Data-driven Design

An inside look for recruiters at the value of a functional, responsive, user-focused website

volcanic

Table of contents

volcanic

What are the goals of your website?

As one of the world's leading producers of websites for evolving recruitment businesses, Volcanic always brings it back to one specific point: How can we help you achieve your goals?

That's why we take a substance over style approach; responsive design considerations, continuous developmental improvement as standard, dependable functionality, a quality CMS and access to real-time analytics.

In recruitment, these qualities are the cornerstones of a lead generation-focused website that churns out registrations and delivers a package designed to deliver ROI on your website over the long term. For us, beautiful, rich design is important, but only skin deep if it's not backed up by continuous improvement and other elements that put functionality, user experience (UX) and integration at the forefront of all that you do.

volcanic
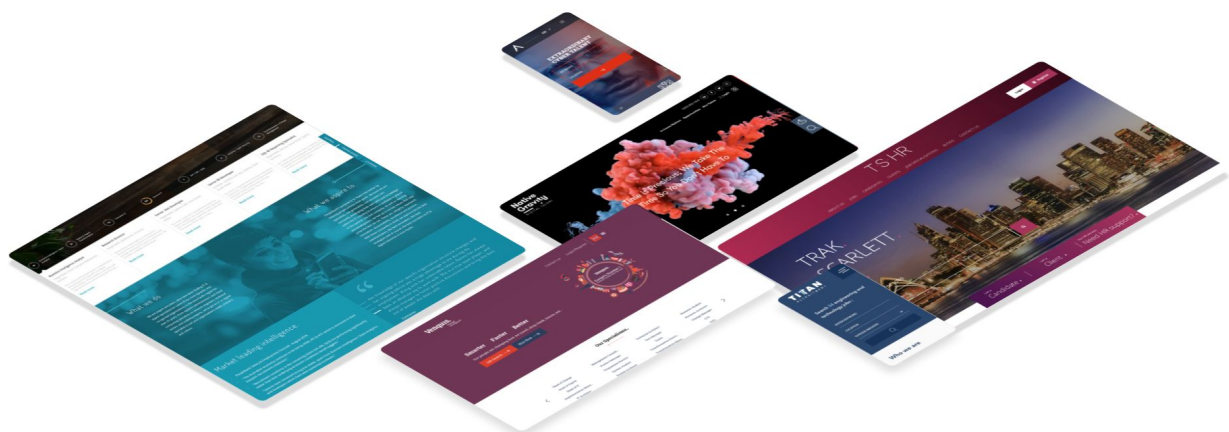
What are the goals of your website?

In order to know how to get that stream of candidates and clients moving in your direction, it's critical to know what they're looking for. Increasingly, we've learned that both candidates (in search of the perfect role) and clients (looking to attract the right candidates) need three particular things from their website:

- A seamless user journey across all channels;
- Trust in mobile user experience;
- The easiest, quickest path conceivable to reach their goals.

At Volcanic, our innovative, cloud-based platform makes our website design platform perfect for recruiters of all sizes to perform better. So we're qualified to take you through the critical principles of data-driven website design.

In this eBook, we delve into the overall importance of understanding your audience, mobile optimisation and making design decisions backed up by data.

volcanic

UX: Become your audience

volcanic

Some audience considerations

When users visit your site - whether on desktop or mobile - you ultimately want them to perform a number of actions. If these actions are difficult to find, your busy mobile user is unlikely to make the effort to hunt them down.

Your website users are, like it or not, mobile. They're on the go, with constantly changing environments around them. To design for the mobile job hunters in your target buyer personas, remember: regardless of what device they are using, it is essential that a priority in this process is the user experience.

Interpretations of your brand will be made in an instant, something the desktop-heavy web design package will fall short on every time.

So what do you need to consider when it comes to UX?

volcanic

Clear out the clutter

An obvious challenge is that on smaller screens, you have less space to work with. This means that key CTAs (calls-to-action) that may be very prominent on a desktop screen are likely to get pushed down and lost on a mobile screen if your content isn't responsive.

