



**ASIA JOB INDEX Q4 2015**  
A TRUSTED SOURCE ON ASIA'S JOB MARKET

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ROBERT WALTERS

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# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q4 2015: ASIA AT A GLANCE

We saw strong momentum after modest job advertisement volume growth in the previous quarter, as companies actively sought the best talent to prepare for 2016. Although concerns about the economic slowdown in China contributed to a slight downturn in hiring, Malaysia is the only country which saw a drop in the number of job advertisements among the six surveyed countries. Demand growth for HR professionals was also evident while companies focused on securing and retaining key talent in the competitive market.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER:

# +39%

Overall increase in job advertising volumes compared to Q4 2014

# +56%

The rise in the number of advertisements for accounting and finance professionals continued as companies actively sought professionals who can support efforts to improve overall cost-effectiveness and facilitate sound business decisions.

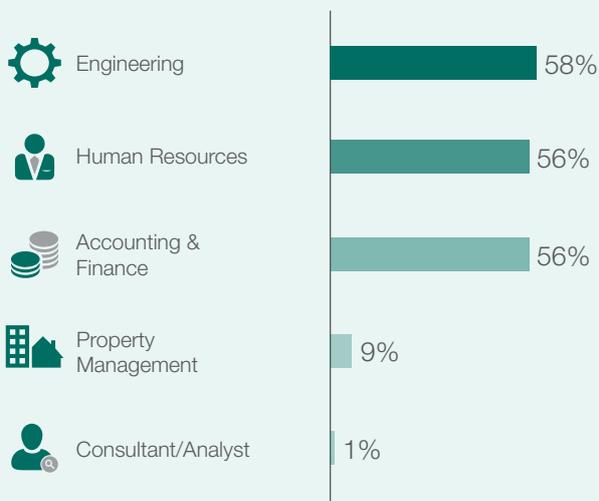
# +15%

Demand for IT professionals was also strong in many areas, with the growth of big data in particular driving demand for data scientists/analysts and consultants.

# +56%

With the war for talent heating up, there was strong demand for HR professionals with direct experience in talent sourcing and retention strategies.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q4 2014 VS Q4 2015



# CHINA: TOP TALENT SOUGHT AFTER TO DRIVE BUSINESS GROWTH



Arthur Wang  
Managing Director  
China

China overall  
**+6%**

Quarterly  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Overall, the recruitment market developed at a conservative pace in 2015; however more vacancies came to market in Q4 as companies sought to fill the allocated headcount before year-end and prepare for business expansion in the new year. Notwithstanding the above, the slowdown in the economy also led professionals to be more cautious about switching jobs, meaning vacancies were open for longer in order to attract more applicants. Moving into 2016, we expect that companies will remain cautious in adding new headcount and will be particularly focused on securing top talent for strategic positions to drive growth. From a discipline perspective, we expect that professionals in the IT and professional services industries will be in highest demand as these sectors continue to benefit from the transition of the Chinese economy to a model that is driven by consumption and services.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- HR registered a 14% increase in advertising volumes; organisational development and talent acquisition were the two most in-demand functions and skill sets.
- Companies sought accounting and finance professionals with solid business analysis skills, pushing job advertising volumes up 7% from a year ago.
- A drive for more creative brand and marketing strategies to differentiate organisations in a crowded and ever-changing consumer landscape drove a 21% increase in marketing role advertisements.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q3 2015 VS Q4 2015



# HONG KONG: MODEST GROWTH AMID CAUTIOUS ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



Matthew Bennett  
Managing Director  
Greater China

Hong Kong overall  
**+13%** | Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“Recruitment activity in the last quarter of 2015 was largely replacement driven as organisations sought to replace underperformers with professionals who could better support their long-term business strategy. In 2016, companies will likely remain cautious with their expansion plans due to uncertainty over the Chinese economy, and will look to drive growth by taking market share from competitors. This will lead to strong competition for top talent who can help drive business efficiency, productivity and revenue.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- HR business partners were in high demand to help organisations plan HR strategy and strengthen their efforts in talent attraction and retention for the year ahead. This led to a significant 45% year-on-year growth in HR job advertising.
- Companies continued to invest in their IT systems to increase efficiency and visibility of business process within the organisation, leading to a 20% year-on-year growth in the number of IT job advertisements.
- Sales vacancies rose 17% as companies sought to replace underperforming resources before the start of the new year.
- Accounting and finance professionals remained in demand as companies sought to strengthen internal controls and risk management, pushing job advertising volume up 19%.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q4 2014 VS Q4 2015



