

March 24, 2021

Rapid growth in e-commerce and progress in DX accelerates demand for digital talent.

Shortage of data security specialists leads to increased training efforts

On March 24, specialist professional recruitment firm Robert Walters Japan announced the latest hiring trends for digital talent.

Retail companies rush to recruit digital talent amidst rapid e-commerce growth

Due to Covid-19, physical retail shops and restaurants have been heavily impacted by dwindling foot traffic and inbound tourism. On the other hand, more consumers are turning to e-commerce sites as well as online services as they spend an increasing amount of time at home. As changing consumer habits push more companies to drive omnichannel strategies with greater emphasis on the digital side, demand for digital talent within the retail industry is growing rapidly.

While hiring for most retail positions paused in 2020, e-commerce and digital related roles remained highly active. Nevertheless, the talent pool for English-speaking candidates with digital retail experience in Japan is extremely small since the domestic e-commerce market is still relatively new. The competition for talent is intensifying particularly for professionals with skills in digital marketing, strategic marketing, CRM, mobile advertising, search engine marketing, and analytics.

Traditionally, salaries offered in retail companies have not been as competitive as they have heavily relied on strong branding to secure talent. However, as demand for digital talent grows across multiple industries such as fintech, retail companies are no longer competing just among themselves. To attract professionals with digital skills, companies will need to prominently highlight career paths and attractive salaries as part of their employee value proposition.

Hiring in tech: intensifying competition for security and DX talent

It used to be that technology was considered an additional cost for companies, but nowadays, no company can operate successfully without it. Companies that have been agile in adopting digital transformation have benefitted from better business performance overall as well as increased productivity through mobilized and engaged workforces. They are also more

competitive in securing talent given that more professionals prioritise organisations where technology is valued. As digital transformation and cybersecurity will continue to be big trends in 2021, there is great demand for tech talent with change management skills who can effectively engage with business stakeholders in ways that non-technical users can understand and get value from. As data governance requirements in highly regulated industries become stricter, candidates with experience in data and cybersecurity will be highly sought after. However, the talent pool of professionals with experience in DX is still limited as it is relatively new in Japan.

Shortage of specialists in data security: growing trend in training

Director of Tech & Transformation at Robert Walters Japan Tomokazu Betzold commented: “With more day-to-day business operations being completed online, companies are placing greater emphasis on data governance and cybersecurity. Although the volume of such positions is notably less than the most in-demand tech positions in the job market, there is a serious shortage of professionals with practical experience in these areas. To address this, more companies are taking measures such as utilising experienced professionals from their overseas offices and teaming them with a less experienced but more readily available hire in Japan, who can leverage the team’s expertise while they develop and grow into the job. Companies will also support local employees to gain the required experience and certifications with the aim of securing talent in Japan for the long term. We can expect this trend of internal development to spread to various industries over the next one to two years.

Covid-19 has pushed many companies to shift to cloud computing, which has led to increased hiring needs for cloud engineers. As demand for server engineers and other traditional IT infrastructure-related roles declines, there is a growing trend to compensate for the talent shortage over the long term by combining in-house training with reskilling of traditional system engineers to acquire skills in cloud engineering.”

About Robert Walters Japan:

Established in London, United Kingdom, in 1985, Robert Walters is a specialist recruitment consultancy with operations in 31 countries around the world. Robert Walters Japan established its Tokyo office in 2000 and Osaka office in 2007. For 20 years, we've been a

driving force in the Japanese bilingual recruitment market, providing high quality candidates for our clients and access to the best jobs. Our consultants are experts in their respective industries and work in teams to provide recruitment consultation services across a wide range of industries and job categories.

Press contact:

Robert Walters Japan

Phone: 03-4570-1500 E-mail: info@robertwalters.co.jp