is that they are constantly mutating. For starters, HTML is the programming language of the Internet, so HTML resumes *are* Internet resumes, but not the only kind.

Resume databanks accept input in many forms-ASCII, rich text format, Word, WordPerfect, HTML, direct entry in a Web-page window-some of the above or all of the above. Even if you don't know HTML from Slobavian, all major word processing programs can now translate your resume into/out of/between any and all of these formats. The best rule for submitting Internet resumes is to *follow the instructions of the site or person accepting the résumé*. I assure you that busy headhunters and employers will not spend much time trying to unlock or decipher your file if it arrives in a nonpreferred format. Additionally, many systems are fully automated and are programmed to just dump any files that don't load properly.

Whether you can include layout and design, bold and italics, and so on will depend on the format you submit your document in. Most Internet resumes are just exactly like regular printed resumes. They have the same words in the same order, but HTML resumes can be written in a new way, where portions of your resume are hyperlinked to expand upon request or have a "go to" command sending the reader to another location in a document that is basically otherwise linear. The trend is away from using hyperlinks just to jump around in a document and toward using hyperlinks to expand into various levels, or rooms off a hallway, if you will.

HTML resumes can be submitted to anyone with an Internet browser. They are definitely going to be the resume of the future, and I recommend you build one now. You can start with an HTML programming guide and software package. Word processors will trans-

late some basic designs, but you'll want to get more sophisticated than that as soon as you can. For example, if you use HTML you can put your keywords in the <META> field. Most search engines are set up to scan this field, and it does not display in the browser (if you open up the source code, however, you can see it). The <META> field is part of the <HEAD> field, following the </TITLE> and looks like this:

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<META Name="description" Content="resume, applications engineer, intranets, Java, Sun,
cost planning, WIP, systems administration, Novell, Microsoft CNE, html coding, version
control, software related engineering">
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Do not submit an HTML résumé with a picture. Any major employer will immediately freak out, as accepting pictures of job applicants exposes them to litigation. Your own home page can have a picture, however, and you can call your reader's attention to your home page.

By the way, take a good look at your home page. Many employers search for an applicant's home page, whether she mentions it or not. If you have a home page full of erotic poetry and diatribes against an ex-spouse, you might want to clean that up, mothball it for the duration of your search, or remove search keys that have your name associated with them.

As mentioned elsewhere, do not use your business e-mail for job-searching purposes, and when you do get a personal account, be careful about your account name. What would you think if you got a résumé from hotbabe@whatever.com, monkeyboy@whatever.com, or sexxfrk@whatever.com? People *do* read e-mail addresses, so act like a grownup. You can go back to being a sexxfrk after you land a new position.



Finally, don't get too hung up on this whole Internet and scannable résumés topic. You **get jobs by talking to people**. Don't hide behind technology.

Following are two versions of the same résumé, one scannable and one a crude B&W printout of the first screen of an HTML résumé. The gray words would be hyperlinks to additional information.

After looking at these examples, be sure to check out the next chapter. It's full of good links for job searching.

Resume

Kimberly Haase
 haase-on-fire@logon.net
 37 East 9th Street, Apt. 7-R
 New York, New York 10003
 Office: **(212) 555-3276**
 Residence: (212) 555-7914

PROFILE

Buyer and merchandiser specializing in high-end fashion, fine watches, fine jewelry, and gifts. Effective communicator and interface between senior management, buying office, sales floor, vendors, and V.I.P. customers. Experienced supervisor, motivator, trainer. Good leadership ability, including setting a high standard for service. Able to coordinate and focus the efforts of others. Also: advanced analytical skills, including "what if" modeling of buying and merchandising data. Software and brands in keywords list at bottom of resume.

EXPERIENCE

Tarbells on Fifth
 New York, New York
 2000–present

Title: Merchandiser

Prepare and execute seasonal plans for \$12.3 million in sales of fine watches at the flagship store, **Tarbells on Fifth**, 22 branch **Tarbells** stores in New Jersey and Connecticut, and fine jewelry and watch counters inside another 18 stores under co-op agreements. Coordinate advertising and promotions, negotiate with vendors, coach and motivate sales staff in high-end gift sales. Provide conceptual direction to the line.

Contributions:

Created 122 percent increase in sales at co-op counters, and 15 percent increase in sales at **Tarbells** stores in a flat market for luxury gift items. Designed the merchandising planning system using **\$ALES ANALYSIS** software. Eliminated six unprofitable profit lines and developed three new lines representing \$1.8 million in first-year business.

Marlissa et Jacqu
 New York, New York
 1999-2000

Title: Buyer

Prepared and executed seasonal sales plan for \$10.2 million in business at 24 stores. Analyzed and reported on sales flow. Negotiated with vendors, coached floor sales staff, used **ZIPPER** software to analyze profitability and flow-through on multiple factors (SKU, designer, style, color, size, store, etc.).