The solution? Well, for many businesses this means clearing out any unnecessary content.

"What do you mean unnecessary? None of our content is unnecessary!" We hear you. But more importantly, we also want you to have great conversion rates, so it really is essential.

Things you may want to cut down include:
- Introductory text - try and condense this down to 1-2 sentences;
- Imagery - especially imagery you don't optimise, i.e. add relevant alt tags, for. If you do use visuals, think about how much value they will add to the mobile experience;
- Explanation text - the aim here really is to design something that is so easy for your users to understand that it shouldn't require any explanation at all.

volcanic

"A user interface is like a joke. If you have to explain it, it isn't that good."

Martin Leblanc,
Founder/CEO, Icon
Finder

volcanic
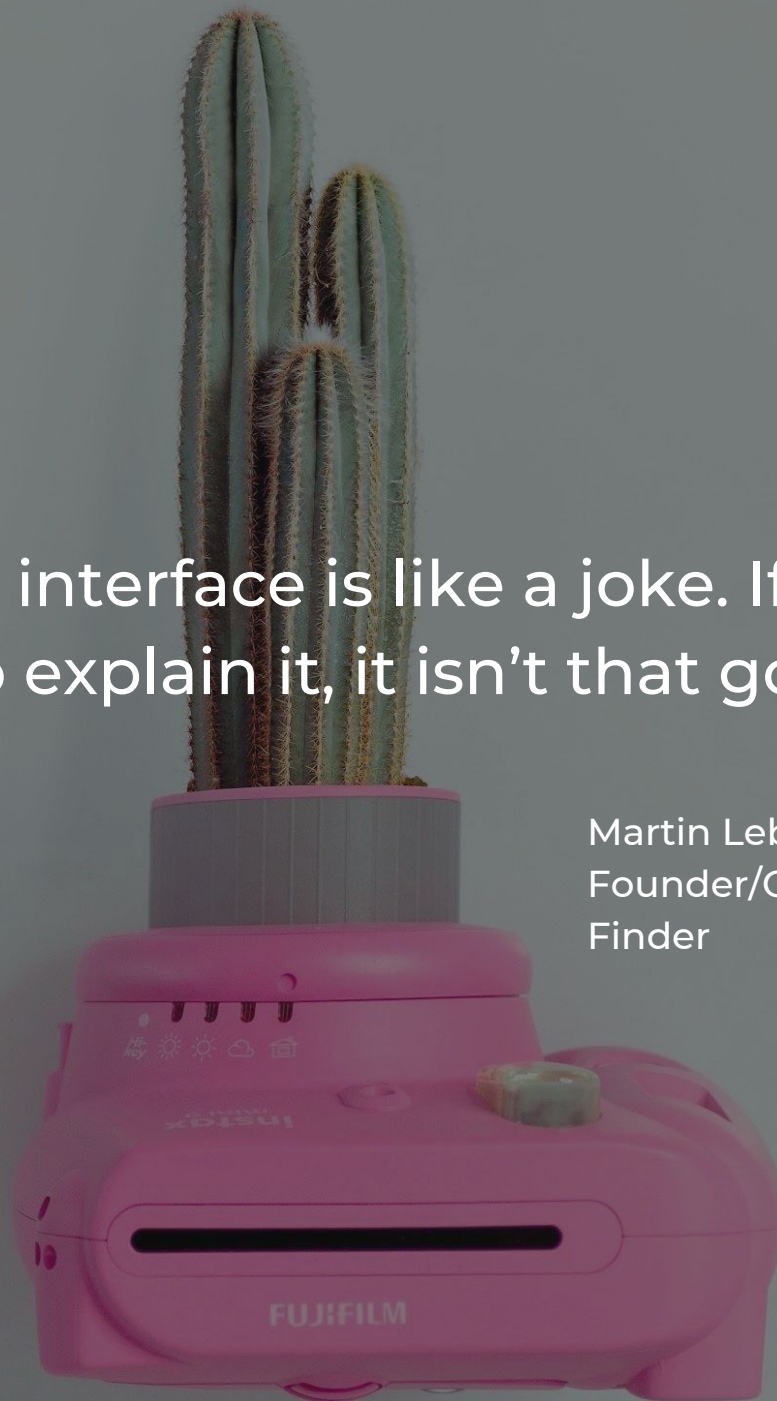
Simple navigation & targets

Simple navigation is also a top priority. Firms should ensure the mobile version of your site is easy to navigate, so users can always find what they're looking for quickly and easily.

An important thing to think about is that users like familiarity and consistency. On desktop they may expect a navigation menu across the top, but on mobile they may be used to the menu expanding out from the left-hand side as a result of tapping a menu icon. Understanding common navigation patterns is all part of creating a seamless journey for your users and ensuring they can access what they need.

There's also the factor of tap-friendly targets on a touchscreen. Certain interface elements such as text-based links and buttons which are easy to click on with a mouse on a desktop device, may be much more difficult to engage with on a touchscreen smartphone. This problem is often referred to as the "fat finger" problem. It's not too difficult to solve, it just requires enlarging buttons and links where necessary, or in some cases, spacing them out.

volcanic

Legible fonts

While we recommend cutting down on text where possible on a mobile website, you cannot avoid text completely.

To ensure your copy is readable and leaves out unnecessary noise, we recommend the following:

- Stick to a minimum number of font variants and keep them consistent across your website;
- Decrease the font size of text that is taking up too much screen space (but remember that you may find it wise to increase the font size of key CTAs);
- Fix the spacing, including line height, margin size, and space between paragraphs. The correct spacing on mobile will ensure that your users can read your content which, let's face it, is why you wrote it in the first place!

