

Press release
7 December 2016

2017 will be a great year to be in technology

Sydney, 7 December 2016 – The positive hiring trends that have buoyed the technology sector for the past 12 months are expected to continue well into the New Year.

Specialised recruitment company [Robert Half](#) forecasts the trends that will dominate the technology sector in 2017 and reflects on how technology professionals can take advantage of the increased investment in their industry and increase their market value.

1. Declining resources sector may not impact IT sector

Part of the economic decline brought on by the end of the mining boom may be substituted by the rise of new technologies and the IT professionals required to fill new positions.

David Jones, Senior Managing Director Robert Half Asia Pacific said: *“Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane have seen substantial growth in the IT sector in the aftermath of the mining boom and will continue to see growth in 2017. However, this should not be an indication that the decline of the resources sector will mean a decline for the IT employment market in Western Australia. Traditionally, companies have reduced their IT headcount during economic downturns – yet their performance lagged behind their competitors by not having the required technology capacity to cope with growing business and a changing environment – so we are seeing stable demand for IT professionals in Perth as well.”*

“Many companies in the New Year will continue to invest in IT to ensure they are exceeding their competitors in performance and revenue, which is great news for technology jobseekers across both West and East coast Australia. The technology sector will continue to be a fast growing and dynamic environment with very positive flow-on effects to the employment market.”

2. Candidate short market will persist

Advances in technology mean the skills required by IT professionals will continue to evolve in the future, making the war for talent still very much alive in 2017 as skilled candidates are in short supply in many functional areas within IT.

“2017 will be a fruitful year for technology professionals as increased innovation and technology developments across multiple sectors are expected to create new business opportunities and consequently more jobs for the IT sector which is expected to be a candidate short market,” David Jones said.

“There is an evident lack of skilled professionals, and more importantly a lack of technology professionals who can bridge the gap between technology and wider business expectations and goals. In an environment like this, approaching IT professionals who are not actively looking for a job is rife and highly skilled talent are frequently getting poached by competitors. Employers will need to put competitive retention measures in place to ensure their best performing talent remain with the company.”

“We are also seeing heavy demand and investment in graduate programs to foster in the new generation of technology workers.”

3. Companies under cyber-attack in need of data security specialists

As cyber-attacks become more sophisticated by using new technology, companies will need to proactively approach these evolving threats and hire the right IT talent who are able to prevent, detect and mitigate these cyber-risks.

“Cyber-security professionals will continue to be in high demand in 2017, with the employment market continuing to be dominated by contract and overseas workers making IT departments increasingly reliant on flexible staffing options. This is the result of Australian organisations enhancing their IT response to cyber-risks, with an uptick expected for cyber-security specialist roles,” David Jones said.

“Cyber-security is increasingly being considered business critical and an ongoing risk to all organisations. The inherent risk in cyber-attacks is not just for their own data security but also the implications a breach could have on their company brand and reputation.”

“Data security specialists will continue to be in demand due to the added risk of security breaches as companies continue to invest in Big Data analytics. The increasing emphasis on data protection is driving demand for skills and talent in this area.”

4. IT specialists can command higher salaries

Despite the candidate short market, IT professionals who specialise in a particular area, such as cyber-security, Big Data or cloud computing, will have a competitive edge in 2017 during the interview process as the search for specialists is expected to remain challenging in the New Year.

“Technology professionals with specialised skillsets will continue to be able to command a higher salary, particularly in the areas of client-side technologies, cloud and Big Data. As companies continue to transform the way they use technology and digital products to advance their business agenda, IT professionals will be further encouraged to specialise in a particular area in order to boost their salary negotiating leverage.”

“The demand for specialists has been accelerated by the rise of Fintech and tech-based start-ups, which receive financial backing from larger corporations across Australia, particularly in Sydney. This is an area we expect to see substantial growth in 2017,” David Jones concluded.

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