# JAPAN: JOBS-TO-APPLICANTS RATIO HIT FRESH RECORD HIGH



David Swan  
Managing Director  
Japan & Korea

Japan overall  
**+5%**

Quarterly  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“In the fourth quarter, job advertisement volumes increased across all disciplines and levels of seniority.**

**The IT/Telco sector remained active, and was boosted by the continued evolution of e-commerce, FinTech, IoT (Internet of Things), as well as the move toward cloud-based systems.**

**The impact of rising foreign tourist numbers has driven growth in the retail sector particularly within the hotels and entertainment and restaurant sub-sectors. The construction industry is also experiencing demand.**

**All signs point to an increase in opportunities for engineers, IT engineers, digital marketing, sales, architects/civil engineers, consultants, and administrative roles.**

**External factors such as the slowdown in the Chinese economy have not had a significant impact on Japan’s domestic job market. The most recent (January 2016) jobs-to-applicants ratio in Japan was 1.28, marginally higher than the previous month and a new 24-year high.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- There is continuing demand for engineers in the manufacturing industry, making it one of the sectors experiencing the greatest growth in the fourth quarter. The most in-demand engineering jobs were in mechatronic, civil, field service, field application, and electrical engineering.
- Companies that are undergoing organisational restructuring to position for growth are recruiting sales professionals across all sectors and we expect this to continue in 2016.
- In the IT sector, there has been strong demand for engineers in Internet-related areas, SE, security-related areas, data scientists/analysts, and IT consultants with growth of about 10% compared with the previous quarter.

# MALAYSIA: GROWTH IN TECHNOLOGY FOR 2016



Sally Raj  
Managing Director  
Malaysia

Malaysia overall

**-6%**

Annual dip  
in job  
advertisements

**“The percentage drop in job advertising this quarter is an accurate reflection of current market sentiments. Companies are feeling pressure from both the uncertainty in the global markets and the falling price of crude oil which has had a knock-on effect on hiring activity and planning. Many positions have been put on hold while others have been removed completely which has prolonged the recruitment process. A number of organisations have taken an unconventional route and allowed some key personnel to go on unpaid leave or take sabbaticals – with the option to rejoin the business when the market shows signs of recovery. Other businesses see challenging market conditions as an opportunity to retrain and/or upskill employees or to transfer surplus staff from low growth to high growth teams.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- The accounting & finance sector saw a 6% annual slide in advert volumes due to a number of open positions being put on hold. This is expected to improve by the end of Q2 2016 as firms plans to transfer more accounting projects from global headquarters into Malaysia.
- Demand from businesses entering the digital market drove the 4% rise in advertising for marketing professionals. In particular, digital marketing specialists experienced the most demand as organisations needed more creative strategies to edge out competitors.
- Constant development of IT platforms and applications by young entrepreneurs in Malaysia is likely to create growth and healthy competition in the technology sector.
- A surge in demand for HR professionals saw a 53% spike in advertised jobs as businesses increasingly recognised the benefits of talent attraction and development