Useful tip: Many font families offer multiple weightings, which can be used to differentiate types of text, rather than using multiple fonts. Best practice is to keep it to one header font and one body-text font.

volcanic

Measuring conversions

One look at an endless form means your audience will lose interest. We cannot stress enough the fact that users are impatient. They want quick engagement paths leading to quick actions. There are usually always more efficient ways of collecting the data you need. For example:

First name(s)

Joe

Last name

Bloggs

vs.

Full name

Joe Bloggs

Both options ask for the same data, but the latter requires less effort from the user.

Consider the user journey when deciding how many data inputs to include in your forms. For the first user touchpoint, and therefore the first potential barrier to entry, we recommend less than three input fields. For subsequent touchpoints, where users have already engaged, you can extend to a maximum of six input fields.

Useful tip: For first-time engagers that you want to convert quickly, the three mandatory input fields are: Full name, email address & CV upload/LinkedIn profile.

volcanic

"Rectangles with rounded corners are everywhere. Just look around this room. And look outside, there's even more, practically everywhere you look."

Steve Jobs

volcanic

The eyes have it

The biggest question in website conversion is this: where will the viewer's eyes go, and what will they see when they get there?

The eye line of the visitor is the heart of the visit itself. Colour, fonts, directional cues and CTAs are its central elements: done right, they can build a psychological conversion of the visitor. Consider the following:

- Colour: It takes just 90 seconds for a customer to form an opinion about a product, and 62-90% of that interaction is determined by the color of the product alone.
- Buttons: Why do buttons tend to feature rounded corners? They pull the eyes toward the CTA copy, as opposed to push them away, like a pointed corner does[4].
- Fonts: Are you torn between using a serif and sans serif font for your brand guidelines? It's true that neither one is more legible than the other to readers. Yet one (serif) connotes traditional and established, whilst the other (sans serif) is hip and casual.

volcanic

The eyes have it

Tracking eye lines and/or elements of a visitor session (such as the directions a mouse travels or heat maps) has never been easier.