Contributions:

Developed a home fragrance business that ran 100 percent increase. Personally directed store merchandising and educated staff on product. Coordinated and promoted trunk shows. Designed new personal shopper programs. Appointed mentor in **M&J's Rising Stars** (management training program, management development program, staff development).

Macy's
 New York, New York
 1998-1999

Title: Sales Manager, Department Sales Manager

Trained, developed, and motivated a staff of **19** sales associates. Ensured compliance to store policies and procedures. Oversaw combined sales of \$1.2 million per month.

Contributions:

Designed a travel shop within the department, eventually duplicated in all stores. Developed a microwave "cooking school" delivered on-site at area college and university campuses with discount coupons tracing 900 percent ROI.

Other experience:

Macy's
 New York, New York

Title: Selling Supervisor
China/Crystal Department

John Haase & Associates, Retail Consultants
Beverly Hills, California
Title: Training Assistant

City of Beverly Hills, Personnel Department
Beverly Hills, California
Title: Human Resources Intern

EDUCATION

University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), Organizational Behavior / Industrial Psychology, 1997

University of Paris, France — Sorbonne
Paris, France
Studies in French language, culture, and history, Fall 1996

LANGUAGES

Fluent in French, some basic understanding of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. Successful with a sophisticated, international clientele.

KEYWORD LIST

Fine jewelry, fine watches, high-end gifts, gift items, co-op agreements, housewares, bath shop, fragrance business, **SALES ANALYSIS**, **SALES ANALYSIS**, **ZIPPER**, zipper, **RET-X**, **StoreWatch**, Store Watch, Windows 2000, Vaporware, Windows 98, Windows 95, Windows NT, DOS, MS DOS, MS Office Suite, Corel Office Suite, WordPerfect 8.0, WordPerfect 7.0, WordPerfect 5.2, WordPerfect 5.1, Lotus Notes, Excel, spreadsheets, Lotus 1-2-3, IBM PC, Mac, **iMac**, **RET-X** workstation, chain stores, specialty stores, consignment sales, gold, diamonds, estate jewelry, estate sales, staff development, executive development, sales training, motivation, skills enhancement, pay-for-performance, pay for performance, stepped discipline, workers compensation, employment law, Tiffany's, Macy's, Shreve & Co., Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Maxfield's, Piaget, Tag **Haur**, **Cartier**, Blanc Pin, Rolex, Raymond Weil, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Comme des Garcons, Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, Matsuda, Romeo Gigli, Giorgio Armani, Verri, Claude Montana, Thierry Mugler, Byblos, Paul Smith, Katharine Hamnett, Donna Karan, Calvin Klein, Karl-Lagerfeld, Jil Sander, Norma Kamali, Stephen Sprouse, **Chantal** Thomasss, Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, Moschino, Dolce **Gabanna**, Mizrahi, Giorgio di sant Angelo, Emanuelle, Michael Kors, **G-Gigli**

End resume.

Kimberly Haase

haase-on-fire@logon.net
37 East 9th Street, Apt.7-R
New York, New York 10003

Office: (212) 555-3276
Residence: (212) 555-7914

PROFILE

Buyer and merchandiser specializing in high-end fashion, fine watches, fine jewelry, and gifts. Effective communicator and interface between senior management, buying office, sales floor, vendors, and V.I.P. customers. Experienced supervisor, motivator, trainer. Good leadership ability, including setting a high standard for service. Able to coordinate and focus the efforts of others. Also: advanced analytical skills, including "what if" modeling of buying and merchandising data. Software and brands in keywords list at bottom of resume.

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Honors / Awards
- Merchandising
- Store / Department Management
- Opening Staff / New Stores
- Forecasting / Analysis
- Software / Systems
- Training / Staff Development

BRAND KNOWLEDGE

- Watches
- Men's Fashions
- Women's Fashions

EXPERIENCE

Tarbells on Fifth, New York, New York	2000–present
Merchandiser , Fine Watches, Gifts, \$12.3 million business.	
Marlissae/Jacque, New York, New York	1999-2000
Buyer , Men's & Women's Fashion, \$10.2 million business.	
Macy's, New York, New York	1998-1999
Sales Manager, Department Sales Manager , \$14.4 million combined business.	
Macy's , New York, New York	
Selling Supervisor , China / Crystal	
John Haase & Associates , Beverly Hills, California	
Training Assistant	
City of Beverly Hills, Personnel Department , Beverly Hills, California	
Human Resources Intern	

EDUCATION

University of Southern California , Los Angeles, California	
B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), Organizational Behavior / Industrial Psychology	
More on college activities.	
University of Paris, France — Sorbonne , Paris France	
Studies in French language, culture, and history	
More on travel.	
	Fall 1996

LANGUAGES

Fluent in **French**, some basic understanding of **Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian**.
More on experience with international clientele.

KEYWORD LIST