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q4 2014 VS Q4 2015



# SINGAPORE: MODEST GROWTH SETS PACE FOR 2016



Toby Fowlston  
Managing Director  
Southeast Asia

Singapore overall

**+2%**

Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“The modest increase in annual job advertising is indicative of active hiring activity amid concerns of an expected lacklustre economy in 2016. The growth in job advertising for HR reflects the increased demand for quality HR professionals to attract and retain talent in a candidate-driven market. E-commerce remains on an upward trend, which has prompted the consolidation of job functions within logistics in the face of new technological trends. 2016 will continue to hold opportunities for IT professionals, particularly in cyber security, e-commerce, and digital marketing. Overall, the latest job advertising figures show a relatively healthy recruitment market.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- A greater focus in corporate governance pushed job advertising for accounting and finance professionals up 8% from Q4 2014. Increased regulations in the financial services sector will continue to drive demand for quality talent trained in corporate governance, internal audit and risk management.
- The 5% rise in business development and sales job advertising reflects a competitive business landscape. High-calibre sales professionals will continue to be in high demand even in the face of economic instability.
- Job volumes for merchandising and purchasing professionals dropped 22% as the rise of e-commerce platforms resulted in increased streamlining of these job functions.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q4 2014 VS Q4 2015



# TAIWAN: NEW MARKET ENTRANTS DRIVE HIRING



John Winter  
General Manager  
Taiwan

Taiwan overall  
**+7%**

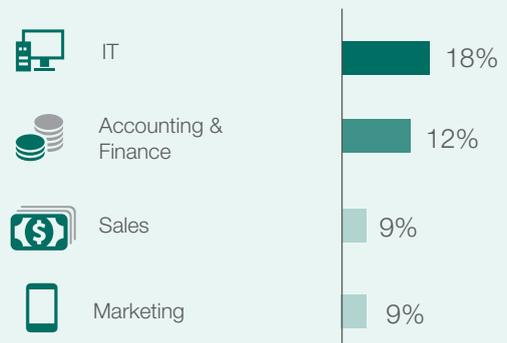
Annual  
growth in job  
advertisements

**“It was encouraging to see a 7% annual growth in job advertisements in Q4, despite an overall slowdown in the economy and export trading in 2015. Although there were contractions in traditionally strong technology industries such as hardware and semiconductor, new market entrants in the software and consumer retail sectors drove hiring and the recruitment market remained candidate-driven.”**

## MARKET COMMENTARY

- Active hiring from small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly in niche industries such as gaming, contributed to an 18% growth in IT job advertising. Software engineers and developers who are proficient in English were in high demand.
- Accounting and finance job advertising saw a 12% increase as companies actively sought business-minded professionals to drive cost savings and better support operational decisions.
- More consumer brands placed greater emphasis on developing the Taiwan market and looked for strong sales and marketing professionals, driving a 9% growth in the number of job advertisements in both areas.

## PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY PROFESSION Q4 2014 VS Q4 2015



# ROBERT WALTERS ASIA JOB INDEX Q4 2015: METHODOLOGY

Robert Walters is an award-winning business and one of the world's leading professional recruitment consultancies with offices in 24 countries and regions. The Asia Job Index tracks advertisement volumes for executive appointments across the leading job boards and national newspapers in the following:

## China

51job.com  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Liepin.com  
Linkedin.com  
Zhaopin.com

## Hong Kong

Classified Post  
Recruit (Tuesday, Friday edition)  
Cpjobs.com  
CTgoodjobs.hk  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobmarket.com.hk  
Jobs.gov.hk  
Jobsdb.com.hk  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.hk

## Japan

Daijob.com  
Careerindex.jp

## Malaysia

The Star  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobstreet.com.my  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.my  
Mystar.com.my

## Singapore

The Straits Times  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Jobscentral.com.sg  
Jobsdb.com.sg  
Jobstreet.com.sg  
Linkedin.com  
Monster.com.sg  
ST701.com.sg

## Taiwan

104.com.tw  
1111.com.tw  
Efinancialcareers.com  
Linkedin.com

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

Robert Walters is the leading professional recruitment firm in the Asian market and currently has a network of offices covering China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

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CHINA  
FRANCE  
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IRELAND  
JAPAN  
LUXEMBOURG  
MALAYSIA  
NETHERLANDS  
NEW ZEALAND  
SINGAPORE  
SOUTH AFRICA  
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