Modern software has been designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of what attracts your audience once they've arrived, and what detracts. Tools (some of which we use) like Mouseflow and Hotjar reveal telling patterns on what the user does when they encounter a given webpage.

Here are some commonly understood eye tracking patterns to keep in mind for web design:

- **The F Factor**: this form of eye line tracking reveals an F-shaped pattern occurring. An F-pattern tends to be a negative for businesses, as the path is closing. Good design suggests a quicker path to conversion is needed.
- **The Z Factor**: Likewise, this pattern of scrolling takes a Z shape, but with one huge caveat: it resembles a continuous zig zag, rather than an ending point like with the F pattern. For one page sites, it's great; but does it suit conversion seekers with third party ATS?
- **The Gutenberg Diagram**: This splits the web page into four different quadrants, with the top left serving as the primary focal area. Like with gravity, this principle holds that a viewer's sightline progresses continuously downward and increasingly left-to-right in trajectory.

Data-driven decisions

We aren't ones to preach about methods that we don't practice ourselves. So here's an example of how we've used user tracking software to make data-driven design decisions on our own website.

Here is a screenshot of a Mouseflow recording of a user on a previous version of our Book a Demo page. For those of you unfamiliar with the software, the bar beneath the controls shows a heatmap of when activity occurs throughout the recording.

Red signifies mouse movement and scrolling, yellow represents clicking/tapping, green represents form interaction and black is inactivity.
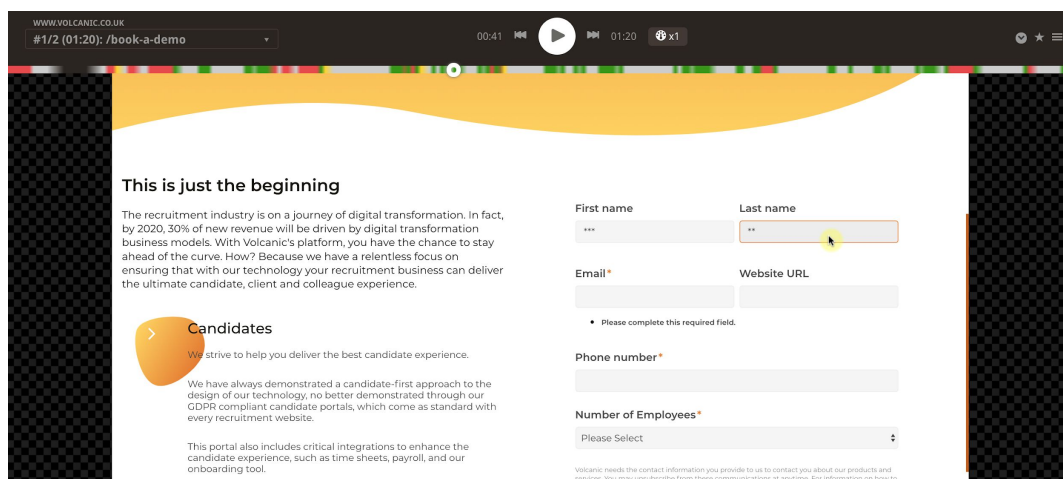
This particular recording presented a form conversion, however it took the user 1 min 20 seconds to complete five fields on the form.

From analysing a number of these recordings, we could see that the amount of text on the left hand side was distracting users, and creating a barrier to form submission.

volcanic

Data-driven decisions

Another point where users were either pausing or leaving the page was the phone number field, which in this version is mandatory.

In response to this realisation, we made the following changes to the page:

- Significantly reduced the amount of text on this page down to one eye-catching headline and one short sentence providing context.
- Changed the phone number field to optional.

Almost instantly we started to see results.

So what does this tell you? Design-led thinking doesn't need to stop at the initial design phase of building a new website. The process should be iterative and most of all data-driven, so that you can make smart design decision backed up by evidence and facts.

volcanic

Mobile matters

volcanic

Mobile matters

The need for a mobile presence is nothing new. Let's face it, digital marketing experts have been pushing the importance of mobile responsiveness for years. Early adopters of best practice mobile-considerate design are undoubtedly reaping the rewards of having mobile-friendly websites.

