TrueJob YC Winter 2016 Application

COMPANY

Company name:
TrueJob, Inc.

Company url, if any:
https://www.truejob.com/

If you have an online demo, what's the url? (Please don't password protect it; just use an obscure url.)
<Redacted>

Describe your company in 50 characters or less.
Data driven startup job search

What is your company going to make?
We're building an interactive job discovery and matching platform. Job seekers upload a resume, then interact with our job postings (users can "like" and "dislike" certain attributes similar to Pandora), causing more relevant jobs to appear.

These interactions flow to the employers as anonymous feedback, allowing employers to improve their job postings. Later, employers will be able to interact with resumes (liking/disliking words, etc) to help the site recommend more relevant candidates. These interactions will flow back to job seekers and provide them with anonymous feedback on their resumes, helping job seekers with the job search process.

Both sides have incentives to provide feedback to improve their experience; doing so improves recommendations. When employers see feedback on their postings or job seekers see feedback on their resumes, they can use it to make improvements.

Which category best applies to your company?
Marketplace

Is this application in response to a YC RFS?
No

If yes, which one?
N/A

Where do you live now, and where would the company be based after YC? (List as City A, Country A / City B, Country B.)
Ann Arbor, Michigan / Ann Arbor, Michigan

CONTACT

Email address we should contact you at:
<Redacted>
Phone number(s):
<Redacted>

FOUNDERS

Please enter the url of a 1 minute unlisted (not private) YouTube video introducing the founders. ([Follow the Video Guidelines](#).)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Yj6-aUg6gI

Please tell us about an interesting project, preferably outside of class or work, that two or more of you created together. Include urls if possible.
Together Mike and I built a custom desk rental mapping system for the TechBrewery (https://techbrewery.org/), the largest startup co-working space in Ann Arbor. We also built into this system the ability to schedule meetings, message other startups on the platform, post news, and more, which we may abstract out into a SaaS startup called RentDesk (mentioned below under "other ideas").

We also worked on a side project called AuthorCharts, which you can check out here: http://www.authorcharts.com/. We were interested in new ways of visualizing all the books an author has written, and built the MVP quickly into something fun, simple and clean.

How long have the founders known one another and how did you meet? Have any of the founders not met in person?
We met in September 2015 at a Meetup Scott organizes called 'Coffee House Coders'. Scott gave a demonstration of a site he was working on (TrueJob) and was looking for a cofounder. Mike was new to the area, interested in the job search problem, and jumped on board.

We immediately clicked and have been working side by side together in a coworking space for almost a year. In that time we've traveled together, presented TrueJob together, and made tremendous progress on the startup.

PROGRESS

How far along are you?
Our platform is fully functional, and is the second biggest collection of startup jobs in the United States, outside of AngelList (and we plan to catch up to them soon!), gathered via a custom scraping system we built.

Job seekers can sign up, fill out their profile, and interact with jobs through an interface that's powerful, flexible, and fun to use. Users can like, dislike, filter, or hide almost anything about a job posting, apply to jobs, and get feedback.

Employers can sign up, fill out their profile, post jobs, and receive automatic feedback from job seekers about their postings, along with analytics about how their job postings compare to others (salary, length, readability, etc).

If you've already started working on it, how long have you been working and how many lines of code (if applicable) have you written?
<Redacted>

Which of the following best describes your progress?
Public Beta

When will you have a prototype or beta?
N/A

How many users do you have?
<Redacted>

Do you have revenue?
No

How much revenue?
N/A

What is your monthly growth rate?
(in users or revenue or both)
<Redacted>

If you've applied previously with the same idea, how much progress have you made since the last time you applied? Anything change?
Here's what we've done in the last six months:

- We've built a custom scraping system that scrapes thousands of startup company websites each night. With this, we can see what tools they use to post their jobs, when they make updates, when their listings grow and shrink, and more.
- We've built a javascript widget that allows people to embed TrueJob into their website. This has helped us drive integrations into startup community websites.
- Using feedback from job seekers, we've added extensive filtering and tagging to our job listing page. The new interface is flexible and powerful, and works in a similar way to products people are familiar with, like Pandora or the Facebook news feed.
- We participated in the New Enterprise Forum (http://newenterpriseforum.org/) coaching and advising program. Over a period of several months, we met with members of the NEF who helped us build and present a pitch deck and executive summary. They helped us present our value proposition for customers and opportunity available for investors.
- We've partnered with startup communities in the Michigan area to provide them a job board, like Traverse City New Tech Meetup (http://www.tcnewtech.org/job-board/) and A2RB (http://a2rb.org/jobs/). We have other integrations in the works with some of the biggest startup communities in Michigan, like MadeInA2 (http://madeina2.com/), Grow Detroit (http://www.growdetroit.com/), and the TechBrewery (https://techbrewery.org/).
- We've increased our Google ranking for several startup job related searches (Ann Arbor, Detroit, etc) and are now appearing on the first page in places we were previously totally absent from.

