

PRESS RELEASE

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BERNHART ASSOCIATES' Q1 EMPLOYMENT SURVEY RELEASED: MARKETERS' EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK BRIGHTENS

More Than Half Planning to Add Staff, Layoffs Continue to Drop

Owatonna, MN, January 18, 2012—Employers are ushering in the new year with an impressive spike in hiring plans, according to Bernhart Associates' Quarterly Digital and Direct Marketing Employment Report for the first quarter of 2012.

"All three of our key employment indicators—new hiring, layoffs, and hiring freezes—are showing improvement over the fourth quarter of last year," said Jerry Bernhart, leading [digital and direct marketing recruiter](#) and Principal of Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC, which conducts the widely tracked quarterly employment survey. "Employers are hiring cautiously, but on the jobs front we've recouped all of the weakness we experienced in 2011. In fact, the new hire index is showing one the largest quarter-to-quarter improvements we've seen in the 12-year history of this survey."

The following are key findings from Bernhart Associates' quarter-one (Q1) survey:

- 52% of companies responding to the survey said they plan to add to staff in Q1, up sharply from 40% last quarter. One year ago, the index stood at 52%.
- 19% of respondents currently have a hiring freeze, down slightly from 20% in the fall quarter.
- The percentage of companies planning layoffs in Q1 dropped to 6%, compared with 8% last quarter.
- There were only narrow differences between marketers, agencies, and suppliers, with business-to-consumer marketers leading all categories in new hiring plans at 56%. Among business-to-business participants, 48% said they expect to add to staff, up from 42% last quarter.

When asked what positions will be in greatest demand during the current quarter, employers listed analytic-related jobs on top, followed by marketing, sales, creative, and account services. "Analytic positions greatly outnumbered all other leading job categories," Bernhart said.

“Several other trends also stand out,” added Bernhart. “We’re seeing more multiple openings per company, and social media-related jobs are appearing for the first time on the top 10 list of positions that will be in most demand.”

Bernhart said there’s also plenty of empirical evidence to indicate things are picking up steam. “Recently, I was speaking with an unemployed multichannel marketing VP who has been actively looking for a new position for several months,” Bernhart said. “He told me he was expecting three offers. You don’t hear stories like that unless the job market is healthy.”

Bernhart Associates’ Q1 hiring survey was emailed on January 9 to more than 12,000 senior executives, hiring managers, human resource officials, and other key participants in online and offline direct marketing. A total of 424 organizations responded to the nationally followed employment-trends survey, which is now in its twelfth year.

According to the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), in 2011, marketers—commercial and nonprofit—spent \$163 billion on direct marketing, which accounts for 52.1 percent of all ad expenditures in the United States. Measured against total US sales, these advertising expenditures generated approximately \$1.96 trillion in incremental sales. In 2011, direct marketing accounted for 8.7 percent of total US gross domestic product. Also last year, there were 1.3 million direct marketing employees in the US. Their collective sales efforts directly supported 7.9 million other jobs, accounting for a total of 9.2 million US jobs.

Results of past surveys can be found in the DMA’s annual Statistical Fact Book and on Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC’s website.

Companies interested in participating in the Bernhart Associates’ Quarterly Digital and Direct Marketing Employment Report should send an email to survey@bernhart.com with “Opt-In” in the subject line, or they can sign up directly on the front page of the digital and direct marketing recruiting firm’s website.

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About Bernhart Associates

Bernhart Associates Executive Search, LLC, is owned by Jerry Bernhart, a leading and nationally recognized [ecommerce recruiter](#) and [direct marketing recruiter](#), writer, and speaker. Founded in 1991, Bernhart Associates today recruits for positions at all levels in Multichannel Direct Marketing, CRM, E-Commerce, Database Marketing, Business Development and Marketing Analytics. Respected as a leading authority on issues related to digital and direct marketing recruiting, Jerry is a frequent speaker at national marketing conferences and is often quoted by the digital and direct marketing news media. Jerry has written dozens of articles for leading online and offline multichannel marketing publications.

The Bernhart Associates Quarterly Digital and Direct Marketing Employment Report, now in its twelfth year, has become the most widely followed employment report in digital and direct marketing and measures employers' hiring plans for the coming quarter. It is the only forward-looking employment survey of its kind in digital and direct marketing and unparalleled in size and scope.

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