With 2018's introduction of Google's Mobile First Index, it is now more important than ever to keep mobile near the top of your list of considerations when it comes to building a website.

So how do you quantify the acceleration of smartphone use?

79% of internet activity in 2018 across the globe will be carried out on a mobile device. This has almost doubled since 2012, which saw a mobile internet usage rate of 40%.

We've seen the impact of mobile viewership here at Volcanic. As such, our websites are AMP (Accelerated Mobile Pages) enabled by default, which allow candidates to access web pages on their mobile phones faster and in a manner that is optimised for mobile devices.

volcanic

Mobile trends

Research from 2016 reveals that over 50% of users accessed our platform using their mobile devices. A website built with mobile users in mind is paramount to our thinking.

The general assumption is that this rise is primarily driven by Millennials. Contrary to this, a study conducted by the Pew Research Center shows that in the US, smartphone use is significant across the majority of age groups.

As of January 2018, 94% of people aged 18-29 own a smartphone, followed by 89% of people aged 30-49, 73% of people aged 50-64 and 46% of people aged 65+.

> Our own research found that over 50% of users accessed the Volcanic platform using a mobile device. A website built with mobile users in mind is paramount to our thinking.

The same pattern has been found in the recruitment industry. According to Indeed, the use of mobile devices for job searches isn't restricted to Millenials. 78% of this age group were using mobile devices for job searches in 2016, trailed by 73% of Gen Xers and, perhaps surprisingly, 57.2% of Baby Boomers.

volcanic

Mobile trends

Your mobile experience extends beyond the interface design. We live in an engagement economy where users expect instant feedback and gratification from their online experiences. They want access to their information quickly and seamlessly.

If you want to

- reach your users and;
- keep them involved and engaged,

you'll need to get your engaging content in front of them as quickly as possible. The experience of using your site on mobile is as - if not more - important as the beauty of it.

And it's offering a window into how recruiters can reach candidates. Seven in 10 UK commuters use their smartphones on their way to work. Nearly half of those respondents said they use it to complete essential tasks. Additionally, that same report reveals that mobile calls are down. Recruitment expert Hung Lee thinks this presents "massive implications for recruiting, especially for the 'just get on the phone' agencies out there."

Page load time is a significant part of this, but it is often ignored. If you use Google Ads to drive traffic to your job vacancies or your recruitment website, Google has introduced a new tool to help you evaluate the speed of your mobile pages, grading pages on a 10-point scale.

volcanic

75% of mobile sites take 10+ seconds to load, and more than 50% of website visits are terminated if a mobile page load time is longer than three seconds.

Think of the amount of leads this could be costing your brand.

volcanic

Why it matters for recruitment

Why do we care so much about your speedy, responsive look? Perhaps a better question is this: **What does the recruitment marketplace actually tell us about job applications, about ATS and the journey, on a mobile web site?**

In fact, there are many insights into how certain sectors approach the job hunt. Here are some examples:

- Healthcare industry practitioners are relatively brazen. They'll keep tabs open on their desktop to job sites, or use work breaks to scroll for their next gig or role on mobile.
- Construction workers are unlikely to use a desktop device in their workday, nor are they very likely to use one at home. A mobile is their access to the next position, one that is likely to require a quick path to conversion.

As we say often in this space and others, mobile may not be the platform where the candidate hits the "Apply" button, but it is an unmistakable part of their path to clicking "Apply".

Mobile offers quick conversions

During lunchtime, think about the captive audience your industry has in its palms. Candidates scroll through mobiles, prepared to easily save the job you've posted, then apply on your desktop website when they get home. Likewise, a timely journey could lead to an application right then and there.

volcanic

Why it matters for recruitment

These days, candidates can easily save an appealing job you've posted on LinkedIn during their lunch break, and come back to apply on your website when they get home to their desktop (free from a lurking boss peering over their shoulder).