Our goal this next month (October) will be to double down on improving our user growth and partnering with more organizations across the United States.

If you have already participated or committed to participate in an incubator, "accelerator" or "pre-accelerator" program, please tell us about it.
N/A

IDEA

Why did you pick this idea to work on? Do you have domain expertise in this area? How do you know people need what you're making?
(Scott) I graduated from college in 2009, at a point where the job search market was the worst it had been in decades. I spent months spending a lot of time on job websites, and the experience was depressing -- filling out one form, signing up for one site just to be sent to another site to apply, and so on. It was from this that the idea for a better job website came to be, and I ended up changing careers to learn programming just to make it happen.

(Mike) At my last job, I thought about leaving and working at a startup, but I felt trapped. Now out of college, I'd lost the support of the career center. I was also planning to move to a new part of the country and had no idea how to start my search. The recruiters I worked with didn't have

opportunities in the area I was moving. I didn't even consider sites like Indeed or Monster because I assumed they only had large, corporate jobs that I wanted to avoid.

We know job seekers need what we're making not only because we were those people once, but from dozens of customer discovery interviews we've done, and what they've told us: that they want a better way to search, filter, and find their dream job, and they want to get feedback to know what they are doing wrong since it's frustrating to put in so much effort and get nothing back.

What's new about what you're making? What substitutes do people resort to because it doesn't exist yet (or they don't know about it)?
Our interface encourages job seekers to interact by liking and disliking different aspects of each job. Employers receive this information as feedback on their postings, which can be incredibly valuable as writing a good job posting is a skill separate from what most employers need to run their business. We've spoken to employers that copy and paste from similar job postings or cobble together the top google search results for 'what to put in X job posting'.

The other half of the platform allows employers to interact with job seekers resumes and applications. This completes the the circle of feedback between job seekers and employers.

Job seekers can get resume feedback from other sources (career centers, friends/family), but never from the places they are applying. This is especially challenging when switching careers – a good resume for a corporate position might give a poor first impression at a startup.

Substitutes for job seekers include other job search sites where a 'shotgun' approach is common. Recruiters are a 'high touch' option but they do not have the same incentives as job seekers. Employers have few options to get feedback on job listings. Some tools exist to do static analysis, but none that we've found allow job seekers direct interaction with postings.

Who are your competitors, and who might become competitors? Who do you fear most?
Here's the competitors we're scared of:
-   Jobr and SwitchApp are mobile first job search apps, and scary because, like us, they have new interfaces to interact with jobs and if successful might be able to expand the Tinder style 'swiping' system and get more detailed feedback from job seekers.
-   AngelList is another company we're afraid of, mostly for it's extensive startup information database and many startup job postings. But their monetization has been focused on their syndicate program, so we believe there is demand for a dedicated startup jobs platform. We are also more focused on funded startups hiring for full time positions, while many postings on AngelList are for cofounder positions that only offer equity.
-   TextIO is scary because of their analytics and smart job description feedback tool that helps the employer, but they aren't a job platform yet, just a tool for employers, and they don't handle feedback from job seekers.

- Hired, Triplebyte, and Mentat offer curated job matching services (similar to our "recommended jobs"), but are very high touch options, focused on technical jobs, and the cost is very high. Mentat is an interesting concept but they are monetizing through job seekers and offering more personal advising and recruiter services that don't fit our mission.

We're less afraid of larger job portals (e.g. Indeed, Monster). While they have huge advantages in scale and data they've collected, they are are unlikely to risk making big changes to their user experience.

LinkedIn, similarly, is less scary even though they are a big player in job search, because of their focus as a professional network, and because much of that network is overcrowded by recruiters.

What do you understand about your business that other companies in it just don't get?
Job seekers choose to apply (or not to apply) to each job they see for a reason. It may be the job title, the location, the pay, the job description, or something else. The reasons a job seeker leaves a job posting or chooses to apply are incredibly valuable information for employers.

In addition, searching for jobs online is slow and dull. If we can make it more enjoyable with a unique, intuitive UI and the promise of great job recommendations, we can incentivize job seekers to interact with job postings and help us capture the reasons they choose to stay or leave. This feedback combined with information about *who* is providing that feedback will help startups better target the best candidates.

Similarly, the reason an employer passes over a resume can be extremely valuable. If we can incentivize employers to interact with resumes, we can give job seekers feedback, helping them when they apply for other jobs or start interviewing.

How do or will you make money? How much could you make? (We realize you can't know precisely, but give your best estimate.)
Initially, employers can post jobs for free on the platform, but will later pay a tiered monthly subscription based on the number of job postings they wish to post, and the level of access to feedback and analytics about those postings they wish to receive.

General purpose job postings in large markets are worth ~$100/post at a minimum (see, e.g. Craigslist) and with improved analytics and targeted feedback we can charge several times that. Down the line we may offer sponsored matches in our job results (operating on a PPC model or similar) that are clearly differentiated.

Job seekers view and apply to jobs for free, but we may implement a 'freemium' model later where additional analytics or custom feedback is available for a subscription fee (similar to LinkedIn Premium).