The journey could just as easily go in the opposite direction. Automatic Tracking Systems allow for a CV or LinkedIn profile to make applications quicker than ever on mobile after your prospect spent another morning disgruntled, with a tab open for a job hunt when the boss was stuck in a meeting.

Regardless of whichever channel an application is filled out on, mobile cannot simply be treated as a means to an end that occurs elsewhere. The popularity of mobile browsing (and the dissatisfaction by consumers with a poor mobile experience) dictates that the user needs to have simple application journeys on both mobile and desktop - they can lead to each other, and they can both deliver the desired result.

So to ensure that you are attracting the best candidates to your jobs, it is essential that the mobile experience you provide for job hunters is as good as, if not better than, the desktop experience.

volcanic

Where does Volcanic fit in?

volcanic

Where does Volcanic fit in?

It's our goal to ensure recruiters of all strengths and sizes think of their website as the main hub of their marketing outreach. Volcanic websites put you in control of your online presence, thanks to an innovative, cloud-based platform suited for recruiters of all sizes. **So what can that give your brand?**

More mobile optimisation

Thanks to our mobile-considerate web design, Volcanic gives clients responsive design ideas that offer:

- Touch responsive screen size scaling
- Mobile specific menus
- GPS location tracking
- Quicker paths to mobile conversion
- Mobile-specific SEO for front page Google rankings

As an example, check out our work with NES Global.

Additionally, because Volcanic technology offers you mobile amenities like AMP pages and Varnish cache, you can enable your mobile applicants to access your web pages on their mobile phones faster than ever. Take our client, Pitch Consultants, as an example.

Pitch's mobile load speeds range from 1 and 2.5 seconds. Be it in WiFi or 3G connectivity areas, Pitch is now in a better position to serve their candidates on mobile devices..

volcanic

Where does Volcanic fit in?

Best-in-breed recruitment website design

It's something we take seriously at Volcanic. Kick off meetings help both us and our clients hammerout the must-haves for initial concept design. To make it work, our goal here is to make the website feel reliable. Our clients can then get back to focusing on the things they do best.

Beyond relationship management, the functionality coin in a website design project has another, equally valuable side to it. That side deals with integrations, progressive updates, and continuous improvement of the website beyond deployment. Working with a designer means you need to rely on people that know recruitment, with special attention to be paid to:

- Quick journey job search functionality
- Real-time, industry bespoke analytics
- Integrations with CRM, social media and marketing
- Automation techniques like form autofills, email alerts, and even easy-to-use technical SEO generation
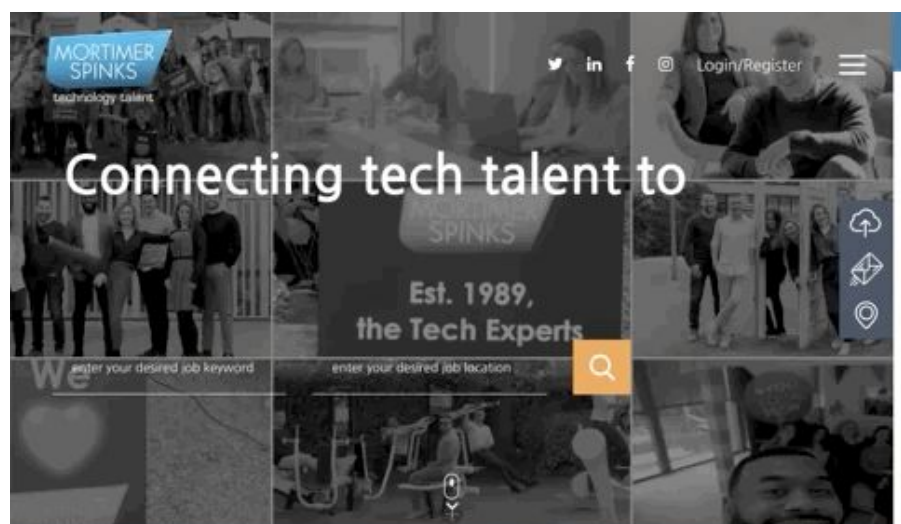
volcanic

Volcanic examples

Have a look for yourself at some examples of our recruitment website design. Each of these sites offer a bespoke user journey for their candidates and clients, with a strong focus on brand identity, clear navigation and job search functionality and use of lines to draw the eyes of the visitors to key action points.