The recruiting and job search space is a huge market. We looked at a 2016 report from IBIS that showed online recruitment sites alone are a $3.7B/year industry, with over $300m in profits last year. Indeed alone has revenues over $500m. The size of the online startup recruiting market is less clear, but we estimate at least $100m/year, based partially on total venture capital raised in the United States and the percentage of capital that goes to salaries. With an initial focus on startup companies and later expansion to the wider online recruiting space we think we can reach revenue similar to competitors like Indeed.

How will you get users? If your idea is the type that faces a chicken-and-egg problem in the sense that it won't be attractive to users till it has a lot of users (e.g. a marketplace, a dating site, an ad network), how will you overcome that?
We must have job seekers using the platform to be able to provide feedback to employers. To get job seekers, we must have relevant and up to date job listings. To do this, we are populating TrueJob with high quality startup job postings we have gathered with our custom web scraping technology. This technology allows us to quickly pull thousands of startup jobs directly from startup company's websites.

We are driving job seeker traffic to the site with a combination of online advertising (Google, Facebook) content marketing, and our integrations with different meetup groups. We have also made investments in SEO (successfully climbing to Google's first page for Ann Arbor and Detroit startup job searches). As more job seekers come to the platform and interact with job postings, we gather more analytics and feedback about those job postings. This will provide a convincing argument for employers to sign up (to reveal the feedback about their job postings we have already collected).

EQUITY

Have you incorporated, or formed any legal entity (like an LLC) yet?
Yes

What kind of entity and in what state or country was the entity formed? (e.g. Delaware C Corp)
Delaware C Corp

Please describe the breakdown of the equity ownership in percentages among the founders, employees and any other stockholders.
<Redacted>

List any investments your company has received. Include the name of the investor, the amount invested, the premoney valuation / valuation cap, and the type of security sold (convertible notes, safes or stock).
None

If you have not formed the company yet, describe the planned equity ownership breakdown among the founders, employees and any other proposed stockholders.
(This question is as much for you as us.)

Please provide any other relevant information about the structure or formation of the company.
<Redacted>

LEGAL

Are any of the founders covered by noncompetes or intellectual property agreements that overlap with your project? If so, please explain.
None

Was any of your code written by someone who is not one of your founders? If so, describe how can you legally use it. (Open source is ok of course.)
<Redacted>

Is there anything else we should know about your company? (Pending lawsuits, cofounders who have left, etc.)
Nope, we've covered it all!

OTHERS

If you had any other ideas you considered applying with, please list them. One may be something we've been waiting for. Often when we fund people it's to do something they list here and not in the main application.
Rent Desk (https://techbrewery.org/rent) [SaaS for coworking spaces]:
Coworking spaces are becoming increasingly popular not only with startups, but with independent contractors, and a growing number of large companies. This has lead to a huge amount of coworking spaces sprouting up across the nation, where you can rent space usually by the desk.

Software to manage these coworking spaces, however, is a muddled mess, so we built out software that helps a coworking space rent, map, and manage desks, collect payments, manage users, post events and news, and more. We initially built the product and implemented it at the TechBrewery (the biggest startup coworking space in Ann Arbor) and had immediate success with it. We think we can abstract this technology out of what we built for the TechBrewery to build a software as a service product to help coworking spaces set up their space easy and efficiently.

Health Inspection Info (http://www.healthinspection.info/) [Easy health inspection reports at a glance]:

Most health inspection reports are hard to find, even though they are available to the public. This information could be collected in one place, with access provided to consumers and resold via an API to review sites like Yelp. Scott created a site called HealthInspection.info which does this for Ann Arbor, making it much easier to find restaurants around you with health inspection reports, ranking them in terms of the "worst" offenders and making it possible to search for particular violations (e.g. rats or cockroaches).

Author Charts (authorcharts.com) ["Box Office Mojo" for books]:
It is notoriously difficult to find public and accurate information on book sales. The market leader in bestseller lists, the NYT bestseller list, combines wholesale numbers with retailers (resulting in double counting), and publishers rarely release raw sales figures. Bestsellers for online retailers (e.g. Amazon) can vary wildly from others like NYT.

We envision a 'Box Office Mojo' for books, a data backed online platform that collates estimated sales figures from different bestseller charts (print or online) in one public location, combined with metadata from other sources like Goodreads. The closest competitor, Nielsen Bookscan, is a niche product that charges media and other outlets tens of thousands annually. Much of this data can be estimated by combining publicly available sources, then published online with full access sold to media outlets and others.

Please tell us something surprising or amusing that one of you has discovered.
(The answer need not be related to your project.)

Over half of startups we've analyzed use custom forms or other manual methods to track candidates and list job postings.

CURIOUS

What convinced you to apply to Y Combinator?
Reading about the incredible experiences of other companies at Y Combinator. The chance to learn as much as we can from leaders in the startup community.

How did you hear about Y Combinator?
HackerNews