Discovered www.discovered.ae
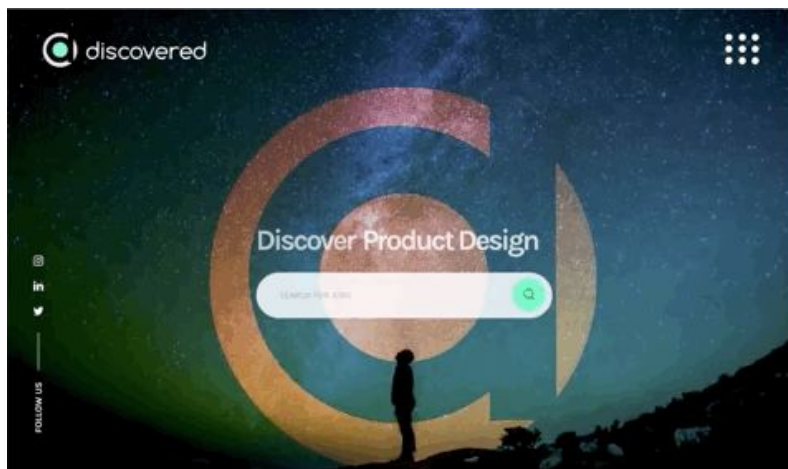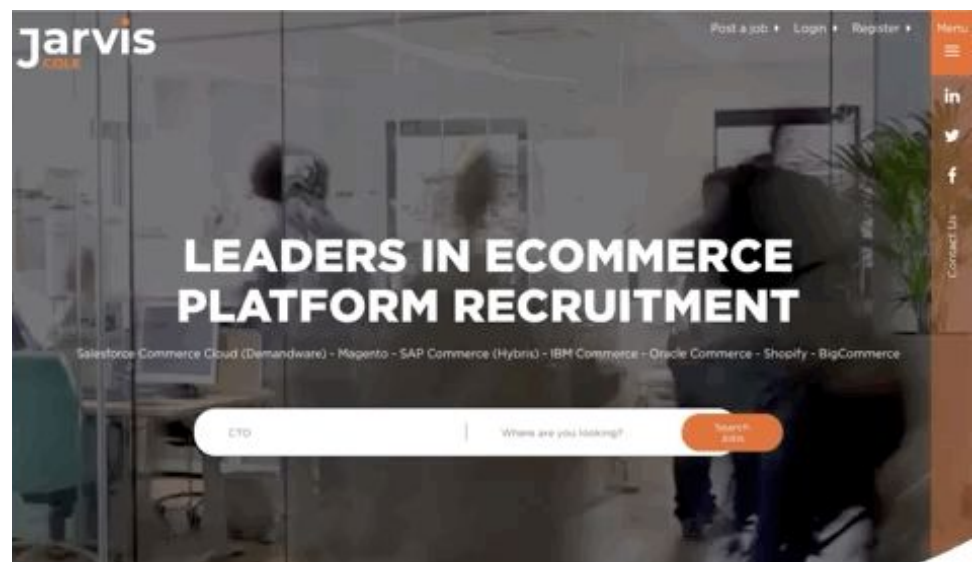

Mortimer Spinks www.mortimerspinks.com

volcanic

Volcanic examples

Twenty Recruitment www.twentyrecruitment.com

Jarvis Cole www.jarviscole.com

volcanic

volcanic

Book a demo

www.volcanic.co.uk